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)

The Chief Cornerstone The 5 W's of Life

Over the next couple of month's editions, the baton of *The Five W's of Life* will be passed off. Essentially that means that each month we'll explore one of the W's. Along the way, we will knowingly "*break*" a few rules, and "*make*" a few new rules.

"What?" you ask; "are the five W's of life?" You already know them, really, they are the "Who, What, When, Why and Where" (and we'll add the "How") of life. We use these terms quite frequently in the course of life. However, there is an ultimate question and ultimate answer for each. And if respected in its proper place, all subsequent "Who? What? When? ..." questions will find their expressions within the ultimate answer.

I must admit that most of this will sound

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The Leadership Corner Leadership Living, Inc.

We Live ... God Ministers Through Us

All scripture is KJV paraphrased.

It's interesting to think about how awesome God is. When I was growing up I used to say that I wanted God to use me to minister to others. In church, I would hear the preacher say that God wants to use each of us to reach other people. For a long time I thought that meant I had to do specific things to make sure people were being ministered to.

For example, when I would chat with people, I was careful to say certain things that sounded like ministry words. I would say things like, "God loves you and He wants the best for you. Or, "Tell God what you want." I spent years thinking that in order for God to use me to minister to other people; I had to say certain things. Or, I had to tell people what to do with their lives.

In recent years God has given me a personal revelation that has proven to be very liberating and life changing. He let me know that it is my job to live the way He instructs me to live on a daily basis. Then, as I going about living, He utilizes me to minister to people whether I'm aware of it or

The Leadership Corner

A Journey to Intimacy The Cold, Hard Facts

Jesus IS LORD, and that's a fact.

For those of you who like to quibble over semantics, the American Heritage Dictionary (as well as the Webster Universal Dictionary and Thesaurus) defines a "fact" as "something done; something presented as objectively real." A thing that is "objectively real" is so; irrespective of our interpretations or our opinions.

Again, Jesus is LORD.

No ... No He's not Lord, *because* one day we made a decision to make Him Lord of our life. He's not Lord, because one day we gave Him our heart.

CAVEAT - Now this next portion may provoke you a bit. But, there is a sense in which we're not really "awake" about some things, until we've been provoked. It gets the blood circulating and the neurons firing. Provocation, if we're wise, moves us to look again with "squinting eyes" at things that we had long since taken for granted.

Jesus is Lord; because God said so. He is Lord, because it pleased God that in Him should dwell all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (1) He *already* has our heart. Our life *already* belongs to Him. Our heart and our lives don't belong to Him because of some act of volition, on our part. They belong to Him, because He made them. And He made them for Himself. As frightening and imposing as it may sound, "therefore" He has the right and the ability to dispose of them as His wisdom deems proper. He said to his disciples; don't sweat those who might smite you on the cheek. Instead reserve all of your fear and reverence for the One who is able to destroy both body and heart in hell. (2) We don't like that do we? We'd prefer to go on thinking that our life is our own and that we may do with it as we see fit. And while there is some validity to that

statement; it falls pitifully short of being a sober reflection of reality.

We, and our possessions, belong to Him. (3) This is why He has the right to command us to love Him with all of our heart, etc. (4) This is why He has every right to command men everywhere to repent. (5) Because He *IS* Lord.

Now that we've "faced the facts;" the question then becomes, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, as if Jesus is not Lord?" God forbid. It being the case, that one day we shall all be cross-examined by the Judge of the Universe; wisdom might bid us "prepare your brief now."

In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, ⁽⁶⁾ what will be our defense; when He says "lovest thou Me, put your name here?" Shall we say, "Lord, Lord, in Thy name we did ... (everything, but love You)."Or shall we say, "Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee; because I have kept Your commandments." ⁽⁷⁾ Or shall we say "Lord, You know that I am Your disciple indeed; because I have continued in Your word." Shall we say, "Lord, You know that I love you; because I have loved my brother ... because I have loved my neighbor, as myself?" ⁽⁸⁾ What shall we say then?

