

KINGDOM NEWS

The Kingdom is Yours; the power is Yours and the glory is Yours, forever.... (Matt. 6:13)

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Motto for the year of 2013 (NEW)

Come out from among them and be separated and I will receive you," says the Lord.
Know you not that you are the temple of the Living God? Dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.
(2 Corinthians 6:16-17, 7:1 KJV Adapted)

The Chief Cornerstone



Shall We Continue In Sin (That Grace May Abound)

While in Sunday service recently, the Lord pointed me to Romans 6:1 "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" I know what answer is given in scripture. But what does that mean? Let's see if context clues will serve us in this case. If we comb through the scriptures just prior to this verse, we find:

"...for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the *gift by grace*, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, *has abounded* unto many. ...for if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive *abundance of grace* and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. ... *But where sin abounded, grace did much more*

Chief Cornerstone

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

2013 – Bring It!!!

All scripture is KJV paraphrased.

We have once again come to the time where we discuss what God has placed in our hearts for this New Year and season. I don't know about you, but 2012 was a major year of transition for me. It was busy, boisterous, and bumpy. I watched God do some amazing things (some of which blew me away).

If you took time last month to reflect on 2012, maybe you saw some of the major changes God brought about in your life. As is usually the case, some relationships have changed, some people's financial situations have changed, and for others, almost everything in your environment has changed.

Now, there may be those of you who can say that you have not experienced much in the way of changes in 2012. This is entirely possible. Or, maybe changes have occurred and you still need time to process them. This is totally understandable.

I remember God told me at the end of 2011 that for 2012 He had major changes in store for everyone. Well, at least from my vantage point, He has kept His word. God has literally pulled me out of some specific situations and placed me in a completely new environment.

The Leadership Corner

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Boot Camp

Your Soul – On Loan



Possession of the Soul – A Layaway Plan

I remember years ago, when I would read across this particular scripture:

And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?⁽¹⁾

I used to think surely something was missed in the translation. For the life of me, I could not understand why the scripture would be written this way. With one eye, I wondered at the possibility of the translators being a little "far afield" on the translation. But with the other eye, I would look at the Sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in carrying legitimate translations of holy writ, across languages, throughout the ages, etc. I believed that even though we as "men" do err, even on the "good stuff;" the Lord watches over His Word. And so I abandoned the notion of "striking through" this verse of scripture and sought rather to be handled by it.

But before I arrived at that celestial shore; I would, from my "narrow" perspective, muse at it reading thus:

And if you have not been faithful in that which is your own, who shall give you that which is another man's?

It sounded a bit like the tense of the scripture in Timothy that reads:

For if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?⁽²⁾

That made sense to me.

But I hope that we've learned by now that a thing is not "right or righteous" on the basis of it "making sense to us." The "right-ness or righteous-ness" of a thing is ascribed by its proximity in nature to the Person of God and His character. Whether or not it makes sense to me (*us*) is a thing that I (*we*) must be responsible for.

For years, I had asked, "Father what does that mean? How am I to understand it?" And if I may say it this way, in God's "own good time" He began to open my

Living Waters



The Mind

(And the Knowledge of Good and Evil)

Last month, when the Lord gave us the article "*The Mind - A Terrible Thing to Waste*" I did not know that it would "*continue to speak*." Perhaps, I should have known it.

Just moments ago in prayer, as I had my head on my Lord's lap, being ministered to by Him; wanting desperately to minister to Him; but being terribly insufficient to such a task. He began to talk to me about something that I had said to Him, prior to my getting out of bed this morning. Earlier I said, "So my Lord, I'm not supposed to be walking according to the fruit of the "*tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*." I'm supposed to be walking according to the fruit of the "*tree of Life*." But *how* do I get there, from here? The spirit is willing; *I* on the other hand am quite ignorant.

Sometimes it helps if we return to the beginning.

In the beginning was the Word. Then after that word, "there was a tree..." Oh, my bad, there were 2 trees. The one we talk about incessantly is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But, *oh my friend*, there was another tree, from which we may freely eat; it is the Tree of Life. Please don't let that cherubim, with the flaming swords deter you from entering in.

