

Kingdom News

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

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The Chief Cornerstone



Weapons of Mass Destruction

Not Sanctioned

No weapon formed against you shall prosper.⁽¹⁾

We like the idea that no weapon formed against us shall prosper; don't we? But do we *really* understand this promise? Do we? I'd venture to say, "Probably not."

Imagine this: What *could* we ... what *would* we do if we knew we could not fail? No ... actually take a moment and meditate on it. What would you accomplish in this life, if you could not be stopped? "Why are we doing this?" you ask. Because, most of the things we forfeit (shrink away from) in life; we do so, not because our enemy has triumphed over us. It is more the case that we have "failed ourselves." It is more the case that we have "failed God." In the promise that "no weapon formed against us shall prosper;" the Lord has given us a double-edged sword.

- On one edge: nothing the enemy intends can stop us from being conformed into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chief Cornerstone

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

A Personal Declaration of Independence

July marks the birthday celebration of the United States. On this Independence Day (referred to as the 4th of July) the United States of America will turn 234 years old. The United States Declaration of Independence is the statement adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which announced that the thirteen American colonies, then at war with Great Britain were now independent states, and thus no longer a part of the British Empire.

Americans across the country will celebrate with parades, sporting events, fireworks, political speeches, festivals, and BBQ (among other things). Many people will take vacations and reconnect with friends and family. What an exciting time, and a great reason to celebrate.

Now, even though many people hold this day in high regard, there are others who feel differently. Native Americans, women, and African Americans (among others) know that in reality not everyone was made free and equal in the U.S. on this notable day. During the writing of this prominent document (and long afterwards), many groups of people suffered oppression, discrimination, and violence for trying to obtain "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" in this wonderful country we live in.

This month's article will hopefully encourage and challenge each of us to make a personal Declaration of Independence. As believers, we have been set free from the law of sin (Romans 8:2 KJV). We are fully able to

The Leadership Corner

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Son of My Wisdom



The LAW The Letter and the Spirit The Foreshadow and the Image

All scriptures paraphrased from the KJV

Recently God has been dealing with me regarding “The Law.” In this article we'll just touch on a particular revelation about the law that He has given. The Law can be seen in two components.

First, there is the letter of the law. This is the law represented simply as a statement or proposition and there are direct actions (or acts of compliance) that correspond to those statements. The letter of the law in most cases can be followed by anybody, especially as laid out in the Old Testament Any sane human being can do the deeds of the law. It would take some dedication, and what is referred to in scripture as “will worship,”⁽¹⁾ but it can be done in human strength. This is what the Pharisees were notorious for.⁽²⁾ They followed the letter of the law like nobody's business. This is a deadly practice (aka legalism), trying to justify self by doing the deeds of the law. God tells us through St. Paul that *by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified.*⁽³⁾ Now here is a most interesting consideration. Have you ever asked yourself why? Why is it that *by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified,* but nevertheless *the doers of the law are justified?*⁽⁴⁾ Not just “why,” but “how” is that the case?

Here is the “why” and the “how:” the law is composed of two parts. There is the letter, which is essentially the propositional expression of the law (i.e., thou shall not kill); expressed primarily in word and deed, which we discussed above. However, there is also the Spirit of the law. The scriptures tell us that the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.⁽⁵⁾ Now the Spirit of the law is indicative of the Personality behind the law, which is the Personality of Jesus Christ. It is Him to Whom the law ultimately points. Now, the reason why the deeds of the law do not justify is because the law is more than deeds. *The law is spiritual.*⁽⁶⁾

That being the case, the only people that can truly and

fully be “doers of the law” are those who have had their spirit regenerated. This is “how” *the doers of the law are justified.* By regeneration they may come to know and love the Personality that the law communicates or reveals. As a result, their deeds flow out of a loving faith in the Person to Whom the law points. For the “doers of the law” their deeds are just a particular expression of the Personality of Jesus Christ. Once we have been regenerated in our spirit by the Spirit of God; then (and only then) can we rightly express that Personality. For only then does He live within us, thus to express Himself through us. To be sure, an unregenerate person cannot even **see** beyond the letter of the law, let alone appreciate the Personality behind it. This is “why” the scriptures teach that *by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified.* For the most part, regeneration is not a prerequisite to fulfill the letter of the law. Ask the Scribes and Pharisees

Again, the law is spiritual, and the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God ... for they are spiritually discerned. Now if the law is spiritual, then we know that the law is of the Spirit of God. For that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.⁽⁷⁾

Now within the spirit of the law, there are two types of expressions of law (for the sake of this discourse).

