

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 2012

You are worthy, Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for You have created all things, and for Your pleasure they are and were created. (Revelation 4:11 *KJV adapted*)

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Special Feature: Discipline (that 4-letter word)

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The Kingdom *focus and aim* of **discipline** (be it that of a child, or military, or academic, or religious) is one of Character.

Therefore, this *discipline* goes beyond the minimum *transactional* demands of *specifically strict or constrained* activities, to permeate the whole of life. Said otherwise, discipline, while it respects, the refusal of a third helping of dessert; it reaches to the whole of life's disposition to proper nutrition.

Imposed discipline must lead to self-discipline.

In a general sense, "self-discipline" is the ability to regulate conduct by principle and judgment rather than impulse, desire, high pressure, *habit*, *temptation*, *tradition* or social custom. It is basically the ability to *subordinate*.

Special Feature

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

Recognizing the Mothers

All scripture is KJV paraphrased.

Isn't it interesting how western society has determined when we celebrate the people in our lives? With that said, in the month of May there is a day set aside to celebrate people that carry (or carried) the mothering role, in our development. We are also aware that fathers are important and there is a day set aside in June to pay them respect. Incidentally, we are also at liberty to honor our loved ones any day we choose.

Let's, however, take this time to have a discussion about what it means to each of us to have (or have had) someone who did what they could to give us the kind of nurturing and support a "Mother" gives. Now with that said, we also know that some people have had individuals in the mothering role who have had a negative impact on their lives. So, let's start with this group. Do we know of women that had children and left them in trash cans? What about the women that aborted their babies? Then, there are the moms who chose to be crack addicts doing whatever it took to get their next high, including prostituting their children. Some of these moms were just children themselves when they had their babies.

What do we say about these women? Do we condemn them for their choices, or do we say things like, "forgive them because they were hurting?" As you can imagine, there are no easy answers. And, it won't do us any good

The Leadership Corner

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Love and *The Truth*



Melchisedec in Laodicea - VI

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

We have spoken at length concerning our role as priests in a Laodicean age of the church. We have come to see that the central problem with the church as she finds herself today is that she is *blind*. How blind is she? Jesus tells us that she is pitifully blind. And because she is blind, she is also poor, and naked. Now let's not get the idea that this blindness is morally neutral. She is not like a child who just doesn't know. She ought to know better.

The other problem with this blindness is this. If the church is related to Israel in any other way, we need to see that our blindness is just like theirs. Indeed all such blindness has the same core. Man was not created blind; man was created to know God. The spiritual blindness of man has always been the result of judgment by God. Blindness, specifically spiritual blindness, is judgment. Blindness comes directly from God.

Remember Romans chapter 1.

*For, the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Because, that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them...when they knew God, they did not worship him as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools...**even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.***

The Chief Cornerstone



Hallowed Be Thy Name

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

Admittedly, I don't even know what to call this, but here is its origin. I was spending some time in prayer and study before the Father the morning of February 17, 2012. I asked the Father, how I should pray; in light of the impending spiritual warfare ahead.

He lead me to 2 Chronicles 7:13-14 (again). So I began to read it before Him. In the middle of that, He pointed me to Matthew 6:9+, before I could turn to that scripture; He pointed me to 1 John 5:14-15. After a bit of silent direction, the Lord began to do this "thing." He began (if I may say it this way); to almost braid these scriptures together. *In my own words*: He talked to me as if these three scriptures were (in one sense) expressions of the same principles of truth.

I'll list the scriptures and tell you what followed, pretty much like He gave it to me.

SCRIPTURES

If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; if My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways (repent; withdraw or circumcise); then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:13-14)

Encapsulation:

- God says of Himself, "If ... My people ... My name ... My face; then I forgive ... I heal.
- God says of us, "You humble ... you pray ... you seek ... you repent."

*... Our Father which art in heaven.
Hallowed be Your name; Your kingdom*



Boot Camp

Do After Their Words – Not After Their Deeds



Do as I "say" and not as I "do" (Part 2)

Then spoke Jesus to the multitude and to his disciples; saying, the scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.⁽¹⁾

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.⁽²⁾

I must be transparent and say that last month as we ended the article, in this column; the Lord said that next month (which of course, would be this particular article) He would show us how Matthew 23:3 and Romans 10:17 were related. I don't mind telling you that that statement scared me. Because at that time (and frankly now) I don't know how those two scriptures are related, I had absolutely NO knowledge. And as I am preparing this article, I'm praying Father "Help. I have no idea which way to go from here." I must also say that it is not at all uncommon for the Lord to point me in a particular direction and send me *walking*; without a map or a compass or a destination address. Frankly this is one of those times. So I'll begin where we left off and trust that along the way, the Father will do what He always does, "show up."

Glossary (you will see the following exchanges):

- You may see the phrase "do as I do" used interchangeably with the phrase "*stimulation of the visual cortex*;" because in order to do as another does; it requires the faculty of sight.
- You may see the phrase "do as I say" used interchangeably with the phrase "*employment of the intellect*;" because in order to go from "hearing" to "doing" requires translation via the faculty of the mind or intellect.

In the previous edition, the Lord said, "You could look at the concepts of "do as I say" versus "do as I do" like they were two paths in a road. They would be two completely different pathways. And the "do as I do"

Nutrition, Health & Wellness

◆◆ ◆◆ ◆◆ ◆◆ ◆◆ ◆◆ My Life! ... A Vineyard? (Part 3)

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. (Genesis 1:29)

For those of you who are joining us this month, here is where we are. About the February 2012 edition of this column, we received a wakeup call. We had previously entertained the concept of nutrition, health and wellness from a purely physical and temporal perspective; then the phone rang. The Lord said to me (very specifically) what amounted to the following:

Bodily exercise is profitable (but its ROI is comparatively small): but godliness is profitable in all things, having promises that are to be realized both in the life that now is, and that which is to come.⁽¹⁾

He proceeded to refocus our efforts. And the perspective that He has taken to enlighten us is the analogy of our lives as a vineyard. I know ... this is a first for me too. Now, for those of you who have been with us along this journey, here are a few mile markers:

- Particular illuminations of the objects of the vineyard (hedge, **winepress**, tower, etc.)
- How the servants draw out of us the harvest of the vineyard
- Details of the wickedness of the husbandman
- And much more

We took a brief look at the hedge, answering the questions: *what is the hedge* and *what is its purpose*. This month, we'll see what the Lord will tell us about the *winepress*.