Before our father Adam, ate of that other tree, He received his direction from God. The Lord said to them, "Be *fruitful*, and *multiply*, and *replenish* the earth, and *subdue* it: and have *dominion* over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."⁽¹⁾ *After* Adam ate from the tree, he seemed to "know" something; he "saw" something ...he seemed to be in possession of some particular "knowledge." What did Adam know? He *knew* that he was naked. Let's see if I have this right: Our father Adam, had broken league with the Sovereign and in its stead, Adam had this "knowledge." A bit reminiscent of the fairy tale "Jack and the bean stalk." You might be too young to recall, that ..

abound... ⁽¹⁾

Then comes the questions, if the grace of God is made that much more luminous in contrast to my sin, then what is everyone complaining about? I mean, it looks like things are panning out right nicely on God's behalf. Imagine with me that the apostle Paul walks right up behind this "gentleman" while the words are still being formed in his mouth. And asked, what are you saying then? Shall we continue in sin, so that the grace of God may continue to be abundant towards us? Perish the thought!!!!

Just as much as God's grace is abundant towards us regarding our sin; so too, is the fact that we have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless we live. So my question to you, "oh vain man," says Paul. "How shall we who are dead to sin, live any longer in it? How's that possible? I imagine that the law of death would be consistent in both realms (natural and spiritual); likewise its consequences. So when a man is dead in this world, he doesn't live any longer in it. He does not pay bills; the government doesn't raise his tax base.

Anymore today, it has come to be the case that the concept of "*what is sin*" has become somewhat nebulous, murky, cloudy, obscure, escaping definition almost. Perhaps it is because we are yet "sons of Adam." We stand, even now, at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; wanting ourselves to "know" good and evil, by our own definition. So when Paul, through the scriptures asks us, "... shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" There is this long pause. Because internally, we are asking a question that is in the same vein as that asked by one former president, "*what do you mean by ... sin?*"

Well "sin" is that thing which seeks to usurp authority over God and everything that He stands for; sin seeks to flex its muscle in the face of God. Sin is the transgression of the law of God.⁽²⁾ "Sin" is that disposition of heart which says within that "I am free to choose. I mean, I do have freedom of will, do I not." All unrighteousness is sin.⁽³⁾ Please be duly advised, that none of this way of thinking is born of faith. Says Paul, "Whatsoever is not the fruit of, or conceived by or wrought by Christ-centered, God-ward, small albeit pure faith; is "sin."⁽⁴⁾

"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" I guess we can see by now that this question is not going anywhere. We may elect to forego answering it now, but ... daily, hourly, moment-by-moment, it beckons to us; "... what will be your response?" As we affirm within

ourselves, "How can we? For those who are dead to sin ... categorically ... unequivocally ... c-a-n-n-o-t continue therein.

For when we were baptized into Jesus Christ, there was formed, in us, an umbilical covenant with the Living God; where we draw our life from and have our being in Him. For whosoever is born of God is not predisposed to sin; is not pre-committed to sin; does not make provisions for the flesh to obey its demands.⁽⁵⁾

For in as much as we submit to this death (*as a way of life*), so too do we partake of the resurrection life of Christ. We become, in the words of one of my Spiritual Leaders, "*Walking Examples of Liberated Lives.*" We become manifest expressions of the newness of Life. *If ... (big IF) ... we have been planted together in the likeness of our Lord's death, then we shall likewise participate in the fruit of His resurrection.* "What is the fruit of His resurrection?" you ask. The fruit of His resurrection is the reality of the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelling in us, quicken our mortal bodies with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.⁽⁶⁾

In the presence of this reality, we are able to make a passing grade in the *Arithmetic of Life*. We are able to add, subtract, multiply and divide.

Addition

We very really are able to **add** to our faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁽⁷⁾

Subtraction

We are able to **subtract** ourselves from fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.⁽⁸⁾

Multiplication

As we walk in this way, God is delighted to make all grace abound toward us; so that we always have all sufficiency in all things, and that we may abound to every good work. We would be fruitful and **multiply**. And God would **multiply** our seed sown, and increase the fruits of our righteousness

to His glory.⁽⁹⁾

Division

We will be diligent to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.⁽¹⁰⁾

And so the question continues to stare us squarely in the face. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth, grant us hearts that will give the biblical, God-honoring response: "God forbid!!!" <cc>

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

⁽¹⁾ Romans 5:15, 17, 20

⁽²⁾ 1 John 3:4

⁽³⁾ 1 John 5:17

⁽⁴⁾ Romans 14:23

⁽⁵⁾ 1 John 3:9; Romans 13:14

⁽⁶⁾ Romans 8:11; Galatians 5:22-23

⁽⁷⁾ 2 Peter 1: 5-8

⁽⁸⁾ Ephesians 5:11

⁽⁹⁾ Genesis 1:28; 2 Corinthians 9:8, 10

⁽¹⁰⁾ 2 Timothy 2:15

How Do I?