- There is the expression of the spirit of the law which **foreshadows** Christ. These are the types of things that Christ fulfilled in such a way that we no longer need to continue them. This part of the spirit of the law would include things like animal sacrifice. We no longer need that, for Christ is our Eternal Sacrifice.⁽⁸⁾ Here you could include the Sabbath laws, for Christ is our Sabbath, He is our rest. And one thing which doesn't point to Christ directly, but which He nevertheless fulfilled was this: temple worship. There is no longer a need to continue the different tenets of temple worship for now we are His temple built without hands.⁽⁹⁾
- Last, but not least, is the spirit of the law as communicating the **image** of Christ. Now these are laws like *children obey your parents; thou shall not covet; thou shall not bear false witness;* etc. These are **not foreshadows** of Jesus like the other ones. These are expressions of the very **image** of

Precepts in Practice



“Because I Said So”

This month we will explore the concepts of tyranny and love. Any Webster’s dictionary will tell us that a “tyrant” is a cruel and oppressive ruler. He (for the sake of this writing, we will refer to the ruler in the masculine although leaders are males and females) rules with an “iron fist” and his authority is absolute. There is no wavering in his judgment. Neither can his subjects negotiate with him.

History is replete with rulers like this including “Ivan the Terrible” (he murdered thousands of his own people with a secret army) in the fifteen hundreds; Josef Stalin (he killed millions of innocent people and induced famines in his kingdom); Adolf Hitler (he systematically annihilated over six million Jews during the Nazi genocide); my ex-husband and several of my former supervisors. Maybe there are some specific names you could add to this list from your personal life, as well.

At any rate, if given a choice, most people would rather not be ruled by a tyrant. In addition, in the United States we live in a democracy. We have been socialized to want to discuss issues, analyze options, get second opinions, and vote on what we think should be done. We are appalled when we find out a decision has been made without the decision-maker consulting those that would be affected by the decision.

So, this leads us to the concept of “love.” For a general definition of this term we again turn to Webster. “Love” is often characterized by having a strong or passionate affection for someone. We expect husbands and wives to have this type of love; parents are usually affectionate towards their children; and many people have passionate affection for their pets. Now, were it not for the fact that we are Christians; we could work with Webster’s perspective. However, we submit to a spiritual authority that supersedes human thought.

Scripture tells us that love from God to humanity is summarized by the fullness of His character. Everything He does flows out of His love. He provides for us. He protects us. He heals us. He forgives us. And

Precepts in Practice

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Love and The Truth



The Fruitful Vineyard

This article contains adult information, and is intended for an adult audience.

Recently the Lord has been dealing with me in the light of His parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen.⁽¹⁾ Last month He was speaking in terms of regeneration in *The Difference Maker – Regeneration*. Regeneration is the work of God wherein man is given a new heart and new spirit; which to man is a new life, a new nature.⁽²⁾ By regeneration Christ betrothed us unto Himself, in that we were given His life, His name (Christian), and His Holy Spirit. As you can appreciate, this road leads to the topic of this article: Marriage.

Let me share with you how this topic came about. I was visiting an on-line Christian forum, as I do from time to time. While I was reading the threads, I came across a large number of threads about “Marriage and Sex.” Many, many people gave their opinion on the subjects. Although this was a Christian forum, I am sad to say that few of these comments/responses had a particularly biblical concept of marriage. I do not intent to sound arrogant; whatever we genuinely know about marriage, it is because the Lord has so “gifted” that revelation to us; myself especially.

That aside, the direction of this message stems from the reality that there are scores of men that are not being fulfilled in their marital beds. I’m talking about the situation where men are getting absolutely no, or almost no intimacy in the bedroom. The Lord has said this: There are a few men that are truly fulfilling their responsibility as husbands; however in reality most men are NOT fulfilling their responsibility as husbands. Don’t we know that godly and holy wooing is more effective than we can ever imagine? So then the directive when a husband is not getting sexual intimacy from his wife is this: look in the mirror;

Love and The Truth

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- On the other edge: we then have a responsibility to allow the Lord to so conform us.

A “weapon” is a device crafted and mobilized with the strict intent to destroy, to damage or to do harm. Does that definition sound reasonable enough? A “weapon” is deemed successful if it accomplishes its task of destroying us. So we see from the first two words of this promise, that whatever the “weapons” may be; this promise speaks concerning ALL of them. This promise annuls the success of “all weapons” formed against us.

Here is a peculiarity about this promise. When the Lord shared this with me, He said that “this promise doesn’t mean that the weapons form against you won’t be deployed. It means that they will not succeed in their assigned intent to destroy you.” Let’s read that again:

The fact that no weapon formed against us shall prosper; does not mean that “the enemy will not take up an attack against us.” It does not mean that these “weapons of mass destruction will not be mobilized.” Said otherwise, “that the enemy will take up an attack against us;” and “that weapons of mass destruction will be mobilized against us; is a veritable certainty. This is why the scriptures warn us that if we would live godly in Christ Jesus, we must also be willing to suffer attack, to suffer persecution. (2) Just here, is where we fail; we have somehow been “sold a bill of goods” we believe that we should not have to suffer anything. This cannot be true, not even close to true. Not many things are farther from the truth, than this. The scriptures teach us that the Perfect Man learned obedience, by the things that He suffered, endured, or allowed. (3) If this be true of Him; how then can we escape so great a salvation? (4)