Repeat: The **winepress** can be identified by a number of different things or artifacts. For the most part, the winepress is our internal system whereby we "make sense" of our life, our world, and our selves. The *mind* or the *intellect* is a prominent and central part of this winepress; it also receives (and in many ways it should receive) inputs from sources of influence external to itself.⁽²⁾

There are sooo many wonderful ways to expisit or

As we look at discipline in the area of the appetites, we see the value of the ability to subordinate the body and its physical appetites to the service of the mind. Now... now before the thoughts spin out of orbit by this common use of terms (let us take counsel from the Word of God):

Regarding "... the value of the ability to subordinate the body and its physical appetites..."

Paul says, (in two places): I do not frustrate the grace of God ... I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by *some measure of self-deception*, when I have preached to others, I myself should be *lost*.⁽¹⁾ With help from a Concordant View of the Original Scriptures (via the Interlinear translation of the original text) and a little bit of creative license; Paul is saying: I trouble or belabor myself or put myself under great duress to bring my body (with its appetites) into slavery to the principles of God, which I teach. I am watchful, lest I through arrogant self-deception disqualify myself from the mandates of the ordinances of the Word of God. I would thereby make myself a TEACHER ONLY of the word of God and not place upon myself the pre-requisite responsibility of also being a DOER of that same Word. This resulting at length, in the loss or compromise of my own soul; it being yet unproven by the word that I myself teach.

What's that?!? Is the hair standing up on the back of your neck? Which phrase was it that pricked you? Was it the use of the term "duress;" or the intimation of the phrase "loss or compromise of my own soul?" The former I'll deal with presently. The latter I'll take a rain check on; but will most assuredly address it in due season. Meanwhile you may certainly research the original text from which the word "castaway" has been translated.

Repeat: "*Paul is saying: I put myself under great duress to bring my body, with its appetites into slavery, to the principles of God which I teach.*"

Regarding the term *duress*; agreed, it is a very strong term. But the light of it is that "duress" is such constraint or coercion as will make "void," the contract between the flesh and sin. Now I'll take creative license here; often we applaud ourselves on having made great sacrifice for the "cause of Christ;" you know, the likes of "going to church" or helping the "widow and the orphan." I'll chide you when I say "too little, too late." The former acts of social duty (*going to church*) we ought to have done, and not to have left the latter acts of personal obligation

(*helping the widow and the orphan*) undone. The enemy and the common man have taken the prize on these acts of kindness and duty. And they will go to great pangs to let you know it, trumpet and all. But Paul says in one place, that we have not yet resisted until "sweat falls as great drops of blood;" in our efforts to strive against sin.⁽²⁾ The occasional "No, thank you" to sin, does not quality. It is with this reality in mind that Paul enslaves the appetites of his body to the service of the call of God upon his life; which he teaches and clearly sees his personal responsibility to also perform.

"... to the service of the mind."

As you can appreciate, we're not talking about the carnal mind; for it is enmity with God. The Lord has promised to put His laws in our mind. So then with the mind I, myself, serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.⁽³⁾ Said otherwise, "...when I bring myself subject to the understanding of my mind, I serve the law of God. For this my conscience heartily approves. Contrariwise, if I allow myself to be subjugated to the unintelligent, growling, beastly appetites of the flesh, I have no other choice but to serve the law of sin. There is a very real sense in which the law of God will ONLY govern through the faculty of the mind or intellect. The *intellect* is then responsible for bringing the *emotions* and *will* into subjection to the ordinances of God. Think of the Mind as the High Priest, having access through the Spirit to the Most Holy Place to receive the oracles of God; whereas the emotions are like the children of Israel, standing outside of the tabernacle waiting to see what "thus says the Lord," sometimes obeying and other times not so much so. The *will* is simply the vehicle of activity; provoked either by the High Priest or by an unruly congregation.

At the precipice of a paradigm shift (regarding overcoming a long-held habit): one gentleman said "... at that moment it became a matter of conscience with me. So I stopped." It was just that simple. He hadn't touched, the once beloved thing, since. Another gentleman (at that same intersection) said "it's not a question of *will* power, but of *won't* power ... "No thank you, I *won't* have any..." or "No thank you, I *won't* do that..." These represent the bringing of the appetites into subjection to what we KNOW to be that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

Imposed discipline must lead to "self-discipline"

Let's meddle a bit with the concept of "self-discipline." In this particular context, let's take a departure from the colloquial, secular definition of the term. Here, "self-discipline" is not like self-righteousness: a thing to be scorn. In this context (very specifically), self-discipline has within its purview the government of the Living God. It is the metamorphosis within the Kingdom that assists the transformation from "servant-hood to sonship."

As in the military: one may enter in upon its ranks wearing a Walton Payton or John Elway throwback jersey; Ralph Lauren Black Label jeans; Puma tennis shoes by Hussein Chalayan; a Movado or Suunto Elementum Terra watch, and a pair of Juicy Couture or Persol Vintage Ratti 806 sunglasses. However, not long upon crossing the threshold of the Kingdom, one is (or ought to be) issued regulation gear, down to the underwear (as enumerated in the Word of God). The picture of the foregone, protracted statement is that there are principles, statues, precepts and ordinances by which the citizens of the Kingdom are governed. Interesting point, they are NOT the same principles by which the world governs (or not) itself. These precepts are not the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Instead, they are plucked straight from the tree of Life (you know, the other tree in the midst of the Garden).

When and where these drastic adjustments are requisite; be sure that you cannot substitute a cup of sugar for a teaspoon of salt. By and large, it will be the day-by-day disciplines in many little things that garner for one the mantle of true discipleship. In truth, we may say that the finest display of such discipline is not the spectacular achievement but the permanent adjustment of *our way of life*; adapted line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept, precept upon precept. Here a little giving and forgiving; there a little submission and humility.⁽⁴⁾

Disclaimer: It is not intended to be implied that "discipline or self-discipline" is an alternative for a holy, godly way of life. But it can make the road easier when you systematically bring the flesh and its appetites into subjection to the dictate of the Kingdom.