In one sense, the only plausible defense will be *Lord may the following be true of me*:

"May it be true that I have fought a good fight and have kept the faith? May it be true that I ran, not as one who didn't know where He was going. May it be true that I ordered the affairs of my life as one who knew that he was wholly owned and operated by God. May it be true that I wrestled not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places? Oh Lord, may it be true that I have put on the whole armor of God?

In like manner have I engaged a holy warfare against my flesh; not aimlessly, as one who

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My Life! ... A Vineyard? (Part 5)

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)

Whew!!! We have been on a world-wind tour of the vineyard of our life. Perhaps, this month we'll take a break ... probably not. We're getting to a very practical and, I trust, interesting part of the journey.

Here we'll talk about "How the servants draw out of us the harvest of the vineyard."

You may recall that last month, the Lord talked to us about how He uses other people to *judge* us. (If you missed last month's article, please take a moment to read it. It will help frame this month's discourse.) Our Father's sending His servants to draw out the harvest is a somewhat complex concept, on the one hand. But in its practical application, it is a common occurrence.

Let me see if I can frame it properly:

Our lives are what they are; and we are who we are. Those realities notwithstanding, we (as servants of the Living God) have a duty to Him, and to our fellow man. God has sown into us His Son, and He expects a harvest. So much so, that any branch in the True Vine that does not bear fruit, shall be taken away. (2) It is clear to us that God seeks a return on His investment; and rightfully so.

What is this *return* that we keep talking about? A *return* is when you give something and expect to receive something back. Our Lord says to us: "If I have sown unto you of My spiritual things, then is it too much to ask that I receive of your natural (*harvest*)?" Who do you think Paul was quoting when *he* said it? ⁽³⁾ Spiritually, by way of the proclamation and exposition of His word, God

sows into us, Jesus. He has been made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. ⁽⁴⁾

Throughout our *walk of sanctification*, God imparts something of Himself in us. He fully expects that there should be a resulting yield or harvest. This is not an unreasonable expectation. In the beginning God said "let there be light (impartation), and there was light (yield), and it was good." See how that works? So God sends His servants to collect "the goods." (pun intended)

Let us now look at the commonality of it. Allow me to say it this way, "Every event in life is a TEST." Said otherwise, "Every event in life is a "servant of the Lord; in as much as it is intended to bring about the purpose of God in us." It comes to draw out of us the harvest." There is a sense in which God says to every one of life's events, situations or circumstances, "Have you *tried* my servant (put your name here)?" E-V-E-R-Y thing that happens to us, serves the purpose of proving our hearts before the Living God. When I say "everything" I mean EVERYTHING. There is not a solitary *person*, *place or thing* that is not strategically set in array to prove us.

Really quickly, what is the *harvest* that God is seeking to draw out?!? That's right!!! You read the February 2012 edition of this column, didn't you? The harvest that God seeks is love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith and temperance. (5)

You've seen it. You're sitting at a *red light* that seems to be the longest red light in the history of automotive transportation. (*Servant*) You're in a long line at the store and the cashier has to shut down just as you approach the counter. Now you have to move to the <u>end</u> of another line. (*Servant*) You're passed over for a promotion. (*Servant*) You just bought a new house, now you find yourself laid off from work. (*Servant*) What do you do? Everyone is watching: God, the angels, our neighbors, our friends, our family, etc. All eyes are on you. What will be your response? Again, your co-worker (or worst your staff member) behaves disrespectfully towards, you. (*Servant*)

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somewhat cryptic, but I pray that it won't be lost on you. I also believe that it will be a most beautiful unfolding of the Sovereignty of the Living God. What we're going to do is meddle with the concepts of the ultimate questions of "Who, What, When, Why and Where" (and "How"); in no particular order.

This month we'll deal with the "WHAT."