The “breaking” of us, is the “making” of us. (5)

It is for this very reason that the scriptures teach that with the same weapon that the enemy intends evil against us; it is with that same weapon that God intends good for us.” *This is a very important Kingdom principle.* The blow of the hammer that the artisan uses to bend a piece of metal is the exact same blow that forms that metal into a work of art. The same weapons, tests and trials that the enemy stages for our destruction; God has ordained for our edification. The Lord uses these exact same weapons (aka tools or instrument) to humble us; to prove us and

to show us what’s in our heart. (6) And with these same instruments or weapons, the Lord brings us into conformity. It is by the weapons or tools that we learn that we really don’t love the Lord with our whole heart, soul, mind and strength. We see by these weapons, events and situations that we do not love our neighbor as our self. Just here, we find that we love ourselves a bit more; quite a bit more. It is by these attempts of the enemy that we learn that we are not really willing to suffer persecution. We say that we are willing, but we faint in the day of adversity. (7)

Why are we talking about his now? “Why do we need to know this?” you ask. This kind of talk so dishevels the “visions of sugar plums, dancing in our heads.”

We’re talking about this now for at least two reasons:
1) Because the Lord said talk about it; and
2) Because the Lord is taking us somewhere.

If we will allow ourselves to *know* this truth, I mean to really, intimately *know* and abide in it; we will find it freeing and liberating. (8) We will find that we are free from the fears of failure (or success) in our lives. Free from the idea that we should never undergo attack from the enemy.

Somewhere along the way it seems that we have translated the promise that “*no weapon formed against us shall prosper,*” into the concept that “no weapon formed against us shall in any way affect us.” These two are not the same. This is not that. And we NEED to know this because if we go along in life believing that God is supposed to protect us from ALL of the attacks of the enemy, then we are offended when trials and tribulations come our way. We pout and argue with God as if to bring Him up on charges of “failure to perform.” As if He has incurred some breach of covenant. This walk of faith is a most beautiful walk; but it is not without its crosses. On the contrary, there are crosses at every intersection of life. “Crosses” in this case; being the opportunity (at every decision) to die to the flesh, and to see the salvation of God in our daily decision-making. “Crosses” in that we recognize that we have been crucified with Christ and the life that we now live, we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and who gave Himself for us. (9)

Disclaimer: Trust that I know that what I am

about to share, will sound “insane.” But as a humble courier of the Kingdom news, I must receive what I have been given; and I must give what I have received. You understand.

At some point, we’re going to have to appreciate (I mean genuinely appreciate) the wisdom of God in placing us in this hostile territory; in this war zone. We must begin to see that in fact, “iron does sharpen iron;”⁽¹⁰⁾ and that “fire purifies gold.” The iron will of the enemy sharpens the iron will of man. In this “face off” we find out whether or not our faith is in God or if our trust is really in ourselves.

We must stop looking at the adversary as some foreign thing; as if he is doing something other than intended. He is a “servant,” (albeit a disobedient one); but a servant nonetheless. Let’s stop crying about his “weapons formed against us.” He’s doing his job. Since, he won’t do what he was created to do;⁽¹¹⁾ he is shut up to this end. This is his “lot in this life.” And all of our crying and complaining will not change that. He has been brought up on charges of treason; he has been judged, and a verdict has been set against him. It is what it is.

That being the case, what manner of man ought we to be: how ought we to carry ourselves? Here’s what we’re working with. We have been assigned to enemy territory, deal with it. We have been called out; translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light.⁽¹²⁾ We have been fitted with the most powerful weapons of war, in existence.⁽¹³⁾ The Lord is our fortress and our strong tower.⁽¹⁴⁾ And, to top it off, we have a promise: that “no weapon formed against us shall be able to succeed in destroying us.”

Know this: the weapons formed against us *will* in some cases actually be deployed. Some of them will be mobilized, with the very intent to destroy us. Reality check: within the enemy’s arsenal, there are weapons that could, very likely, destroy us. Here’s the beauty though, the Lord has not sanctioned them in this fight. This is why it can be safely said that “no weapon sanctioned for use in warfare against us shall prosper, in its effort to destroy us.” For the Body of Christ: the enemy is only permitted to use the weapons that will work in us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.⁽¹⁵⁾ Talk about a fixed fight. The enemy is only licensed to use the weapons that will work together for the good of those who love God and to those who are the called according to His

purpose.⁽¹⁶⁾

“Prove it!” you say. Fair enough.