I admonish you to begin a life of godly discipline. Without it (no matter how subliminal), it is the enemy's goal to have you "tossed about by every wind of doctrine" and chasing every rainbow. There is a way of the Kingdom by which we are to honor our Lord and

Sovereign. Enter in upon that way, and continue in it.

Respect.

(Inspired by *The Disciplined Life – The Mark of Christian Maturity* by Richard S. Taylor, Bethany House, 1962, pp 30-31, with considerable adaptations)

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ Galatians 2:21a; 1 Corinthians 9:27

⁽²⁾ Romans 8:7; Hebrews 8:10; 12:4

⁽³⁾ Romans 7:25

⁽⁴⁾ Isaiah 28:10

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to try to simplify the issues many have faced with the "mothers" in their lives that may not warrant celebration.

I do have a suggestion. I submit that we can acknowledge the people who have provided us with positive contributions, even though there are some people who do not fit into this category (whether or not they held the formal title of "mother"). We also know that some of the people we celebrate had no real claim to motherhood in our lives. They may have been neighbors, friends, extended family members, teachers, and the list goes on.

I have another question. Is it biblical to celebrate people (and "mothers" in particular for this month's discussion)? Let's see what the word of God has to say.

Exodus 20:12 says, "Honor your father and mother; that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives to you." Ephesians 6:2 goes on to add that this is the first commandment "with promise."

We see here that God not only wants us to give honor to our parents, He *commands* us to do so. Now, we are reminded that in our discussion, we are focusing on the people who have carried or shared the "mother" role in a positive way in our lives. This does not mean that these people were our biological

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mothers.

Can we take a moment to think about who these positive people are (or were)? I'll start. Growing up, I was fortunate to have a biological mother that loved her children. While she may not have been college-educated, her heart was big enough to not only love her children, but many other children in the neighborhood. She hugged and kissed us, cooked for us, and made us read our little bible books (even when we didn't want to). She prayed for and with us. And, it was because of her example, that I gave my heart to God.

I also had an aunt. She was my mother's sister. She died when I was a young adult. I loved her like a mother. She took care of me when my mother wasn't able to. She taught me things I had never heard of. And, she treated me like I was her daughter.

Finally, I have my sister. While she is only one year older than me (biologically), growing up, she was a mother hen. She protected me. In school, she would fight anyone that tried to harm me. She provided for me. When I wanted little treats that my parents could not afford, somehow my sister found a way to get them for me. And, when I was afraid, my sister was fearless.

In my mind, these women were the collective "mother" I will always cherish.

Now, what about you? May I encourage you take a few moments to consider who were the nurturers, caregivers, and mentors you might celebrate as "mothers" in your life? Then, at some point (this month or anytime throughout the year) you may want to show these people just how much you appreciate them.

As for the people who held the "mother" role that seemingly had a negative impact on our lives, I say, "Don't waste another moment of energy on them in thought or in deed." Life is too short to give time to memories or situations that don't move us forward. Thank God that He has kept us, and provided for us other people that we can celebrate.

Let the festivities begin! [LL]

Joyce White, LMSW

Spiritual blindness is **NOT**, I repeat **NOT**, the result of a lack of the knowledge of God. Spiritual blindness is a result of the suppression of the knowledge of God. This takes the form of rejection of the knowledge of God. This is spelled u-n-r-e-p-e-n-t-a-n-c-e.

Isaiah 59:2 says it this way: *But our iniquities have separated between us and our God, and our sins have hid His face from us, that He will not hear. Our hands are defiled with blood, and our fingers with iniquity; our lips have spoken lies, and our tongue has muttered perverseness. None calls for justice, nor any pleads for truth; we trust in vanity, and speak lies; we conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity... WE GROPE FOR THE WALL LIKE THE BLIND, AND WE GROPE AS IF WE HAD NO EYES, WE STUMBLE AT NOONDAY AS IN THE NIGHT...*

When you have a moment, do a quick search (through the Bible) for spiritual "blindness." What I believe that you'll find is interesting; it is most always directly from God to a rebellious, unrepentant people. If Jesus says we are blind, we have been ripe for judgment for a while. The grace of God is truly abundant towards us.

I have a few questions...

- Why don't we look like the church in the book of Acts? (Not so much culturally, but spiritually.)
- Why does our version of the gospel seem powerless to change our hearts?
- Why does being "filled with the Spirit" (today) NOT endue us with power like it did in the early church? It's certainly NOT because we don't need the same type of power that they needed. We do! Very desperately!!!
- Why is the church so much like the world as to be nearly indistinguishable from it?
- Why are we, who are called Christ's, just as divorce-prone as sinners; just as in love with the world as sinners; just as saturated with entertainment as sinners?

- Why do we listen to the same music and watch the same movies?
- Why do we have just as much an issue with anger and other distasteful attitudes?
- Why are we depressed?
- Why is there just as much pornography in “Christian” homes as in sinners' homes?
- Why are we enslaved to our appetites, such that obesity plagues us as much as sinners?

Furthermore, why aren't we asking “Why?” continually, honestly, and earnestly before the Lord?

I believe I know why, we fit the description of Laodicea to a “T.” We are wretched, miserable, poor, and naked. And because we're also blind, we don't even know there's a problem. So then we call ourselves, “blessed and highly favored.”

Now is the time for repentance as never before. I am in need of it. You are in need of it. WE NEED IT!!!!

It is time to repent, believe, be baptized, and receive the Spirit, and then live our lives as ones led by the Spirit of God.

Let's be zealous, therefore, and repent. For whom He loves, He rebukes and chastens.

God speed. -LATT-

David L. White

I Beseech You Therefore Brethren...

...by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Romans 12:1-2 (KJV)

come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. (Matthew 6:9-13)

Encapsulation:

- God says of Himself, "My name ... My kingdom ... My will ... My power ... My glory.
- God says to us, "You hallow ... you seek first ... and do."

And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask any thing according to His will, He hears us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him. (1 John 5:14-15)

Encapsulation:

- God speaks to us of His Faithfulness ... His will ... His attention ... His gifts.
- God says to us, "Be confident ... align your petitions ... know that I hear ... know that I give."