There is one sense in which the fundamental "WHAT" in life is ... "WHAT is the meaning of life?" For "WHAT" purpose have we been created; which we will address in the "Why" article, in the months to come. Or (if the idea of being created is not a foregone conclusion in your mind) the question would be For "WHAT" purpose have we come to be?

Now I must say (this is my personal opinion, but perhaps not mine alone) that if you do not believe that we were created, you're going to have a very difficult time arriving at the REAL "WHAT" in life. Because when our version of "What is real?" becomes unhinged from its mooring; the result is the woeful environment of "Relativism." For in the "relative" world, there are no true longitudinal (North-South) or latitudinal (East-West) coordinates. The answer to any question, in some sense, depends on who you ask; and what day it is; and whether the sun rose in the east or west. And pretty much, we could go virtually "anywhere" from there. So much for that.

"WHAT is the meaning of life?" For "WHAT" purpose have we been created? Or for some, the question is "Have we been created?" But for those who properly apprehend the tenor of the scriptures, this question has been settled. It is a foregone conclusion, that "in the beginning God created"(Genesis 1:1). The question: "WHAT is the meaning of life?" is not itself the ultimate "WHAT" question. This temporal existence that we call "life" is not "ultimate" in any real sense.

The ultimate "WHAT" question is just that: "WHAT?" (Hang in there, we're going to somewhere.)

If we answer the truly ultimate "WHAT?" question, then everything else falls neatly into place. So let's

ask, and answer, that question, shall we.

Question: "WHAT?" Answer: "God IS..."

Question: God *IS*...what?

Answer: God is everything that He has represented Himself to be. God is Sovereign. God is Holy. God is wise. God is Eternal. God is One. God is Righteous. God is Just, and the Justifier. God just IS

I beseech you; please... please... do not dismiss this on the basis of its simplicity. Do not say within your heart, "Oh, we already know that." Because, from the looks of things, I'm inclined to ask, "Do we, really?"

This is the ultimate "WHAT" that we must know and be committed to. From there, all of the other proper "what's" manifest themselves.

I won't wait until the end of the book to tell you that the correct answer to the "5W's" in life will find both its origin and its expression in the Personhood of God. Now, we have addressed the *ultimate and eternal* "WHAT" question.

Next let's look at the *temporal* question of "WHAT?"

The scriptures answer the "What" question in soooo many ways, and in each case, all roads will either begin with, or end with God.

Question: "WHAT is the meaning of life?" Answer: The simple answer is that we have been created in the image of the Triune, Sovereign God; that we might be conformed into the image of Christ, so that we might *know Him*. (1) The answer itself may be expressed in any number of other proper sentences, for sure. But this will suffice for now; the gist of it is the same. God is Sovereign. We were created in His image. He has purposed that we be conformed into the image of His Son.

What, do you imagine, would be the case if you re-read the scriptures with this major premise in

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mind? That in the back of the 66 books, and 40+ writers: God IS....

"Would you like to see what that looks like?" Okay, pick a scripture, any scripture.

Take ... say ... the *Ten Commandments*. For the sake of brevity, we'll meddle with only a few. But you may certainly make time and "pull back the covers" on the rest of them; especially, now that we've settled the question of the ultimate "WHAT?"

Ten Commandments (2)

1) Do not put any other god before Me

The real "WHAT" that provokes this commandment is that God *IS* … the only wise God. He says of Himself, "Before Me, there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me." ⁽³⁾

Another way of saying that is: "Do not place any other god, between us." As you can appreciate, if something stands between us and God, we have a line-of-sight problem. If there is another god between us; when I [God] look at you I see your idol, which I MUST judge. And when you look at Me, you see your idol, which you refuse to judge.