In the eyes of the enemy, Calvary was a weapon of mass destruction intended to destroy Jesus; to dethrone the Heir of the Kingdom. We get a glimpse of this in the parable of the vineyard; where the wicked husbandmen sought to kill the son (heir) in an effort to gain his throne, his inheritance.⁽¹⁷⁾ The Lord whispered to Paul, that if only the enemy had known that Calvary was actually a scalpel (a precise surgical instrument) used to undo the effects of Adam’s sin; he never would have tried to hang him on a cross.⁽¹⁸⁾ If the enemy had only known that by Christ giving His life, He was saving ours; he never would have provoked the people to cry “crucify Him; crucify Him.”⁽¹⁹⁾ What the enemy did not know was that in his effort to destroy Jesus; he was destroying himself. The enemy sought to bind Jesus in the chains of death. What the enemy didn’t know was that Jesus was coming willingly to destroy him who had the power of death (the enemy) and to free those who feared death (us).⁽²⁰⁾ Of a truth the law of the Lord is perfect.⁽²¹⁾ In deed, God is no respecter of persons nor will He be mocked, whatever the enemy sows; that shall he also reap.⁽²²⁾

What shall we then say to these things? If God has ordained our success, who is it that can lightly accomplish our destruction?⁽²³⁾ What weapon is there that can succeed in its efforts against us? I submit to you the neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor power, nor shall any other creature be able to accomplish against you that which God has ordained for your success.⁽²⁴⁾

Look at our military might and that of some of the other nations. There are weapons of mass destruction that could wreak havoc throughout the earth. We are so arrogant as to believe that the reason that these weapons of mass destruction have not yet been mobilized is because “we’ve somehow negotiated peace treaties.” The truth is that the Lord has spoken a word (a prohibition) into the earth; that forbids the use of these weapons. The Lord, Himself, will deploy weapons of mass destruction upon the earth, at the time appointed.⁽²⁵⁾

So I ask again, what could we do if we knew that no weapon formed against us (although deployed in some cases) shall succeed in destroying us?

Could we then say “Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done,” and know that nothing can stop this from happening in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

Wow!!! On the one hand, we cannot be stopped. And on the other hand, we have all of the resources (ways and means) necessary to accomplish great things for the Kingdom. Looks like the deck is stacked “in our favor,” doesn’t it?

On the flip-side: There’s a sense in which this can be very scary, can’t it? We often “rock ourselves to sleep” with the notion that we have not done much; because circumstances didn’t favor us. But if we look into the mirror of God’s Word (that perfect law of liberty), and acknowledge that the Kingdom affords us something of the attribute of “invincibility;” then we have nowhere to hide from ourselves, do we?

We’ll wrap-up on a more personal note. During one of Jesus’ discussions with Peter, the Lord told Peter that the enemy had requested permission to launch an attack.⁽²⁶⁾ So we see that there was a weapon formed against Peter; and that the enemy had been given permission to deploy. Now an interesting thing is that Jesus knew that this petition had been granted giving the enemy access to Peter. But you’ll notice that of all the things that Jesus could have prayed for Peter, He didn’t pray “that the enemy would not sift Peter.” Jesus didn’t pray that the “weapons would not be deployed; He knew that this was inevitable; just as Jesus knew that Calvary was inevitable. H-O-W-E-V-E-R, what the enemy meant for evil (with a design to destroy);⁽²⁷⁾ God means for good (with the intent to conform us into the image of His Son).⁽²⁸⁾

The servant is not above his master,⁽²⁹⁾ if Jesus learned obedience through the things that He suffered,⁽³⁰⁾ then we cannot be permitted to escape. Know this, that weapons of mass destructions will be launched or deployed against us, get ready. But also know that the only weapons sanctioned in this war, are strictly chosen that we may be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

Trust God.

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

- (1) Isaiah 54:17
- (2) 2 Timothy 3:12
- (3) Hebrew 5:8
- (4) Hebrew 2:3
- (5) 1 Corinthians 9:27
- (6) Deuteronomy 8:2-3
- (7) Proverbs 24:10
- (8) John 8:32
- (9) Galatians 2:20
- (10) Proverbs 27:17
- (11) Isaiah 14:10-20; Ezekiel 28:15
- (12) Colossians 1:13
- (13) Ephesians 6:11-18; 1 Corinthians 10:4
- (14) Psalm 91:2, 9
- (15) 2 Corinthians 4:17
- (16) Romans 8:28
- (17) Matthew 21: 37-39
- (18) 1 Corinthians 2:7-8
- (19) Mark 15:13-14; Luke 23:21; John 19:6
- (20) Hebrews 2:14-15
- (21) Psalm 19:7
- (22) Galatians 6:7
- (23) Romans 8:31
- (24) Romans 8:38-39
- (25) Revelation 6th chapter
- (26) Luke 22:31
- (27) Genesis 50:20
- (28) Romans 8:29
- (29) Matthew 10:22-25
- (30) Hebrews 5:8

THE WORD



- 1) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2) The same was in the beginning with God.
- 3) All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- 4) In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- 5) And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

John 1:1-5



live vibrant, fulfilling lives that God wants for us. We are not under the rule of our fleshly lusts and desires anymore. Because of the Holy Spirit, we are capable of making decisions about our lives that yield positive results.

I was recently talking with a friend of mine. She had been laid off from work. She told me she felt like a weight had been lifted off her shoulders and she wanted to declare the day she was released from her old job as her day of independence. When she said this, God spoke a word to me. He instructed me to share it with you.