This is the confidence that we have in Him: that He is our Heavenly Father; that we are His people and that we are called by His Holy name. We have a responsibility to honor His Holy name; humble ourselves; pray; seek His face; repent; look to Him for our daily bread; forgive and be forgiven; be led and delivered; align our petitions with His will and trust Him.

HIS WILL?

What is His will? (If I may be so bold as to say it this way.) "If we search the Bible cover to cover; or if we search the world from pole to pole; or if we search throughout the ages, nay even throughout the eons; I believe that we will find that the will of the Living God can be resolved into two expressions."

These two expressions constitute a peculiar dynamic; the one over against the other.

So dynamic are they, as to (*in mathematical terms*) cancel one another out (so to speak).
 So dynamic are they, as to (*in musical terms*) resonate.
 So dynamic are they, as to (*in physical terms*) strike a most interesting balance.

Disclaimer: I have *not* personally done this as yet; but I shall (going forward) measure things by this truth. I will weigh things in the balance of this scale. I'm telling you this only on the basis that it is what God has said to me; therefore I know it verily to be true. As yet I am not aware of any personal or empirical knowledge on my part concerning it. I am disclaiming this because I don't want you to look at me as if I'm the first "unicorn" that you have ever seen. If this is true (and it is TRUE) it is so ONLY because the Lord has revealed it so. I can stake no claim to it other than that I wholeheartedly believe it (knowing its origin).

That being now properly disclaimed...

THE WILL OF GOD HAS EVER SINCE AND WILL EVER MORE RESOLVE ITSELF INTO THE "SEEKING OF THE FACE OF GOD AND THE TURNING FROM OUR WICKED WAYS." IT IS INEXORABLE.

Everything resulting in the will of God being done (where *we* are involved) will issue from this dynamic duo. The will of God essentially is the establishment of His Kingdom (by means of seeking His face) and the subsequent (or consequent) destruction of the kingdom of the enemy (by means of our turning from our wickedness; i.e., repentance).

Our Lord said 1) repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand; and 2) that He came for the expressed purpose of destroying the works of the devil.⁽¹⁾ These things CANNOT have their place with us, without the seeking of the Lord's face AND the turning away from our wicked ways (repentance). These two Siamese twins are so inextricably intertwined that you cannot have the one without the other. Anyone who tells you

otherwise, you can tell them that I said that they should check their pedigree; because they very likely may be the son of the Father of lies.

The antithesis of this dynamic is so diabolical as to bring whole nations to their knees; ours included. You'll remember that it is *righteousness* that exalts a nation; whereas sin is a reproach to any people.
⁽²⁾ It may also be said this way ...

- What is *righteousness*, but the seeking of the face of God and a turning from our own ways?
- What is *sin*, but the refusal to do these two things?

If you comb through the ruins of any (dare I say EVERY) nation you'll find that the umbilical relationship between these two has been severed or destroyed. To try and seek the "face of God" without a commitment to turn from one's own wickedness is a blueprint for an idol god. Likewise, to try and turn from our wicked ways, without the prerequisite "seeking" of the face of God, is the epitome of the works of the Law.

I submit to you that the most powerful ammunition in the enemy's arsenal is just this: that we cease to seek the face of God and simultaneously that we DO NOT turn from our wicked ways. I'll wager you (and I'll put up my own money on this one) that these two realities are so jointed and integrated that the exact degree to which the one is absent, it is to this degree that the other is present. That is to say that to the exact degree and in like fashion as that we refuse to seek the face of God; even so we prevail in our wickedness; and vice versa. This particular law is "imposed" versus "strongly encouraged." I'd go so far as to say "immutably" so.

I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

The Lord says, "Look, it is not the case that My hands are short or that My arms are so weak that I cannot rescue you from the draught, or from the locust, or from the pestilence. It's not that My ears are so heavy or even that I'm so preoccupied that I *cannot* hear you. That's not it, at all. I want to hear you, I want to heal you and I want to deliver you. But because you won't forsake your wickedness;

you *cannot* properly seek My face. On top of which, your sins have hid My face from you. When My face is hidden; My ears don't work either. ⁽³⁾ You want to know why our prayers go unanswered. It's *not* because we're not screaming loud enough. Oh, we are screaming plenty loud; it's just that our iniquities are screaming louder."

You've probably seen the commercial where the stain on the guy's shirt is distracting the "listener." The "listener" sees the mouth of the "talker" moving. But he "hears" the words of the stain on the guy's shirt instead. Sound and fury void of significance. It is a confusing audible. And so no play is run.

You heard James ⁽⁴⁾ when he said that the double minded ought not to expect to receive anything from God. How is one double minded? One is double minded when he lives a life reprobate of obedience and still expects God to stop what He's doing whenever he prays.

SEEK HIS FACE?

So you're asking ...

Question: How do we seek the face of God?

Answer: By Hallowing His Name

Sound too simple? Impossible maybe? The scriptures teach that "he who comes to seek the face of God must first believe that He is the Sovereign Lord God; and that He rewards those who diligently hallow His name. ⁽⁵⁾

BREAK/FIX

Sometimes it's easier to discern how to "fix" a thing if we can learn how it was "broken," in the *first place*.

Take a walk with me, back to the *first place*, back to the Garden of Eden. Come on, it's okay. We can walk past the cherubim with the flaming sword; because the way into the most holy place has been opened to us by the Blood of the Lamb. ⁽⁶⁾

Here we are (that wasn't so bad, was it). No, you're not bleeding ... I checked, you're fine.

In the beginning one of the strategies of the enemy was to defame and discredit the Ethos of God. His name is representative of His Ethos (His character

and His authority).

In one "word" the serpent blasted both the character and authority of the Living God. The enemy said, "You shall NOT surely die." Translation: "God is not being honest (character); and He's not really going to kill you (authority). What's that again? What does *authority* have to do with the taking of one's life. Quite perceptive, you are.

There is a sense in which the *ability* to give life or take life (in all its forms & expressions) is the epitome of the expression of power (or authority). That is one reason that it is forbidden for us to take the life of another (except by Divine ordinance, we don't have the authority). Now you also see one of the reasons that human sacrifice is an occult ritual; because it is a false expression of power. In the heavens it is a foregone conclusion that the "giving or taking" of life is symbolic of "power/authority."