We have been created in the image of the Triune, Sovereign God; that we might be conformed into the image of Christ, so that we might know Him. How shall we be conformed, into the image of Christ? Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but when Christ who is [the *meaning of*] our life, shall appear, then shall we be like Him. (4) How shall we be like Him? "For we shall see God as He IS." And that is possible, only if there is no other "god" before Him. You may recall (from prior editions) that there is a Kingdom principle that "we become the image of the thing which we continually behold, or esteem." The Lord showed us this principle in at least two places in scripture:

- 1) When Jacob was keeping Laban's cattle. (5)
- 2) When God warned Israel about serving idols. (6)

2) Do not make for yourself any engraved images

The real "WHAT" that provokes this commandment is that God IS ... a consuming fire. He IS not like anything that He has created; whether in the heavens, or in the earth or in the sea, beneath the earth. (7) The Lord said, to Israel, "When I talked with you out of the mountain, you didn't see any graven images, did you? The making of graven images, is the result of a most pernicious case of amnesia. (8) It is when we forget the covenant of our God that we are driven to worship "people, places and things." (9) In fact, it is this peculiar "loss of memory" that is the only means by which the enemy may entice our hearts to worship anything other than God. No man who remembers the covenant God can be drawn away into idolatry. May I tarry here a moment longer?

Pray tell, from whence cometh this "peculiar memory loss?" Cometh it not on the heels of the graces of God, which we claim for ourselves? Here was God's warning to Israel (and to us):

Beware that you forget not the LORD your God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes ... If you do, then when you have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses, and lived in them; when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God ... And say in your heart, my power and the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth. Remember the LORD your God: for it is He that gives you power to get wealth; that He may establish His covenant ... (10)

So again, "WHAT is the meaning of life?" We were created in the image of God, that we might come to both know Him and be made like Him. God has a kingdom in the earth realm; the throne of

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which His Son shall occupy. He desires that we should sit with Him in His throne. (11) But this can only happen if we allow Him to conform us into the image of His Son (because the throne belongs to His Sons).

We could go on, and on, and on, but we'd end up in the same place we started; asking the question "WHAT?" and finding its rightful answer in that God IS...

Next month, God willing, we'll explore the "WHO" of life. <>cc>

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

<u>Scripture References</u> - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- (1) Genesis 1:26; Romans 8:30: Philippians 3:10
- (2) Exodus 20:2-17; Deuteronomy 5:6-
- (3) Isaiah 43:10-13; 1 Timothy 1:17
- ⁽⁴⁾ 1John 3:2-3
- (5) Genesis 30:37
- (6) Psalm 115:4-8
- (7) Deuteronomy 5:8
- (8) Deuteronomy 4:12, 15-18, 23-24
- (9) Deuteronomy 4:9
- (10) Deuteronomy 8:11-18
- (11) Revelation 3:21

The Beginning...

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

John 1:1

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show to you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.

1 John 1:1

not.

Now, I want to make a clarification before I go further. Of course there are plenty of times that God uses His people to minister the gospel to people in a very intentional way. This is part of the great commission.

What we are talking about today is the daily ministry that God does even when we are not aware of how He is using us. Knowing that our daily responsibility is to seek God on how He would have us live out the day (one day at a time), can relieve a lot of pressure for some people.

When we know that our daily ministry is a result (a direct result) of our daily living, this may help us to focus our activities. We've all heard that we, as believers, should be examples for other people. Yes, this is true. But, how exactly do we model the type of behavior others should follow? Do we do it by telling people how they ought to live? Are we modeling appropriate behavior when we are in church singing in the choir?

Many people have struggled with the concept of allowing God to use them on a daily basis. Many of us know that it's quite a handful just to make it through the day. In our lives we seem to have so many responsibilities and demands. Often we say and do things that may not bring honor to God. For example, we may be at work and a coworker does something that "makes us mad." We may respond in anger in that moment. Or, we may get home from work and because of the stress of the day, we may yell at our children or spouse.

When we are in these situations God still wants to use our lives to minister to other people. He never takes a break from wanting to use us. How can He do this when life itself can be so challenging, even before we take out time to "do ministry?" I submit to you that maybe we could take a vacation from thinking so much about

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"doing ministry" and focus more intently on "being ministry."