Many believers are experiencing challenging times right now due to the failing economy; high unemployment rate; mortgage meltdown; and the credit crunch. In addition, many families are facing health problems without adequate, affordable health insurance. God said to tell his people that these events can mark the day of our independence. I know it sounds strange, but go with me.

A few months ago I lost my job. As a result, my family was faced with multiple financial problems. There were also some health concerns we were facing at the same time. As would be normal for anyone dealing with an unexpected job loss, I had to ask God what happened. When I did this, he reminded me of some of the prophecies He'd given me months before this occurred. God had been telling me that some major events were going to take place and that my family would be impacted. He instructed us to trust in Him no matter what we saw, heard, or experienced. Of course, it was easy to accept this word when He told me because nothing had happened, at that point. Oh, but when it did, he had to remind me that this is what He'd foretold.

It was like He was preparing us for this modern day "famine in the land." If you think about it; that is exactly what is happening. There is a famine in our country and some other countries as well. Sure third-world countries already had famines, but many people in the rest of the world didn't pay that much attention to their needs because we were doing relatively well.

Now, however, we are being touched by this massive economical burden. Every person in America (or someone we know) is being negatively impacted by the events that are going in our economy. And, God said that these events signal a need for a "breaking free" in the spirit and in the natural. God wants believers to break free. He wants us to declare our personal

independence from reliance on anything or anyone other than Himself.

We don't want to admit it, but many of us (dare I say most of us) relied too heavily on our jobs, our homes, our statuses, our investments, and so on. We winked at God as we went through our daily lives doing what WE wanted to do (not what HE wanted us to do). Now, the tables have turned. We, as believers, are finding ourselves in situations where we have to make up our minds that we are going to trust in, rely on, and seek God for who He is (first), and receive what he has determined is best for us at this time.

Please understand that I am not saying that God brought any of these economic issues on humanity. Not at all. Instead, we know it was initiated, propagated, and constructed out of human greed. Still, God will utilize any event to help his people turn their hearts and attention back to him (ask Israel).

So, what do we do now? I encourage each of us to make a personal Declaration of Independence this very month. Our declaration could go something like this.

- We will renounce reliance on any person or thing other than God.
- We will seek God for who He is and not for what He can do for us (He's not Santa Claus).
- We will ask for His instructions as to how we are to go about our daily activities.
- We will stop telling God what we want Him to do, and accept that what is happening in our lives is a result of either what God has planned, or what we have sown.
- We will begin to sow seeds of obedience (based on the word, and the revelation of the Holy Spirit).
- We will modify our prayers to include mostly praise and worship and very little asking for material things (for ourselves and for others).

- We will make it a point to look for God in everything we face.
- We will sanctify God in the eyes of others by our faithful obedience and reliance on Him.

This is our personal Declaration of Independence. Please feel free to personalize it as the Holy Spirit guides you.

July 2010 is the 234th birthday of the United States of America. It is the celebration of our nation breaking away from reliance on the British government. Let's also make July 2010 our 1st birthday. It will be a celebration of our breaking away from reliance on this world for our sustenance and livelihoods. Instead, we will place our focus on He who deserves it, our True and Living God.

So let it be written, so let it be done! ~LLI~

Joyce M. White, MSW

Leadership Living, Inc., Joyce M. White, MSW – CEO
 For additional information you may contact us at leadershiplivinginc@yahoo.com

Jesus Christ, which means they live on, in us forever. For we are the **image** of Christ in the earth, and are continually being sanctified unto that **image**. This never fades away.

So remember, when a person asks why we follow some Old Testament laws, and not others, you know. Some are **foreshadows**, and as such were done away with, as Christ fulfilled the respective prophesies. As the scripture says, "When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."⁽¹⁰⁾ However, the **image** of God never fades in the earth; it lives on perpetually in His people. For the sake of illustration, below I've made a simple table so that you can keep this article in perspective.

<i>The Law</i>		
The <u>letter of the law</u> : The deeds of the law, by which no flesh can be justified.	The <u>spirit of the law</u> : The personality behind the law, the person of Jesus Christ.	
	The <u>foreshadowing</u> : fulfilled in Jesus on the Cross, no need to continue walking therein.	The <u>image</u> : fulfilled by Jesus in us. We live these every day.

I hope this sheds some light for you; it sure has for me.

We appreciate each and every one of you: Kingdom News readership family. *-SOMW-*

David L. White

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

- (1) Colossians 2:23
- (2) Matthew 3:7
- (3) Romans 3:20
- (4) Romans 2:13
- (5) 1 Corinthians 3:6c
- (6) Romans 7:14
- (7) John 3:6b
- (8) Hebrews 9:10-12
- (9) Acts 7:44; 17:24-25; Revelation 21:30
- (10) 1 Corinthians 13:10

DILIGENCE IN PRAYER

Character is etched, more profoundly, in the diligent seeking; not as much so in the mere asking.

Some things you can simply *ask* for; other things you must diligently *seek*; still others, the violent must take by force (*knock*).