The Lord warned us not to fear the person who could hurt only the body. But to fear the One who has the authority (POWER) to destroy both the body and soul (composite life) in hell. ⁽⁷⁾

Side Track (smiling): We don't like to talk about "hell" do we? If we talked about it more, perhaps fewer people would end up there. Statistics will show that fewer people end up in holes and ditches with clearly marked signs; than those ditches where no sign or warning was posted. The scriptures are not far behind those statistics, as they teach that even a bird is less likely to fly into the net (of a fowler) that is clearly visible to it. ⁽⁸⁾ The deception that moved us away from "hell" as a topic is that "we don't want to scare or intimidate people. If it is true in the scriptures than it is AVOIDABLE; ought it not (for the sake of the souls of men) to be dealt with in its proper place."

Like it or not, novice and children are drawn with solemn warnings. After you have their attention you can teach them, thus provoking in them a reverence for God and respect for their fellow man. But few people are initially drawn by love. It's often either fear or pain that slows their feet long enough to arrest their attention. Love may then be sown thus yielding obedience. Even so, this fruit must first survive the stones, the thorns and the briars of the heart and of the life. The birthing of love, in the heart of mankind, has a protracted germination process.

Again we seek the face of God, by esteeming the holiness of His name. We hallow His name by being a humble, prayerful, and repentant people who are called by His name. When we are called by His name we say He is our refuge and our fortress.⁽⁹⁾ There is also a sense in which our obedience to the will of God, is representative of the coming of the Kingdom of God (in our lives specifically) and the hallowing of the name of God (in our hearts particularly). From here we have reason to petition the following:

- Daily bread
- Forgiveness
- Godly leadership
- Protection and deliverance
- Healing for the land

WHERE YOU FIND THE SEEKING OF THE FACE OF GOD AND REPENTANCE FROM PERSONAL SIN; VERILY THERE THE NAME OF GOD IS HALLOWED; THERE THE KINGDOM OF GOD IMMINENT AND (EMINENT); AND THERE THE WILL OF GOD IS PREVALENT.

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ Matthew 4:17; 1 John 3:8

⁽²⁾ Proverbs 14:34

⁽³⁾ Isaiah 59:1

⁽⁴⁾ James 1:7-8

⁽⁵⁾ Hebrew 11:6

⁽⁶⁾ Hebrews 10:19

⁽⁷⁾ Matthew 10:28

⁽⁸⁾ Proverbs 1:17

⁽⁹⁾ Psalm 91:2

pathway would be the easier of the two. Essentially because the "*do as I do*" pathway doesn't *require* the consent of the intellect. Nor yet does it *require* faith. And we all know that without faith it is impossible to please God. Now for some (the lame or the weak in particular), faith can enter into the equation when they follow the "*do as I do*" pathway.

Now for those of you who have not yet read the prior article (I suggest that you do so, when you have an opportunity). To begin here, could be something like piecing together a puzzle, without first assembling the frame (or the outermost pieces). You may, at length, complete the puzzle; but the journey, itself, may "leave something to be desired."

Let's look at the following scriptures:

- Many of the Corinthians *upon* hearing, believed...⁽³⁾
- Paul asked the Galatians this question: "He therefore that ministers ... and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"⁽⁴⁾
- Faith is the substance of things hoped for...but that which is seen is not hope.⁽⁵⁾ Therefore that which is seen is not faith either.
- Many "believed" in His name, when they saw the miracles ... but Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because he knew all men ... for he knew what was *in* man.⁽⁶⁾ He knew that it is not *in* man to believe as a result of what he sees; faith comes by "hearing," and hearing by the word of God.⁽⁷⁾
- So He said to the people "... you have seen Me, and still don't believe."⁽⁸⁾

So what is all of this noise about the "*do as I say*" versus "*do as I do*?" Great question, I wish I'd asked it (smiling). Please do not sleep on this next series of statements. One reason that we are illuminating the differences between these two pathways; is because the one (*do as I do*) does not require the consent of the intellect; whereas the other (*do as I say*) does. Whenever we deal with God (and/or the things of God), it is IMPERATIVE that we interpose the consent of the intellect. That's one reason. God is not intrigued by our "mindless" compliance or obedience, which is not obedience at all.

Boot Camp

continued on page 11

Another reason it is important to differentiate between the two pathways, is because it is the strategy of the enemy to carry us along the “do as I do” currents of “this life” *without* the consent of the intellect. You may recall that in Romans 7, Paul said that when we serve with the mind, we serve the law of God....” I submit to you that the flesh (for the most part) takes the “do as I do” pathway; as opposed to the “do as I say” pathway. I also submit that much of what is taught today is introduced through the vehicle of the “eye-gates” intentionally bypassing the intellect. Crazy statement, but I’m sure you will find it to be quite true: the conscience informs the intellect, not the eyes. The intellect is supposed to educate the eyes, if brought into perspective. But that often doesn’t happen. How often do we make decisions (or provoke the will to action) based solely on what we “see,” without the counsel of the intellect (mind)?

The “do as I do” route of behavioral influences requires that the eyes and the emotions (or the “want to”) inform and provoke the will to action. On the other hand, the “do as I say” pathway requires that the intellect enter into the consideration and counsels the will to action.

Look at how our children are being taught via stimulation of the visual cortex of the brain. While we think that this mode of teaching is easier for our children to learn; we forget that it’s easier because it’s cheaper. And cheaper is not always better, right? Look at how our young ladies are being taught to dress; by watching what is paraded up and down the runways (or worse yet, the streets) of our nations. The scriptures say, that we are supposed to teach our young ladies the virtue of modesty.⁽⁹⁾ But the stimulation of the visual cortex, preaches another gospel; which calls for a “do as I do” response.

Again Paul says to us in Romans 7 (v25) "...so then with the *intellect* I myself serve the law of God; but where the intellect (mind) is not consulted, I by the flesh serve the law of sin."

I'm going to push the envelope farther when I say that the “do as I do” mode of teaching is more strategic in the production of slaves; whereas the “do as I say” method of instruction has the potential to produce intelligent and critical thinkers.