How do I love the Lord with all my heart, soul, mind and strength?

How do I perform that which is good?

For as long as I am under that law to my first husband, I am incapable of fulfilling the law to my 2nd husband. Although I know that the one is right and the other is not. I cannot be wed to the 2nd husband; until the 1st husband is dead to me; and I to him.

For I will know that he is dead to me, when he calls and I cannot hear him (as such). And I know that I am dead to him, when he calls and I do not answer. (jcw)

(Romans 6:1+)

- JoAnn C. White

Many of the changes we've experienced in 2012 were turbulent. Some may have even seemed to be negative. Personally, due to the constant changes God took me through (from day one in 2012), by the end of the third quarter, I was almost completely exhausted. Then, He told me that I could not afford to faint because He had more for me.

Once again, He kept His word. Fourth quarter of 2012 was the culmination of the major changes during the year. Time would fail for me to share all of the details. And, I realize each of you have stories to tell that illustrate the transitions you have experienced.

Having said all of this, what is the word for 2013?

I was reading recently in the book of II Samuel, specifically chapter 7. An interesting event is recorded in the first verse. It says that God gave King David "rest from all of his enemies." This is a powerful statement. You will recall that King David was a man of war. He was constantly at war with one nation or another. But, here, scripture says God gave him rest.

What does it mean for God to give rest? If we diligently search the scriptures we would find several places where God gave rest to His leaders and/or His people. And, in each situation we find that certain things began to happen during periods of God-given rest. For one, the people of God began to build. God would give the people rest in order to establish them to do the work He had in mind.

In some of the biblical communities God blessed the people to plant, create irrigation systems, do art, build houses and temples, set up schools, develop language, and so much more. It's amazing what can be done when we are not constantly fighting minute-by-minute.

This is where I want to share what God gave me as the mantra for 2013. You can see for yourself if it matches what He has placed in your spirit and/or what is being said in your local congregation.

God told me that for 2013 He will do two things with the people of God (that are ready and who will obey).

1: God will establish us

2: God will grow us

Let's start with the first item. Webster tells us that

“establish” means to make firm or stable, and to give permanency to someone or something. It also means to cause to grow.

“Grow” means to develop into maturity, increase and expand.

God said to me that the transition on 2012 was meant to lay the foundation for Him to establish His kingdom in the earth in 2013. Now, you might say that God has always been doing this. And, you would be correct. However, the “earth” He was referring to is the earthen vessel He has redeemed to Himself. That would be us, His people.

Last year God gave us a number of directives. He told us from day one that He would bring shifts and changes in our lives and in our environments. He let us know that He expected us to draw near to Him and to put off things that did not align us with His will. For those of us who have done this, we are well positioned to walk into this new season equipped to experience the establishment and growth God is talking about.

Here are some of the things we can expect to see and experience.

Traction: God has said that He will give super natural traction to the work He has called us to do. Last year we began to dabble in some of the things God had placed on our hearts. Many of us did not make much headway (partly due to the constant changes God was taking us through). But, last year was our “dry run.”

Now, it’s time to “go live.”

What were you trying to get going in 2012 that just didn’t seem to move forward? Whatever it was, get ready, in 2013 it is going to take off. Why? God had determined the timing for establishment and growth and that timing is 2013.

Partnerships: God has said that He will grant us the partnerships we need to do the work He has called us to do. This includes our personal lives, families, churches, schools, organizations, and our communities. He will leave no stone unturned.

We have to be ready to work with people that many of us thought we would never have the opportunity to interact with. In 2013 God will “bring us before great men (KJV).” This means He will cause us to engage on levels and with people and entities that were formerly

out of our reach. People we were not able to connect with before will “all of a sudden” be accessible to us.