– JoAnn C. White 5/17/10 ~9:58PM (PT)

the list goes on. What God does is a result of who He is. God's love for humanity is a paternal love that far surpasses anything we could comprehend. (1 John 3:1 paraphrased) says "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God..." God is love and everything He does flows from that love.

When it comes to our love towards God, scripture is clear that it speaks of our obedience to Him. (John 14:23 paraphrased) says that "If we love God we will keep his commandments." It is useless for us to tout how much we love our Great and Wonderful God if we do not do what He (by His word and through His Holy Spirit) instructs us to do.

Now, this brings us to where we will build a bridge between tyranny and love. Isn't it interesting that God wants us to obey Him above anything else we do? Many of us are familiar with how God will tell us to do things we simply do not want to do. Or, we may have a different (or in our minds "better") idea as to what we should be doing. Still, God seems to insist that unless we have a loyal love for and obedience to Him, we are nothing more than "sounding brass or tinkling cymbals" (1 Corinthians 13:1). This means our words of love and adoration sound like loud banging on empty pots (quite irritating).

I don't know about you, but to me, this sounds like tyranny. Why can't I make at least some of my own decisions? Why did God give me a brain? Why did He make me in His image if I am not allowed to use the intellect He gave me? Basically it sounds like God is saying, "Do what I tell you to do simply because I said so." He gets no pleasure out of us trying to negotiate with Him. Nor is it thrilling to Him to wait for us to get a second opinion on what He has told us to do.

Bottom line, God wants us to obey His commands "because He said so." We are to seek to humble ourselves to the point that we move at His command. Just like the eagle flies at His command. And, the sea and waves roar at His command. The sun rises and sets at His command. Nowhere in nature do we see created elements or animals having committee

meetings to determine what would be the best direction to go in.

Never have you seen ants discussing the pros and cons of gathering and storing food for upcoming months. At no time have you heard the stars wrestling with the options of whether or not to "come out at night." And, there are no advisory boards to give counsel to the trees to help them determine if they want to provide shade and oxygen for creatures and humanity. Still, we humans (and Christians no less) want to process what God has said, analyze our options, have our social networks weigh in, and let God know what we've decided is best for us (and then we want Him to bless what we do –imagine that).

Let me add in a personal note. When I was a young child living in my parent's home, I remember that my father was (at least in my mind) tyrannical in his judgments. He made these rules that the kids had to abide by. Don't even think about asking me if the kids had a say in making the rules. He would say things like "It's my way or the highway." Although he often chuckled when he made this statement, we kids failed to capture the humor in it.

I swore to myself as a kid that when I grew up, I wouldn't allow anyone to dominate me. Needless to say that after I became a Christian, I had to make a concerted effort to humble myself under the mighty hand of God. It wasn't easy nor did it come quickly. I am happy to report, however, that over time I've gotten better at yielding my will to God's will. It is absolutely a daily walk in faith.

To help you better grasp how God's tyrannical love is beneficial for us I will share the revelation He gave me. As stated before, everything God does comes from His character of love. His protection, provision, counsel, healing, instruction, and His correction (spankings) exist and flow from His great love for us. Romans 5:8 (paraphrased) says, "God showed His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us". God loved us before we were born. He loves us whether or not we return that love in the form of obedience. He loves all people including atheists, agnostics, and people who curse Him. Nothing can stop or block God from loving us. It's who He is. And, contrary to popular belief, God does not love us *more* once we become Christians (that's a whole other teaching). He loves us with all of Himself all of the time (there is no "more" or "less" to God's love).

THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL



He also let me know that all of the laws, commandments, and principles that He has established are for our good. When we follow them we are blessed with health, long life, provision, and soundness of mind, peace and so much more. His instructions exist in the form of laws so that we will know that they work all of the time. They will never fail us. If we obey his laws, we can only benefit.

I do need to add that although we are to follow God's instructions simply because He said so, this does not relieve us of our duty to be prudent. When we have decisions to make, we must do what we know is right. For example, if I need to buy some shoes I should conduct research so that I know where the shoes are that I am looking for (which stores carry them). I should also compare prices and so forth. But, once I've done all of this I make my decision based on what I sense God is leading me to do. I might determine from my research that between Target and Wal-Mart, I would get a better deal if I purchase the shoes from Wal-Mart. But, I need to have an open heart to God such that if he nudges me to go to Target, I should end up at Target.

We want to understand that we are to always follow God's leading even when we've done research that seems to contradict what God is telling us to do. All of our decisions must be made "because God said so." I don't go to Target because it is a good idea. I don't go to Wal-Mart because the price is lower. On the contrary, I do all things "because God said so." This is what pleases the Father.

When we make a commitment to live our lives by this mantra, we will begin to see amazing improvements and massive changes. God is not nearly as excited about what we do as He is about why we do what we do. He must be first in our hearts and He must be at the center of all of our decisions. His word, principles, commandments, and instruction must guide our daily lives. Making decisions based on anything other than "because God said so" will only lead us into enemy territory gravely lacking the protection, provision, and guidance of our all-knowing, all-seeing, and all-loving Father.