God helped me to realize that ministry is more who we are than the specific acts we engage in to spread the gospel. How about we concentrate a bit more on having our lives represent how we can yield to God in our daily situations as we face routine issues? If we can do this, we will find that God will use us to minister even when we have absolutely no idea that He is doing this.

Paul shares this truth with us in 2nd Corinthians 3:2. He says, "You are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all people (KJV paraphrased)." He was letting us know that while Christians will engage in specific activities to spread the gospel. The essential truth is that we don't just speak the gospel. Indeed, we "are' the gospel.

How we engage with God and society will dictate if God is being appropriately seen through our day-to-day lives. This means that we would do well to focus more intently on how we deal with our lives. That would include how we engage with our children, how we interact with our coworkers, neighbors, friends, and strangers, etc.

In order to "be" the gospel, we would have to spend quality time with God so that He can "spell" out how He wants us to go through our day. Why? If we are to be an accurate representation of God, we need to know (and do) what He instructs us. His instruction covers everything from what we wear to where we live. It covers how we spend our time and resources.

As we approach the second half of 2012, I encourage each of us to check in with God to see if we are being read correctly. If so, we can focus on the "living" of life, while God uses us to minister the gospel via epistle.

Be blessed! [LL]

Joyce White, LMSW

had not properly identified his enemy. May it be true that I kept under my body. I have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. I have brought it into subjection; so that the whole of my being would be at Your service. (9)

May it be true Lord, that the things that the world considered worthy of gain; those I counted loss for Christ. Not those only, My Lord, but I have counted "all things" but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. My goal, My King, was that I might win Christ. Lord, my heart's desire was that I might be found in You, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. (10)

May it be true of me oh Lord, that I have loved my neighbor ... that I have laid down my life for my friends ... that I have esteemed the wealth of others above my own. May it be true My Lord that "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost, except the son of perdition." (11)

May it be true that I have lived in such a way as that my life would manifest Your name. I hope that it was clear to those around me that Your character was preeminently important (to be sought after); and that Your authority over me was the guiding principle of my life.

My King, I pray that I have glorified You on the earth; and have finished the work that You gave me to do."

Here's the situation that we are faced with. Jesus *IS* Lord. There is no getting around it. That being the case, what duty do we owe Him, as our Lord?

Just now the hearts of some are tempted to recoil in disdain at the imposition of His Lordship. In America, we like to think that "we choose." We

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resent the thought that someone or something takes away our "right to choose." It's a Western disposition of heart (and not one that will long be held). In other countries, they know that there are many choices that affect their daily lives; which have already been made for them.

"It is my God-given right to *choose* who I serve!!" you demand (fist pounding the table). Hadn't Moses said as much to Israel?!? (12) Indeed he had. And I agree with both you and Moses. You may certainly *choose* who you serve. But that *still* doesn't change the fact, that Jesus IS Lord. Sure you may serve the gods of your fathers on the other side of the flood, if you choose. (13) But when the dance is over, there will only be One "piper to pay."

How dare you [JoAnn] tell me that Jesus Christ is my Lord, whether I like it or not. Well, He is. And at length we're going to have to answer for our disposition to His Lordship. And oh, what a weighty tally it shall be. Wisdom bids that we square our accounts with Him now and Him alone.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter:

Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. (14)

God speed. -JTI-

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

<u>Scripture References</u> - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

(1) Colossians 2:9

(2) Matthew 10:28

- (3) Proverbs 24:1
- (4) Deuteronomy 6:5-6; Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30
- (5) Acts 17:30

(6) Romans 2:16

- (7) John 14:15
- (8) John 15:12, 17; 21:15-17; 8:31
- (9) 1 Corinthians 9:26-27; Galatians 5:24
- (10) Philippians 3:7-9
- (11) John 17:12; 1 Corinthians 10:24
- (12) Deuteronomy 30:19
- (13) Joshua 24:2, 14
- (14) Ecclesiastes 13:13-14

How do you respond? How do you, by the word of God, justify your response? I'll leave that with you. But remember that for three years Judas walked and talked with Jesus. Do you recall (because I don't) any place in scripture that Jesus' behavior was untoward concerning Judas?