Finally, **Resources:** In 2013 God has determined to bring us into the resources to take the work He has placed in our hearts to a higher level. He will fund what He has called us to do. Believe it!

Now, this all sounds very exciting - as long as we are talking about what God will do. What about what we have to do, yes, this is a necessary part of the discourse.

God summed up our part in one word “follow.” He wants us to follow His lead. When a door has been opened to us, we step into that door. When He brings a partnership opportunity that we know is in line with what God has been ushering us to do, go with it.

Don’t be afraid to walk with God in this new season. He is taking us completely out of our comfort zone. Whatever was normal for us last year, we will need to forget about it. In 2013 we will engage with God in ways we never imagined. The only thing that would hold us back would be our own fear.

Take a moment to catch your breath. Now, jump into what God has in store for 2013.

- Don’t be afraid.
- Don’t be ashamed.
- No need to explain yourself to people who are not in alignment with God.
- And don’t apologize.

Go forth in the name of the Lord and allow Him to establish His kingdom in your earthen vessel and in the earth (environment)! ^[LL]

Joyce M. White, LMSW

How to Live ...

The prohibitive directives in scripture do not teach us how to live. They teach us how NOT to live.

Telling someone how not to live does not, therefore educate them on HOW to live. So we see how that the law was weak through the flesh.

Inspired while listening to one of my big brothers (in the gospel) 12/14/12 @ 9:32 AM

eyes. Allow me to briefly share with you what He has said to me. It is rich to my soul, and I pray that same richness for you.

RESPONSE

The Lord began to "open my eyes" by braiding together the following scriptures (among many others):

In your patience possess ye your souls. ⁽³⁾

And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou delivered unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord⁽⁴⁾.

... Jesus answering said ... Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. ⁽⁵⁾

EXPOSITION

- *By patience we possess our souls*
We may have possession of our souls, through the exercise of patience and endurance. What does it mean to have possession of our souls, in this age? Sometimes it's easier to get at thing by first identifying "what it is not." On that note, let's look at what it means to not have possession of our souls. When we forsake patience (longsuffering), which is a fruit of the Spirit, ⁽⁶⁾ at length our souls come under the jurisdiction of the prince of this world. For it is in our patience that we are taught and turned into sons. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God. And it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.* Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. *And every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure.* ⁽⁷⁾ Translation (*jcw style*): Now have we the *title* of son-ship. But it is not presently evident within us, what is the mature expression of this coveted son-ship. For those of us who long to have a perfect knowledge and apprehension of this reality, we purify ourselves; even as He is pure. "Purity" in this expression implies an absence of "mixture or compromise."

"Purity" here intimates a singleness of focus. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore your eye be single, your whole body shall be full of light, pure. ⁽⁸⁾

- *Faithful over a few, ruler over many*
The master said to his servant, "Because you have been faithful over the few things that I have placed in your care. Now have jurisdiction over more." Or said otherwise, "because you have been faithful over that which was mine, I'll give you something of your own."
- *Render ... to God the things that are God's*
I believe that we "get" what is said to belong to Caesar. What bears more attention is what belongs to God. King David said, *"My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget Thy law."* Said otherwise, "My soul is continually under the jurisdiction of my will. It is within my hand to do with it as I will. But I do not forget Your law." ⁽⁹⁾

"Why?" King David, "What does your soul and God's law have to do with each other? So King David replies, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." ⁽¹⁰⁾ Now I know that we "love to hate the Law." But don't tear up your raffle ticket just yet; it may still be a winner. The Law of God, when received by faith and applied to the soul, so fits the soul for service to God;" and that in concert with the blood of the Lamb and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

We may render to God a soul that is useful to the "honoring of His name, the ushering in of His Kingdom and the doing of His will, when ... and only when that soul has been discomfited (from its temporal use) and fitted (for its transcendent use), through a right apprehension and application of the Law of God.

Light: The use of the term "Law" here points to the encapsulation or distillation of the Ten Commandments. I know... I know... I did that on purpose. We have lived in such a "lawless" society, for so long that the idea of us being under any type of law or governance chaffs us. But hang in there, there is light at the end of this tunnel. The expression of the Law that was "shelved" (*to which I am NOT referring*) was the 613 statutes, ordinances, precepts that explicated the initial 10 (*to which I am referring*). And that, only in so much as it has been breathe again to us in Jesus' discussion with his disciples, on "What is the great

commandment."