Caveat: When I reference the intellect, I **do not** intend to imply that an ungodly employment of the intellect produces righteousness, simply because it is the "intellect." I reference the use of the intellect, because it is the method by which the Lord chooses

to teach, to lead and to transform us. The scripture reads this way: "Do not conformed to this world following the “do as I do” path: instead be transformed by following the “do as I say” path to the renewing of your mind.⁽¹⁰⁾ You see Jesus asking the young man, why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say? Further, I **do not** intend (either expressly or implicitly) that there is no virtue to the “do as I do” teaching modality. The “do as I do” mode of influence is extremely potent; which is why the Lord warned us about it. It is very strictly a Kingdom principle; it is intended to serve the purposes of God. You’ll recall that the “do as I do” modality is enacted by the stimulation of the visual cortex (the faculty of *seeing*). Here are two very interesting places where you see the principle yielding favorable outcomes (one example is temporal and the other example is eternal).

- *Temporal example:* Jacob, in keeping Laban's cattle, negotiated his wages as such. The striped, speckled and spotted cattle shall be Jacob's pay. The goodly cattle shall belong to Laban. Jacob placed **before the eyes** of the healthy cattle striped almond, popular and chestnut branches. And when the cattle saw the striped, speckled and spotted branches, they *became* like them.⁽¹¹⁾ And we see this because they gave birth to striped, speckled and spotted calves. Can you see just how potent is this modality of influence?!? It is sooo potent, that it holds sway over "unintelligent" creatures. You're probably beginning to get the point, here. The *do as I do* teaching or influence modality is more useful for influencing the "unintelligent." Please do not take this use of term "unintelligent" as derogatory, it is only intended to be descriptive.
- *Eternal reference:* 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, because we shall *see* Him as He is.⁽¹²⁾ And what we see in Him, we are to become like Him. Quick sidebar, this promise is not merely futuristic; it has a very real, present (albeit transcendent) intimation and application. It is intended that, **in this life**, we shall begin to "see Him as He is;" so that we may become what we see.

So there we have it (by the grace of God):

The relationship between Matthew 23:3 and Romans 10:17 (opening scriptures) is the case, that Jesus was warning both the people and His disciples. He said, The Pharisees, for the most part, teach the Law of Moses, so give them a hearing. Faith can be stimulated by hearing the Word of God. One reason this was key, was because the general population and the disciples were not learned men. They were prone to get their understanding of the scriptures from the "teachers of the Law" either by *what they said* or *what they did*. Jesus was helping direct the learning process, by telling them which learning and influence modality would serve them best.

God Bless You -BC-

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

- (1) Matthew 23:3
- (2) Romans 10:17
- (3) Acts 18:8
- (4) Galatians 3:5
- (5) Hebrews 11:1; Romans 8:24
- (6) John 2:23-25
- (7) Romans 10:17
- (8) John 6:36
- (9) 1 Timothy 2:9
- (10) Romans 12:2
- (11) Genesis 30:37-41
- (12) 1 John 3:2

HOW FOOLISH OF ME?!?

The fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Psalm 14:1-3

express the purpose of the winepress. Where, oh where, does one start? Let's see, we'll begin at the 30,000 foot level, drop down for a bird's eye view and then bring it in for a headshot. Afterwards, we'll take a seed (of truth) and wrap it around a single event; so that we have a frame of reference. Here is how that looks:

Cruising Altitude (30,000 Foot Level)

- ❖ In order for grapes to yield wine, they must be crushed, and set aside for a period of *fermentation*. Now there's a word that won't get much press these days; in our microwave society. "Fermentation" is originally an organic, bio-chemical (enzymatic) process by which "sugars are broken down into smaller molecules that can be used by a living system." Sweet, and quite relevant, hah?

Bird's Eye View (500 Foot Level)

- ❖ **The word of God** (seed) – The Word of God has been spoken, in the earth. For example: "The just shall live by faith." (3) We'll get up-close and personal in the headshot."
- ❖ **The soil of the heart** – Whether the soil of our heart is resistant or disagreeable (wayside); shallow or uncommitted (stony); prickly, contentious or rebellious (thorns); or hungry, supple, and humble (good); the heart **MUST** take some disposition to the truth of God's Word and the leading of His Spirit. (4)
- ❖ **The germination process** – Furthermore, the type and condition of the soil of the heart, will determine or influence the germination process. The soil and the germination process are integral components, they work together. The one necessitates the other. *Example:* when the Word of God (seed) falls by the wayside, no germination process occurs, because the Word is caught away, by the enemy. (5) When the seed falls on good ground, it naturally produces a harvest of 30- to 100-fold increase.
- ❖ **Grapes** – In one sense, the grapes are our principles; our life's philosophy, or creeds, our worldview, etc. (For the sake of this discourse, embedded in our "principles" are our desires,

ambitions, predispositions, etc.) The grapes (or our principles) are the off-spring of the Word of God (or the lack thereof) within the heart of man. Whatever may be the condition of that soil, will determine the type of grape produced. Example: you can have a sound Word and a weak, undisciplined but good heart, which produces a less than desirable life's philosophy (lacking a firm grasp on or implementation of truth and reality). You've met people like that; they are kind, precious even, but you question how they manage to arrive at some of their philosophies or beliefs; because they are somewhat inconsistent with how God represents Himself through scripture.

- ❖ **Winepress** - The winepress is that "place within us" where our principles and world events **COLLIDE**. This place is where the transactions of life, put to the test, our beliefs or life's philosophy. When the Word of God, in our hearts, comes face-to-face with LIFE, a friction occurs. This is the case basically, because the Word of God judges LIFE (all of it). Not a single transaction (thoughts included) escapes the judgment of the Word of God. Contrary to popular belief, all judgments are not grievous. But all things are laid bare before the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.⁽⁶⁾ We like to call these events "tests and trials." But frankly they represent ALL of the occurrences of life (the good, the bad, and the ugly). Nothing escapes the scrutiny of the Word of God.
- ❖ **Wine** - The wine is what comes of that collision, between our beliefs and the events of life. *Example:* You can genuinely believe that the Lord expects that you *know* and *obey* His Word. But in practice, you can govern your life according to your own personal preferences. The resulting yield (or wine) will be distasteful to the Master. And how "life" responds to you will be telling of that displeasure. All of life's occurrences must be disposed of in some fashion or other. All of life's events, pressing in upon the Word of God, produce wine (whether Merlot; Concord; Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon; Beaujolais; Port; Pinot Noir or just plan cider). As grapes go into the winepress (there's no getting around it), wine (of some sort) must come out.
- ❖ **Servants** (not the husbandman) - And the Father is coming for His wine, trust that. You may recall from

the original article of this series, God sends or allows "servants" to collect or prove the wine (or the Master's yield). In this case, the servants are the people, places and things that "happen" to us. These "servants" can include the world, the flesh, and the enemy. They come to collect their "pound of flesh." And we respond to them a certain way, based on what we've done with the seeds; the type of grapes borne; the process within the winepress and the resulting yield (wine).