I sure don't want to find myself in this situation. Do you? ~PIP~

Joyce M. White, MSW – CEO Leadership Living, Inc.

examine yourself first. The husband is to examine himself FIRST; before he ever looks at his wife as the cause of this breakdown in intimacy.

I believe that the direction that the Lords wants to go with this article (or series); will speak to man's responsibility to his wife, and God's conditional promise in return.

Now you may want to re-read the parable about the vineyard and the husbandmen if it's not still fresh in your mind. The Lord has made clear to me that this parable is very apt to teach about the husband's responsibility in marriage, among other things. However, some groundwork needs to be laid before this commences. Please turn to Matthew 21:33-40.

- The "householder" of the parable represents God.
- The "vineyard" represents the people of God, and from a *marital* perspective, represents the bride.
- The "son" in the parable represents the Son of God.
- The "husbandmen," represent the heads (spiritual leaders) of the people of God (priests/pastors/bishops), and from a *marital* perspective; represents the husband.
- The "husbandmen" in this parable are characterized as wicked, but for the sake of this discussion let's also consider the parable is also to the righteous (and whosoever has an ear please hear and obey).

Now that the groundwork has been laid, we need to see what's happening in this parable.

God plants the vineyard, etc. He leases it out to husbandmen. It is their responsibility to tend to the vineyard as representatives of God. They are to tend to the vineyard in the likeness of God Himself. This means that husbands are to tend to their wives in a godly way, after a godly manner. What is a godly way: in *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

meekness, and temperance.⁽³⁾

In the description of “love” we see this: charity is kind; envies not; is not boastful; is not puffed up; does not behave unbecomingly; seeks not her own; is not easily provoked; thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth; always covers (the other); always trusts; always hopes; always endures; never fails.⁽⁴⁾

The term here translated “charity” is *agape*; which is most often translated “love.” Now, who does not recognize that a man that looks anything like the preceding description has undergone and is undergoing sanctification indeed? This teaches us a foundational truth about marriage itself. The purpose of marriage (like the purpose of everything else in the Christian life in one way or another) is to sanctify us; to make us to become like Jesus Christ.

Let’s contrast a few things here: In the 5th chapter of Isaiah, this parable of a vineyard shows very clearly that the problem is with the vineyard itself; it would not bear fruit.

Now back to the parable in the 21st chapter of Matthew, it is not implied anywhere herein that the vineyard might not bring forth fruit. The problem first and foremost is the husbandmen. Again, the problem first and foremost is the **husbands**.

These husbandmen potentially did one thing right, and definitely one thing wrong. The one thing that they potentially did right was this: there is no indication that they did not tend to the vineyard diligently. Said otherwise, the husband must tend to his bride lovingly, tenderly, diligently, and righteously. The one thing they definitely did wrong was this: they did not render unto the householder (God) the first fruits of the vineyard. The husband **MUST** make sure that his bride yields firstly to God. The husband must make sure that God is preeminent in his wife's life.

- The husband must make SURE that God is preeminent in his bride's mind and heart.

- The husband must make sure that he defers to God in such a way that God, rather than the husband, is the primary influence in all her choices. She must yield her fruit, first, to God.

If the husband is diligent, careful, tender, loving, and longsuffering, making it easy for his bride to yield fruit first to God, then God has made a promise. Now this promise may have never seemed to fit marriage until we see it in light of this parable. This is the promise.

Honor the Lord with you substance, and with the first fruits of all your increase: so shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine.⁽⁵⁾

Did you get that? Did that come through clear? If the husband is diligent, tender, loving, righteous towards his wife in such a way as that she yields, and yields firstly to God. God Himself will make sure that the husband's wine presses burst with new wine. The image given here is of the bubbling up of sexual intimacy, and passion. For the fruit of the vineyard represents the essence of the bride, of her humanity in general, and her femininity in particular.

So we see that if the husband is diligent, in accordance with the directive of God, with the intention that his wife bears fruit to God. That husband will have no lack in intimacy (sexual or otherwise). As I was writing this article, the Lord revealed to me that in the context of the husbandman/vineyard language, there are other directives to couples on godly marriage. I believe we'll be exploring those in the coming article(s).

-LATT-

David L. White

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

- (1) Matthew 21:33-44; Mark 12:1-11; Luke 20:9-16
- (2) Psalm 51:10; Isaiah 57:15; Ezekiel 11:19; Ezekiel 36:26; Romans 2:29
- (3) Galatians 5:22
- (4) 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a
- (5) Proverb 3:9-10

Jesus asked “do you esteem My ability to heal, above your illness? Which one? Is your *faith* in your current state of blindness? Or is your *faith* in My ability to give sight?” The blind men, said Yes, Lord we esteem Your ability to give sight over our inability to see.” The Lord said, “Whatever you have placed your *faith* in; whatever you worship; whatever you esteem, have that.” We know what they placed their *faith* in, because their eyes were opened.⁽⁹⁾

In Peter’s letter to the churches in the northern part of Asia Minor⁽¹⁰⁾ he encouraged them regarding their trials. He said, that the “trials of their faith” (or the testing of their “allegiance to God”) was much more precious than gold. And that it would result in praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. He said that their *faith*, once proven, would worship the Lord.