Jesus said unto him, You shall at all times, and in every conceivable way (i.e. shalt) love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. But I'll go you one better, the second is just like it. You shall at all times, and in every conceivable way (i.e. shalt) love your neighbor as if your neighbor's soul were your very own. Everything that the Law and the prophets ever said (or ever will say) can be encapsulated or distilled into these two commandments.⁽¹¹⁾ For those of you who STILL aren't convinced, let us reframe the statement. At no time (in the past, or in the present or in the future), are we directed or allowed to forego loving God and loving our neighbor (as described by or LORD above); and remain guiltless.

The issue of the "Law" being thus settled, let's talk about the concept of the soul being "on loan." For the sake of this discourse, the definition of "what constitutes the soul" bears some illumination.

It is my present understanding, that the "soul" comprises the faculties of the mind, will and emotions (or sensibilities); which, further, constitutes "Who" we really are. While you may respectfully *beg to differ*, I am sharing this because what follows stands in the shadow of this conception of the soul (*although it may seem at times to challenge even this definition*).

A LOAN

This is going to be raggedy and altogether rife with suspicion, but it should serve to deliver the message. The Lord has shared something with me, in such a way as to defy description. Many of the realities that He has disclosed, on this topic, do not translate seamlessly. Thus I am saddled with the arduous responsibility of delivering a message that is, itself, much larger than the package into which it is being forced (i.e., a right and proper use of the English language). I feel much like a USPS delivery person trying to deliver the "light of the Sun" to a specific address on planet earth. You get the point. Here goes....

Presently, our soul belongs to God.

It is an object or artifact of God's possession. Sometimes we think that because we have what we like to call "freedom of will" it therefore means that our wills themselves belong to us. I'd like respectfully to challenge that notion (or shall I say misconception). "All

souls are Mine," says the Lord.⁽¹²⁾ This fact is one of the things that qualify Him to dispose of the unwilling, unbelieving soul, in hell. Our mind (or intellect) also belongs to God. Which is why He did not flinch when He spoke of our duty or of our obligation to love Him with all of our mind. He may legitimately require this of us because our mind belongs to Him. You may also recall that He has promised to keep our minds in perfect peace, as long as they are "locked and loaded" on Him.⁽¹³⁾ Any departure from this way; yields the unwieldy fruit of confusion and depression; because our minds were created for Him. And they were given (or shall I say loaned to us) for that purpose, solely. Our emotions, our passions, our ambitions, our adoration all belong to God (especially in this world). We often refer to the "heart" when referencing these expressions. And even this has not escaped the mandate of God; as we are told (commanded even) to love God with the full weight and breadth of our hearts.

In summary, the soul belongs to God.

While we are here, in this present world, the faculties of our being have been loaned to us. They have been placed under our jurisdiction for the time being; like so many talents. And our Lord has gone on a far journey, to see how we would dispose of our duty to Him, concerning the things that He has left to our discretion.

And we, in the foolishness of our heart and mind, dare to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. We think that we are landlords, over these faculties, when we are barely husbandmen in a vineyard that belongs to Another. We think that because they are IN our possession, that they verily ARE our possessions. I'd ask you to revisit that notion.

The soul and all of its faculties BELONG to God.

We are called to be faithful over that which is Another's. If properly so executed, our LORD has promised to make us rulers over much, much more. I'm sorry, what was that question? Oh!! You're asking how does "being made to rule over much more have to do with our soul? The soul ... you say "is what it is, right?"" Well ... Is it? Or is it possibly a partitioned expression of something so much greater; over which we may at length receive possession. The Lord will give us full possession of these faculties, when ... and only when we have

learned to employ them solely for His pleasure. Right now, we're not doing such a good job. We were created in the image of God, to express Him in ways that our feeble minds cannot even begin to approach. Even science seems to believe that we presently use less than 10% of the full capacity of our minds. Even their instruments of measurement are altogether temporal and flawed, they are on to something. What then of our emotions (et al) and what then of our wills?

