

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 2011

Render therefore unto God ... **the things that are God's.** (Matthew 22:21 KJV)

The Chief Cornerstone



What's the Difference?

Between Mary and Martha

I'd like to share with you a discussion that took place during one of our "girl's road trips." One of my sisters asked quite "out of the clear blue;" "What was the difference between Mary and Martha?"

While I had never really previously given that much thought; I asked the Lord, "Father, how will You answer that question for us, today?"

Here are some of the things that the Lord revealed during that initial conversation and a few days thereafter:

There was an event, at Martha's house, in which Jesus was present; Martha was cumbered about with many things and Mary was content to sit at Jesus' feet. ⁽¹⁾

We noticed that Martha was busily seeing to the affairs

Chief Cornerstone

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The Leadership Corner Leadership Living, Inc.

When "No" is not "No"

How many times have we heard God say "No?" He may have said it audibly or He may have spoken through our environment to let us know there was something He did *not* want us to do. When God says "no" sometimes it can be painful. We may feel like He is angry with us or that we don't deserve what we have been praying for.

In this article we will explore the concept of "No." We will delve into what it truly means (particularly when God says it). I believe we will walk away with a new revelation and a greater appreciation for our loving Heavenly Father.

Paul experienced God saying "no" in II Corinthians 12:9 (KJV paraphrased). Paul let us know that he asked God three times to deliver him from the "thorn in his flesh." Paul described this thorn as the messenger of Satan who would send seemingly constant persecution and bondage. We know that Paul was often imprisoned, beaten, scorned, and at times had very few resources to do the work God had called him to do.

In effect, Paul let God know that it was quite a burden for him to carry out this amazing ministry while always having to deal with persecutions, poverty, and trials. God gave Paul magnificent revelations and did powerful miracles through him. We know that Paul wrote approximately two thirds of the New Testament. He was the lead in bringing the gospel to the non-Jewish world

The Leadership Corner

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Son of My Wisdom



The Relationship Between the Ethos of God and the Ethos of Man

We've come a long way, haven't we? We began with the Ethos, Logos and Pathos of God. We went, from there, to the ethos, logos and pathos of man. We come now to the task of receiving revelation of the *relationship* between the Ethos of God and the ethos of man.

THE MODEL ETHOS

Essentially, the ethos of man is designed to be a manifestation of the Holy One; of the Ethos of God.

As soon as we recognize that we are patterned after God, you come to realize that the law of God is descriptive of God, and prescriptive to man. God is. Man is coming to be, having been patterned after God. Therefore, man is coming to be "as" God is. The Lord directs that we are to be "holy" for He is Holy. Paul goes on to say, "Let this mind be in your which was also in Christ Jesus." ^(Philippians 2:5-8) Why?! Because our ethos was patterned after His Ethos; like Father, like sons.

LAW vs. COVENANT

The OT laws, as we understand them, are not laws of God's character and authority. They are, however, laws that teach us about God's character and authority. We have also to remember something about commandments. All commandments fall within the context of covenant. That is the case with the exception of one: repentance is the only real commandment also given to those outside of covenant. Everything else falls within the covenantal context: commandments to Adam/Eve, Abraham, Moses, to the priesthood, to Israel, to the Church. These all fall within covenant.

Man is not himself a law, and therefore is not to be simply led to a law. Man is a personal being, and ought therefore to be conformed unto another Personal being, namely God (as revealed in Christ



A Journey to Intimacy Vanity of Vanities

Question: What profit has a man of all his labor which he takes under the sun?

Answer: Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity. ⁽¹⁾

For the purposes of this discourse, let's set parameters on the words "vain" and "vanity." This will enable us to synchronize our first step of this journey together.

Glossary (by JoAnn): The term "vain" represents excessive *self*-absorption or narcissism (personal). The term "vanity" represents futile, unsuccessful and ineffective efforts (impersonal).

Now let's ask that question again:

Question: What profit has a man of all his labor which he takes under the sun?

Answer: The most impotent of incompetence, says the Preacher, the most futile of all dead works; worthless.

Now doesn't that just frustrate the living daylights out of you? Here we have the second wisest man that ever lived; and arguably one of the richest men of record. And Solomon's clinical and empirical assessment of this life and all of its labor is that it is "vain, fruitless, barren, and full of thorns and briars." Mind you, this is the same "life" that *we* sell our souls to attain its summit; as if Solomon hadn't already warned us, that there is literally nothing at the top of that mountain. There is at least half a dozen more, like Solomon, who will attest to the validity of his analysis.