The scriptures teach that we wrestle not against flesh and blood. (6) Jesus knew this, even with Judas. He did not fight with Judas, even though Jesus knew that he would betray Him. (7) He was not like the wicked husbandmen, who beat and killed the servants who came for the harvest. Jesus settled the score on the Cross. Because He knew that the fight was between two Kingdoms, not two people. The same is true for us; our triumph will be no different. We yield up the proper harvest when we take the battle to the Cross and not to our neighbor. When we take the battle to the Cross, God is honored and the enemy loses "hands down." But when we take the battle to our neighbor, our adversary, our family, etc., God is not honored and we lose "hands down."

When the Lord prayed in John 17, He said to the Father, "I have manifested Your name, to the men You gave me out of the world." And we saw that repeatedly throughout the life of our Lord. But how did He manifest God's name; by responding with love, joy, peace, longsuffering ... etc., to the events of life. Is not the name of God the sum and substance of all love, joy, peace? Is not the Kingdom made manifest through righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost? (8)

We often think of the "temptation" of Jesus as having occurred in the wilderness, primarily. But I submit to you that the temptation of Jesus was in full force "from the Manger to the Cross." I personally believe that it was even heightened during our Lord's last three years "between the Jordan and the Cross."

We see the events (*servants*) of our Lord's life that were sent to prove Him; to draw out of Him.

Places like Gethsemane as the soldiers came to collect Him;

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Things like being hauled to and from judgment halls, where He was beaten and spit on. *People* like His brother Israel, yelling "crucify Him; crucify Him."

So we see that our life's events (*people*, *places and things*) are servants that are assigned to prove us, or to draw out of us the wine of the vineyard. Now that we know who these servants are, we are to respond to them with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc. =NHW=

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<u>Scripture References</u> - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- (1) *Genesis* 1:29
- (2) John 15:2
- (3) 1 Corinthians 9:11
- (4) 1 Corinthians 1:30
- (5) Galatians 5:22-23
- (6) Ephesians 6:12
- (7) John 6:64
- (8) Romans 14:17

Lord, Lord

For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Romans 14:11-12

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

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?

- 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!

<u>Scripture References</u> - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- (1) Philippians 2:12 (2) John 15:1-2; Luke 13:7
- (3) Matthew 21:17-19
- (4) Gleanings and adaptations from A.W. Tozer's Man: The Dwelling Place of God, p.62-68 (5) Hebrews 13:20-21

SUMMARY ←

The Chief Cornerstone

"What?" you ask; "are the five W's of life?" You already know them, really, they are the "Who, What, When, Why and Where" (and we'll add the "How") of life. We use these terms quite frequently in the course of life. However, there is an ultimate question and ultimate answer for each. And if respected in its proper place, all subsequent "Who? What? When? ..." questions will find their expressions within the ultimate answer.

Journey to Intimacy

Just now the hearts of some are tempted to recoil in disdain at the imposition of His Lordship. In America, we like to think that "we choose." We resent the thought that someone or something takes away our "right to choose." It's a Western disposition of heart (and not one that will long be held). In other countries, they know that there are many choices that affect their daily lives; which have already been made for them.

SUMMARY ★

The Leadership Corner

When we know that our daily ministry is a result (a direct result) of our daily living, this may help us to focus our activities. We've all heard that we, as believers, should be examples for other people. Yes, this is true. But, how exactly do we ...

Nutrition, Health & Wellness

You've seen it. You're sitting at a *red light* that seems to be the longest red light in the history of automotive transportation. (*Servant*) You're in a long line at the store and the cashier has to shut down just as you approach the counter. Now you have to move to the <u>end</u> of another line. (*Servant*) You're passed over for a promotion. (*Servant*) You just bought a new house, now you find yourself laid off from work. (*Servant*) What do you do?

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