In closing, *faith* is the currency of the Kingdom; it is a medium of exchange. It is that by which we exchange our life for His. It is that by which we procure the promises of God, made available in Christ Jesus. =BC=

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

- ⁽¹⁾ Hebrews 11:1
- ⁽²⁾ Romans 14:23
- ⁽³⁾ Romans 12:3
- ⁽⁴⁾ Hebrews 11:6
- ⁽⁵⁾ 1 Corinthians 10:19-21
- ⁽⁶⁾ Luke 22:32
- ⁽⁷⁾ Matthew 15:25
- ⁽⁸⁾ Colossians 2:9
- ⁽⁹⁾ Matthew 9:27-30
- ⁽¹⁰⁾ 1 Peter 1:17

THE TORAH



... IT IS WRITTEN ...

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God

We shall not tempt the Lord our God

We shall worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shall we serve.

Matthew 4:4-10



THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

PERFECT – Conforming precisely to its definition and purpose. God is perfect because every aspect of His nature corresponds precisely to the essential definition of that aspect. Example: God’s love corresponds precisely to the essential definition of what it means to be loving

IMMUTABLE – Of an unchanging nature. When we speak of God’s immutability, we affirm that His essential nature, attributes and motives are the same in all circumstances, even though they may manifest themselves differently depending on those circumstances. God remains fully God in all situations and His love justice, mercy, power, goodness and other attributes are not diminished or corrupted under any circumstances.

TRANSCEDENT – Going beyond normal boundaries; when applied to God. Not contained within the physical universe or the range of human understanding. God’s full nature and character transcends any confines we can imagine. It is clear that this is a necessary attribute of God, for He could not have created the universe if He were contained entirely within it.

OMNISCIENT – Knowing all that is, as it truly is. God’s knowledge of things is fundamentally deeper than our knowledge. Being Creator of the space-time continuum and all it contains, He knows all that goes on in it, as it truly is, without subjective bias or physical limitations. Not bound by the constraints of time and space.

OMNIPRESENT – Present to all; that is closely related to His omniscience. God is not merely abstractly aware of everything, but knows all that is by virtue of His direct presence in all that happens. His presence is experienced differently according to the relationship of the individual to God. God frequently hides Himself to preserve our freedom.

PERSONAL – Possessing a personality. To possess a personality one must at least possess a center of consciousness, volition and intelligence. God exists as three persons each possessing His own personality and each united in seamless cooperation with each other.

Ralph C. Wagenet on The Coherence of God

❧ SUMMARY ❧

The Chief Cornerstone



. For the Body of Christ: the enemy is only permitted to use the weapons that will work in us a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.⁽¹⁵⁾ Talk about a fixed fight. The enemy is only licensed to use the weapons that will work together for the good of those who love God and to those who are the called according to His purpose.⁽¹⁶⁾

Son of My Wisdom



Last, but not least, is the spirit of the law as communicating the **image** of Christ. Now these are laws like *children obey your parents; thou shall not covet; thou shall not bear false witness*; etc. These are **not foreshadows** of Jesus like the other ones. These are expressions of the very **image** of Jesus Christ, which means they live on, in us forever. For we are the **image** of Christ in the earth, and are continually being sanctified unto that **image**. This never fades away.

Precepts in Practice



When it comes to our love towards God, scripture is clear that it speaks of our obedience to Him. (John 14:23 paraphrased) says that “If we love God we will keep his commandments.” It is useless for us to tout how much we love our Great and Wonderful God if we do not do what He (by His word and through His Holy Spirit) instructs us to do.

❧ SUMMARY ❧

The Leadership Corner

We don't want to admit it, but many of us (dare I say most of us) relied too heavily on our jobs, our homes, our statuses, our investments, and so on. We winked at God as we went through our daily lives doing what WE wanted to do (not what HE wanted us to do). Now, the tables have turned. We, as believers, are finding ourselves in situations where we have to make up our minds that we are going to trust in, rely on, and seek God for who He is (first), and receive what he has determined is best for us at this time.

Love and the Truth



If the husband is diligent, careful, tender, loving, and longsuffering, making it easy for his bride to yield fruit first to God, then God has made a promise. ... *Honor the Lord with you substance, and with the first fruits of all your increase: so shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine.*⁽⁵⁾

If the husband is tender and loving towards his wife in such a way as that she yields to God. God Himself will make sure that the husband's wine presses burst with new wine.

Boot Camp



You can hope that a situation turns out okay. You can hope that decisions are made in your favor. But true, Kingdom *faith* is an “act of worship,” therefore it must terminate on a Person.

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