We could go on for some time here. But here is a nice place to park, for now.

Our soul belongs to God. It is on loan to us (for some three score and ten years ... and some change); to see how we will exercise our dominion concerning it. We have been given an Owner's Manual, called the Bible. Please don't misread the name; the Owner is God. Pardon this use of language: we are to take the "Law" and convert the soul with it. If we will learn how to bring the soul into just the right relationship with the precepts of the Constitution of the Kingdom (Bible), we may offer it to God for His use. We may by this exercise, say "Lord, your five talents have gained other five." And He, with all holy delight, may say in reply "Well done, My good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over that which is Mine. It is My pleasure to now make you ruler, and to give to you that which you may rightly have possession of ... your soul."⁽¹⁴⁾ It's in our patient continuance that we come into possession our own your soul.⁽¹⁵⁾ <(BC)>

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

⁽¹⁾ Luke 16:12

⁽²⁾ 1 Timothy 3:5

⁽³⁾ Luke 21:19

⁽⁴⁾ Matthew 25:15-30

⁽⁵⁾ Mark 12:15-17

⁽⁶⁾ Galatians 5:22-23

⁽⁷⁾ 1 John 3:2-3; Matthew 5:8

⁽⁸⁾ Matthew 6:22

⁽⁹⁾ Psalm 119:109

⁽¹⁰⁾ Psalm 19:7

⁽¹¹⁾ Matthew 22:37-40, *with slightly adaptations*

⁽¹²⁾ Ezekiel 18:4

⁽¹³⁾ Isaiah 26:3

⁽¹⁴⁾ Matthew 25:15-30

⁽¹⁵⁾ Luke 21: 19; Romans 2:6-7

Jack the son of a poor widow, was supposed to 1) Take his mother's cow to market, and 2) Exchange it for money that would support the family's needs. Much like Adam's Father telling him 1) Be fruitful, multiply, replenish, subdue and have dominion, and Oh! 2) Stay away from that tree.

Two long stories, shortened ... both Jack and Adam are distracted in their duties. Jack ends up with a handful of worthless beans. And Adam ends up with a head full of worthless "knowledge," from which the systems of this world are spawn. The rest is history.

Hhhmmm, Now what value did this new found "knowledge" afford our father Adam? After he had eaten of the forbid, was Adam more (*or less*) encouraged or empowered to be fruitful, multiply, replenish, subdue and have dominion? It seems that quite the contrary is true. Adam, instead of taking dominion; was prone to be fearful and to hide. All of this as a result of this newly acquired, coveted, costly but worthless "knowledge." And so it has been propagated throughout the ages; the more we "know" the more we fear. Or worse yet, we "go where angels fear to tread." This is the case, because apart from God, "knowledge" whether of good or of evil can only *inform*. It cannot provoke life; it cannot draw down the Life of God. And it is only by the life of God that we are able to be free from fear, fruitfully multiply, subdue and truly exercise dominion.

I'm not telling you something that you don't already know from personal experience. When God *speaks*, and we *do*, we *live*. Contrariwise, when we (apart from God) *think*, and we *do*, we *die*.

On the one hand, God speaks, and Adam (translated: *we*) have the authority and ability to live and move and have our being in Him. On the other hand, we eat from "that other tree" and we are cut off from the rights and privileges of having our being in Him. Having our understanding darkened and being alienated from the life of God through ignorance, because of the blindness of their heart.⁽²⁾ We are left to forge our own existence. And what we end up with is what we have on parade today; a world that refuses to acknowledge the Sovereignty of God; a world that must now define its own "being."

The enemy sold you a Mercedes; but when you got to the garage you found that it was a bicycle (with one flat

tire). While it is a viable mode of transportation, it is a long way from being a Mercedes. So Adam, the enemy told you that you would be like God; being able of yourself to discern between what is good and that which is evil?

Father Adam, what he neglected to enlighten you on (perhaps because the enemy didn't himself know this) was that God was *never* interested in a man who could *himself* discern between good and evil. For, good and evil, are in one sense not worth discerning, as they are very much alike; and are temporally of the same origin.