And Solomon was not the first person to say this; he's simply repeating what God told Adam. God said to Adam (and his posterity), "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow shall you eat

Precepts in Practice



Our Standard Response to God

Have you ever thought about what your “standard” response to God should be? What about when you are dealing with other people? Do you have a “standard” response when issues arise, things don’t go the way you thought they should, or when people let you down?

Most people have heard about training that teaches us how to “respond” instead of “react.” We are taught that when we are in reactionary mode, we allow other people and external circumstances to rule our thoughts, emotions, and behavior.

We are told by “experts” that we should learn to *respond* to situations versus *reacting* to them. The professional trainers teach us that “responding” has to do with being proactive. It has to do with planning how we will interact in a variety of circumstances. By planning our responses we take ownership in how we think, feel, and behave.

We can apply this principle to our interactions with God. We can “plan” our responses to whatever God tells us to do. I know that this may sound a bit “plastic.” Why would anyone want to “plan” a response to the Heavenly Father?

After all, isn’t God spontaneous sometimes? Doesn’t He tell us things at seemingly the last minute? What does that old song say? “He may not come when you want Him, but He’s always right on time.” It would appear that God sometimes waits until the last minute to let us in on what He is doing. Some would say that this is one reason why we get caught off guard, possibly causing a variety of reactions on our part.

Let’s check in with Paul on something he wrote, related to how we should “plan” to respond to God. In Romans 10:13-17, Paul details the steps it takes to actually get into a relationship with God through Christ. He tells us that people would need to “call upon the name of the Lord” in order to receive salvation.

This sounds simple at first glance. But, he then backs into what has to happen before we can get to the place of “calling on the Lord.” Paul shows that we can’t call on God if we don’t believe in Him. We also can’t believe in God if we don’t know about Him. Further, we can’t know



Boot Camp

Submission - *The Sanctification of the Soul*



Introduction – The Next Journey

Last month, in this column, we summed up the 7-part series entitled *Public Enemy #1 – The Flesh*. It was a somewhat intimidating look at the human spirit, the soul, the flesh and their various relationships to the Spirit of God.

Within that summation, we noted (now stated more perfectly) that the Lord revealed to us how that the Spirit of God intends, by the human spirit, to mentor and lead the soul into sweet submission and obedience to the Word of God. Thereby we become progressively sanctified into an amazing expression of “Son-ship.”

I know we are not fond of the word “sanctification.” But is it possible that we shun this word because we have allowed the enemy (or the world) to vilify it for us? As long as the word “sanctify” is in the Bible; and as long as the Lord is calling us to this way of life, it will remain a part of these discourses. It must. We must say what God says, and we must say it the way He says it. Or we make ourselves liars. The Lord teaches us that we are to reckon God’s Word to be our standard of truth; and everything to the contrary we are to reckon as untrustworthy.⁽¹⁾

To “sanctify” essentially means to “set oneself apart; or to be set apart for God’s use.” It’s noble to talk about “belonging only to God,” but we often fail to undertake the journey that gets us there. Many of us are fond of the notion of going to Europe, but are not interested in boarding the plane or ship that is required to get us there. Well until “teleportation” becomes a practical and affordable means of transportation; this is what we have to work with.

How does the Lord intend to sanctify us to Himself? “Great question,” you say. Well the answer is even greater. I overheard our Lord saying in one of His conversations with the Father, “...sanctify them [*that’s us*] through Your truth. Your Word, Father, is truth.”⁽²⁾

One reason that we really, really *NEED* to talk about this concept of *sanctification*, is because what we *are*

Living Waters



Faith, Hope & Charity

And now abides *Faith, Hope, Charity*, these three; but the greatest of these is Charity. ⁽¹⁾

Ahh, what a lovely threesome *Faith, Hope* and *Charity*.

I received this a few weeks ago:

Hope “does not see”
Faith “sees”
Charity “loves what Faith sees”

I had previously and often wondered about the relationship between *Hope* and *Faith*. Along the way, while talking with one of my accountability partners and discussion Romans 8, the Lord dropped this on us. By permission, I’d like to share it with you.

HOPE (*does not see*)

“Hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man sees, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” ⁽²⁾

Said otherwise; hope does not see the object of its expectation. In many ways, hope is like an arrow shot into the air. At some point, you know that it will return to the ground, but “when and where” is anybody’s guess. On the other hand ...

FAITH (*sees*)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ⁽³⁾ Faith is able to “see” or substantiate the object of hope. Why?!? Because faith is like an arrow, pointed directly at the “bull’s eye.” Faith has the object in its cross-hairs. “What is that object?” you ask.

The object of genuine, Kingdom-worthy faith is

Nutrition, Health & Wellness



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*)

(Introduction)

Spirulina & Chlorella

We’re excited that the Father has given us permission to include a *Health, Nutrition* and *Wellness* column.