Headshot (Up-Close and Personal)

- ❖ On a personal note: The Word of God comes to us telling us that "the just shall live by faith." The heart (soil) has some particular disposition or opinion about this truth. The heart can ignore it; misunderstand it; disagree with it; catalog it; receive it; love it; etc. Or it can take any combination of these (or other) dispositions: it can agree, but misunderstand the truth. It can catalog this truth, but ignore it in practice. And this happens rather organically (during the germination process), there is often no pomp and circumstance involved. This subtle process results in a particular principle of life or worldview. Often we do not even know the disposition of our own hearts on a matter (even after the grapes are produced). We go along our merry way, until the servants of life make a demand on our disposition to the truth that "the just shall live by faith." It is then that we find out that not only are we not prepared to "live by faith" (whatever that means); but we also question whether or not we're "just." And out the window goes our confidence in our relationship to this particular truth. And that's only if we're honest with ourselves.

What's that you ask? What is the difference between the collision that occurs in the *winepress* and the demands placed upon us by the *servants*? Awesome question! Wow, I can't get anything past you, can I. Keep it up; you're making me work here.

The difference is that the transactions that occur in the *winepress* are, for the most part, internal and in some sense covert (or not readily visible). These set the

rudder of our life, and quite unwittingly. This process is like a night worker in the dungeon of a library, binding manuals (principles) and putting them on the shelves of the heart. Now regarding the demands placed upon us by the "servants;" this confrontation is essentially external and overt. This is when the servants come knocking, and the owner of the library (that's you) reaches for one of those manuals. And whereas you thought you were "living by faith;" you find in those manuals recipes for "crow" or blueprints for escape hatches; to deal with some of life's challenges. So here is our Lord, anticipating wine and out comes cider; or worse ... vinegar.

When we look at our lives as a vineyard (which is the model for this journey), the winepress is that place where the grapes of life are processed in such a way as to wring out of them, nectar or wine. The wine is then useful in creating a particular (preferably godly) climate or fragrance of life.

The winepress of life will take on many different names. You may find a name for this process that suits your particular tastes. That's fine, as long as you acknowledge or recognize its existence. This way, you can do something about the fermentation process, if you don't like the wine that's coming out of the winepress. Better yet, if the Lord is not particularly pleased with the resulting wine, we can do something about the grapes or about the fermentation process.

On the way out, let's quickly see some of what can (and what cannot) be controlled regarding the processes associated with the winepress.

Relating to the winepress we have:

- ❖ **Grapes** – In that grapes are the result of the disposition of the heart (soil) to the word of God (seed). We do have some control here. That we guard our heart with all diligence is *our* responsibility. ⁽⁷⁾ One way to secure the heart is by being both a hearer and doer of the Word. ⁽⁸⁾
- ❖ **Life events** – Life events are the things that happen to (or around) us. Their origin is usually external to us (but not always). In most cases we do not have direct control over these events. That okay, because the gold is not so much in what HAPPENS TO us; as it is in how we RESPOND TO the event(s). That brings us to the fermentation process.
- ❖ **The fermentation process** – Again the fermentation process is an organic, bio-chemical process by which

"sugars are broken down into smaller molecules that can be used by a living system." Said otherwise, "There is a natural sugar in grapes, called fructose. The fermentation process breaks down the natural sugars. The living organism is the symbiosis of yeast and bacteria that feeds on the sugars. This process, over the course of time, is what produces wine." We do not control this process; we do however have some control over the types of grapes that go into this fermentation process.

Life Event – A Fertile Vineyard in the Wilderness

Let's see what a vineyard looks like in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11):

- ❖ **The word of God** (seed) – Jesus was led up, at the direction of the Spirit of God, into the wilderness.
- ❖ **The soil of the heart and the germination process** – The heart **MUST** take some (specific) disposition to the truth of God's Word and/or the leading of His Spirit. There is **NO** middle ground. This is what constitutes the type and condition of the soil of the heart. Furthermore, it is the condition and type of the soil of the heart that influences the germination process. En route to the wilderness, it is clear to us that this particular seed (the leading of the Holy Spirit) fell on good ground. How can we tell? Because of the fruit. The Spirit led, Jesus followed. We will also notice that the condition of the soil and the germination process is further affected by the 40 days and nights of fasting. Now take heed that we do not eulogize our Lord's humanity, by confusing it with His divinity. Here we're prone to say that the soil of His heart was already 100% pure and fertile; nothing further needed to be done. Confirmed, the soil of His heart *was* already 100% pure and fertile, in as much as He was God. But in as much as He was also man, His humanity **NEEDED** to be tempered and humbled with prayer and fasting; as His life has shown. Why do we need to see and know this? So that we don't sidestep or otherwise escape our responsibility to go and do likewise; and for the very same reasons. Our humanity **NEEDS** to be tempered

and humbled. If we fade on this responsibility, the penalties will be greater than we are able to bear; in this life, and in the life to come.

❖ **Grapes** – Again, the grapes are our principles; our life's philosophy, or creeds, our worldview, etc. You'll recall from above, that embedded in our "principles" are our desires, ambitions, predispositions, etc. The grapes are the fruit of both the vine and the soil aren't they? They are the offspring of the Word of God (or the lack thereof) and the soil of the heart of man. Has our Lord, not made that abundantly clear in the wilderness? What was His fruit or life's philosophy? "It is written...."