What is being said here? Are we saying that all of a sudden we learn that we're *not* supposed to "think" at all? Or that we are to abandon the faculty of our intellect to every wind of doctrine that comes. God forbid. Perhaps it's more the case that no legitimate, valuable thinking occurs until God has spoken. All thinking that precedes the word of God to us; tends, and intends, to usurp authority over our "doing;" resulting in *works of the flesh* versus *works of faith*. Naturally the "works of faith" arise out of the fact that God has spoken. God speaks, we believe, we therefore "do."

In summary we may see that the mind is a faculty that is intended to receive direction from the Living God in order to function properly. Where God has not first spoken, the mind does not, nor can it function properly. The mind is then left to the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which has already been judged.

Again, the mind is a terrible thing to waste. And a mind that operates based on the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is a waste.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. ⁽³⁾

"How?" you ask. See Paul's answer to the church at Ephesus (4:14-32).

Much love and respect. *-*LW**

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

⁽¹⁾ Genesis 1:28

⁽²⁾ Ephesians 4:18

⁽³⁾ Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:23

Are You Sure?

There is a healthy contemplation that drives us to check our commitment to our various relationships with others. While I have your attention may I ask another question? Do you ever wonder if you're really saved? I don't mean to intrude ... okay maybe I do intend to intrude. Do you contemplate your loyalty and commitment to your relationship "with Christ" very specifically? Respectfully, we are not talking here about your relationship with a religious institution. We're asking about a very up-close and personal relationship with the Person of Jesus Christ. The scriptures encourage us to periodically check our "fruit." We are admonished to work out your own soul's salvation with fear and trembling. ⁽¹⁾

I can just imagine Jesus standing before the fig tree, asking "Hey guys, what type of tree is this?"

His disciples replied (almost snickering), "My Lord, it's a fig tree." And Jesus asks again, "How can you tell, that this is a fig tree?"

His disciples reply again (almost bursting at the seams), "Teacher, we can tell by the leaves."

Jesus once again, "Okay, let Me ask you guys one more question ... what is the purpose of a fig tree, if it won't bear figs." They all fell silent.

Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, "Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit, My Father will remove. It will not be allowed to continue to make demands of (or trouble) the ground." ⁽²⁾ He looked at the disciples and walked away en route to Bethany. ⁽³⁾

So I ask again, how do we know that we have a personal covenant with God?

May I make a few suggestions on ways to discover the truth? ⁽⁴⁾

- 1. How does your covenant with Jesus Christ affect your concept of God and your attitude towards Him?**
- 2. How does your relationship with God affect your attitude towards Jesus Christ (Him as a Person and His Lordship over your life)?**
- 3. How does your covenant with God affect your attitude towards the Holy Scriptures?**
- 4. How does your relationship with Christ affect your attitude towards your "self-life" or your "flesh"?**
- 5. How does your covenant with Christ affect your relationship with and attitude towards your fellow Christians?**
- 6. How does your relationship with Jesus affect your relationship with and attitude towards the world?**
- 7. Last, but in no way least, how does your covenant with Jesus affect your attitude towards sin?**

Perhaps we should take the next couple of weeks or months and grapple with this? Try to answer each question thoroughly in light of the scripture's mandates on each of these respective relationships. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. ⁽⁵⁾

Be Sure!

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

(1) Philippians 2:12

(2) John 15:1-2; Luke 13:7

(3) Matthew 21:17-19

(4) Gleanings and adaptations from A.W. Tozer's Man: The Dwelling Place of God, p.62-68

(5) Hebrews 13:20-21

∞ **SUMMARY** ∞

The Chief Cornerstone



And so the question continues to stare us squarely in the face. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth, grant us hearts that will give the biblical, God-honoring response: "God forbid!!!!"

Boot Camp



While we are here, in this present world, the faculties of our being have been loaned to us. They have been placed under our jurisdiction for the time being; like so many talents. And our Lord has gone on a far journey, to see how we would dispose of our duty to Him, concerning the things that He has left to our discretion.

∞ **SUMMARY** ∞

The Leadership Corner

And so the question continues to stare us squarely in the face. "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth, grant us hearts that will give the biblical, God-honoring response: "God forbid!!!!"

. Living Waters



God has said that He will give super natural traction to the work He has called us to do. Last year we began to dabble in some of the things God had placed on our hearts. Many of us did not make much headway (partly due to the constant changes God was taking us through). But, last year was our "dry run."

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