The Lord has been sharing beautiful nutritional tidbits with us and they are transforming our lives. They are also changing our relationship with food; which is vital for a servant of God. ⁽¹⁾

We’d like to share some of these morsels with you.

The scriptures teach that we are destroyed because we lack knowledge. ⁽²⁾ This is particularly true as it regards nutrition. It may well be said that we are destroying ourselves (with our knife and fork) because we lack nutritional knowledge.

You already know this, but it bears repeating. We are in a war; and in order to be battle-ready we must maintain our temples in good working order. Most of the things that we “hunger and thirst after” are detrimental to our health and some of us don’t even know it. All we know is that it “tastes” good. As mother used to say, “Everything that tastes good isn’t necessarily good for you.”

If what we eat does not “give life” to our body, then death in its various expressions (whether immediate or protracted) is the unfortunate alternative. It’s useless praying for a miracle, when we neglect to do our duty; especially when it is within our power to do it.

Some of us, who know that we are not doing the best we can, aren’t sure what to do to change that.

of the home, and serving. And we see Mary, who was sitting at his feet; while Martha seemed to be doing all of the work. Now when Martha asked Jesus to make Mary get up and help her; Jesus declined Martha's petition. This decline came on the grounds of the fact that of the two options to "serve" or to "sit;" Mary had chosen the better of the two.

Now one of the challenges for many of the women today (myself included), is that we can identify with Martha. We believe that we can "bring home the bacon and fry it up in the pan" For thus we have been socialized. So for us, it's possible that Jesus's rebuke of Martha's request was (on the face of it) disconcerting.

It seemed to us that Martha was "busy" and Mary was not. Somehow we have placed a mantle on "busyness" as if it had some intrinsic value. It doesn't. I'll challenge you to consider that both Mary and Martha were both very active. Martha was "busy" baking bread; and Mary was "busy" partaking of the Bread of Life.

So what are we to understand from this discipline?

The Lord said to us (that day) although what Martha was doing was not wrong; what Mary had chosen was far superior in nature.

Here are a few of the implications of each of their choices:

Martha was busy doing what *she* understood was her responsibility (to serve). While Mary was doing what was an imperative for every servant of Christ (to sit).

If Jesus were thirsty, who would know it first: Mary or Martha? Martha would very likely have brought Jesus something to drink on the basis of the possibility that he might be, at that time, thirsty. Mary would have seen, very directly, his thirst. We cannot serve God on the basis of what *we think* He wants us to do "for Him." We must at all times be sensitive to both His very specific directives and His intimations. And this we derive from sitting at his feet.

The scriptures teach that *man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*⁽²⁾ Who was in a better position to receive "every word that proceeded out of His mouth?" It was Mary who sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.⁽³⁾

The scriptures teach us the various outcomes when the

word of God is sown "among thorns" versus when it is sown on "good ground." The seeds that fell among thorns were choked by the cares of this world.⁽⁴⁾ The Lord is sharing with us an "IF/THEN" principle of the Kingdom; it is itself a law. It is a law in, as much as, every ... single ... time you find that the one event occurs, the other will follow of necessity. The law is just this: *IF* the Word of God falls among thorns; *THEN* the thorns will choke the Word and render it unfruitful. There are no two ways about it. The law of the Lord is PERFECT it does not change for a-n-y-o-n-e.⁽⁵⁾

What were Jesus' words to Martha? He said, "*Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things.*"⁽⁶⁾ The word of God is unfruitful in the hearts of those who are "*careful and troubled about many things.*" Does that sound like a description of the hearts of the people of God these days? There is no need praying that the Word of God not be choked when it falls among the cares of our life. That's like standing out in the rain without an umbrella and praying that you don't get wet. The Word of God cannot lie; nor will the law of God make concessions for us.

A few days after the original "Mary/Martha" discussion, the topic came up again in a different conversation. The Lord further revealed the following:

He said, "You cannot fully engage a comparative analysis of the differences between a "Mary" heart and a "Martha" heart, based on the first day of school (where Mary was sitting at His feet)." He said take a closer look at the heart of Mary. So I found myself in the eleventh chapter of St. John; when Lazarus died (the first time).

This is what the Lord pointed out to me. He said look at the "works and words" of each Martha and Mary, when they approached me as I drew nigh to Bethany (shortly after Lazarus had been buried).⁽⁷⁾

Martha's (works): Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. Martha's (words): "**Lord, if you had been here, my brother had not died.**" (Verses 20-21)

Mary's (works): As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet.