❖ **Winepress** – The winepress is that "place within" where our principles **COLLIDE** with life. Here the "happenings" of life challenge our beliefs and philosophies. When the Word of God, in our hearts, face-off with LIFE, a friction occurs. The one affects the other. The Word of God judges life OR the cares of life choke out the Word. Where the Word of God is preeminent not a single transaction (thoughts included) escapes its judgment. Now perhaps we see why Jesus responded with "It ... is ... written..." Nothing escapes the scrutiny of the Word of God. There is particularly brilliant wisdom in our Lord's responses. *Please Everlasting God, may we learn from Your examples?* Again, embedded in our "principles" are our desires, ambitions, predispositions, etc. What were some of our Lord's desires? Ambitions? Well we can tell by the specifics of the temptations, right. Our Lord says, through James that "EVERY man is tempted when he is enticed to fulfill his own desires." ⁽⁹⁾

Quick sidebar: James 1:13 (KJV) reads "... God cannot be tempted with evil" And intimates (Interlinear NT) "... God is untried; although evil is trying"

- One of our Lord's physical desires was to nourish His body (after 40 days and nights of fasting, we can certainly understand that). So the enemy attempts to appeal to the humanity of His desires; suggesting that Jesus turn stones into bread. Here in the winepress, our Lord's physical hunger collides with His Father's directive that man shall not live by bread alone.
- Another of our Lord's desires was to be kept and protected by the Father. Jesus knew that His humanity alone could not help Him weather the storms of His life (and so it is for us). Our Lord also knew that His divinity alone would not

support Him with an incongruent, non-compliant lifestyle. Again the enemy attempts to entice our Lord to see whether or not the Father will actually keep Him; suggesting that Jesus cast Himself down, in light of the Father's Psalm 91 promise.

- Last, but in no way least, we see that our Lord, anticipated a Kingdom. *As God*, this was a part of His discussions with the Father, prior to His incarnation. *As Man*, this was part of His prophetic promises; His Father had told the prophets (and others) of His Son's kingdom all along. So the enemy attempts to draw Him away by suggesting that our Lord fulfill his own desires for a kingdom; instead of waiting on the Promise of the Father.

❖ **Wine** – The wine is what comes of the collision between our beliefs, desires and the events of life. So we saw the collisions, now for the precious wine:

Each of our Lord's desires was illuminated by the specific temptation.

The Lord was hungry. The enemy said, "Well eat then." The Lord says ... It is written, we don't eat because we're hungry. We eat according to the Father's speaking. The "when, where and what" of our eating (or refraining from eating) MUST accord with to our Lord's provisions. (*wine*)

The Lord trusted that the Father would keep and protect Him. We get the sense of this from our prayer directives in Matthew 6 ... deliver us from the Evil One. As well, we get the sense of this trust from the prophecy of the Psalm (16:10) ... "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." The enemy says, since the Father has His arms of protection around you, then jump. Let's see if He will catch you. Our Lord's response: It is written ... we trust the Lord God; we don't fleece (tempt) Him. (*wine*)

The Lord knew that the Father had prophesied concerning His Kingdom. (Isaiah 9:6-7; John 18:36) The enemy said, "Why wait? Delayed gratification is over-rated. If you worship me, I'll give you not one kingdom, not two kingdoms, but all the kingdoms of the world for one price. Worship me. Our Lord's rebuke was solid: "It is

written, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*" (wine)

Did you notice that each time the grapes were crushed, wine came out? Not vinegar ... not cider; but wine. The enemy tempted Jesus; our Lord's response was not one of self-justification (vinegar); or even self-gratification (cider). He simply pointed to the Father's honor (wine).

- ❖ **Servants** (not the husbandman) –As peculiar as this sounds, the enemy served the role of the "servant." He came to prove the Lord. So it is in our lives, both the tests and the testers; both the trials and the try-ers come to prove us. Whether intentional (on their part) or not, they perform the role of the servant. We are led through the wilderness of life, so that our hearts are proved. ⁽¹⁰⁾ We see how the Lord responded to the trials. Now we know what is expected of us, right. When the servants of life, come to prove your love, joy and peace; pour it out. When the tests of life come to draw out longsuffering, gentleness and goodness; open wide, be generous to them. And when the trials of life come to wring out of you, faith, meekness and temperance; turn to them the other cheek.

We see that the winepress is the place where the Word of God judges life and its circumstances. May each attempt result in the overflow of the wine of the Kingdom?

Be blessed!

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ 1 Timothy 4:8

⁽²⁾ February 2012 Kingdom News edition, same column

⁽³⁾ Romans 1:17

⁽⁴⁾ Matthew 13:3-23

⁽⁵⁾ Matthew 13:19

⁽⁶⁾ Hebrews 4:13

⁽⁷⁾ Proverbs 4:23

⁽⁸⁾ James 1:22

⁽⁹⁾ James 1:14

⁽¹⁰⁾ Deuteronomy 8:2-3

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 ❧

Special Feature



Therefore, this *discipline* goes beyond the minimum *transactional* demands of *specifically strict or constrained* activities, to permeate the whole of life. Said otherwise, discipline, while it respects, the refusal of a third helping of dessert; it reaches to the whole of life's dispositions...

Love and the Truth



Spiritual blindness is **NOT**, I repeat **NOT**, the result of a lack of the knowledge of God. Spiritual blindness is a result of the suppression of the knowledge of God. This takes the form of rejection of the knowledge of God. This is spelled u-n-r-e-p-e-n-t-a-n-c-e.

Boot Camp



So what is all of this noise about the “do as I say” versus “do as I do?” Great question, I wish I'd asked it (smiling). Please do not sleep on this next series of statements...

❧ SUMMARY ❧

The Leadership Corner

We see here that God not only wants us to give honor to our parents, He *commands* us to do so. Now, we are reminded that in our discussion, we are focusing on...

The Chief Cornerstone



The will of God has ever since and will ever more resolve itself into the "seeking of the face of God and the turning from our wicked ways." It is inexorable.

Nutrition, Health & Wellness



... Here the "happenings" of life challenge our beliefs and philosophies. When the Word of God, in our hearts face-off with LIFE, a friction occurs; the one affects the other. The Word of God judges life OR the cares of life choke out the Word. Where the Word of God is....

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