Mary's (words): **"Lord, if you had been here, my brother had not died."** (Verses 29, 32-22)

Contemplate that for a while, as we take a look at the twelfth chapter of St. John. This time, Jesus finds Himself in Bethany; six days before the Passover. Again we find Martha serving; and again we find Mary *at His feet*; but this time she has not come empty handed. Mary proceeds to pour upon the feet of our Lord, spikenard. A very expensive and humbling offering she makes. She anoints his feet with ointment (expensive) and wipes them with her hair (humbling).

There is something very distinct about the feet of Jesus. The scripture says "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"⁽⁸⁾ If you search the scriptures, I believe that you'll find that whenever someone came willingly to the feet of Jesus their needs were met; their petitions were granted.⁽⁹⁾ Throughout the scriptures we find "the Mary heart" at the feet of Jesus.

Disclaimer: In no way are we intending to vilify Martha's character and glorify Mary's character. The scriptures say that *Jesus loved Martha and her sister (Mary)*.⁽¹⁰⁾ We are simply looking to see what it was that positioned Mary at the feet of Jesus. Because we see that (in the words of our Lord) this particular posture is "needful."⁽¹¹⁾

Father

May it be Your pleasure to give us a heart like Mary's?

A heart that hastens to Your feet. Amen

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ Luke 10:38

⁽²⁾ Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4

⁽³⁾ Luke 10:39

⁽⁴⁾ Mark 4:7-8, 18-20

⁽⁵⁾ Psalm 19:7

⁽⁶⁾ Mark 10:41

⁽⁷⁾ John 11: 1-46

⁽⁸⁾ Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15

⁽⁹⁾ Luke 17:15-19; Matthew 15:30

⁽¹⁰⁾ John 11:5

⁽¹¹⁾ Luke 10:42

(as well as to many Jews).

So, what was God saying when He said "no" to Paul's constant request for deliverance? To answer this question let's borrow a definition from the Webster New World Dictionary. One key definition of "no" is to "disagree with."

When God disagreed with Paul, He was letting Paul know that what He had planned was better and more appropriate for Paul than what Paul "thought" he needed or wanted in order to fulfill his purpose. Paul had a sincere passion that he wanted to achieve. And he thought that his request would help him reach his goals.

In Philippians 3:8-10 (KJV paraphrased) Paul lets us in on his passion. He says he counts all things as loss that he may be found in God not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Paul went on to say he wanted to know Christ in the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

I don't know about you, but I think this is a "tall order to fill." Paul wanted to have an intimate relationship with God as he went about to do the work God has placed in his heart. He didn't want anything to stop or hinder him from achieving this goal.

This is what God honored. He honored it to the point that when Paul requested deliverance from his "thorn in the flesh" in order to freely fulfill his destiny, God let him know that this desire would not get him to where he truly wanted to be. God said, I disagree with your request (in other words, God said "no").

Here's what we can understand about God, from Paul's experience. God places passions and dreams inside of every person. We then have an opportunity to go through life seeking to accomplish what God has purposed for us. However, at various points along our journey we sometimes believe we know what it will take to get us to where we want to go.

Well, sometimes we may be right on target, but at other times, God has to let us know that He has a better route for us to take. And, we must understand that God's route may not be the most pleasant route, but it is the one that will fulfill His heart as it relates to our journey.

So, now we can see that there are times when God will disagree with us. Our requests (as sincere as they may be) will not always line up with His desires for us. When this happens, He will say “no.” Our response should then be gratitude (not anger, depression, or sadness) for learning that He has something different in mind, as well as something greater in store for us.

When God says “no” it often means that He disagrees with our request in light of what He has planned.

Be blessed!

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

- The *recompense* is the fulfillment of how we relate to the promises/provision and the commandments of God in our “coming to be.”

Below is a table for illustration.

Covenant	God	Man
Promise/Provision	Directly about God; and is performed by God to man	Indirectly about man
Commandment	Indirectly about God	Directly about man; and is performed by man to God
Recompense	Fulfillment of man’s relationship to God in light of His promises, His provision, and His commandments.	

Son of My Wisdom

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Jesus).

We must *not* see the law as an end in itself; that is legalism. We must see the law as a means to another end; that end is Christ. For, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to them that believe ^(Romans 10:4). Remember, the law is a means, a schoolmaster leading to Christ ^(Galatians 3:24). For the law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul ^(Psalm 17:9).

So, man is not to be led **unto** a law, but as Psalms here tells us is to be converted **by** a law, and as Galatians tells us, led unto Christ. Now, in as much as law essentially pertains to covenant, let’s explore covenant a bit.

- Covenant is comprised as *promise/provision, commandment, and recompense*. *Promise/provision*, describes something about God, or you might say reveals something about God directly, and prescribe something for man indirectly.
 - *Provision* is something God has done
 - *Promise* is something God shall do
- Both reveal something about God, his character, and his authority.
- *Commandment* describes something about God indirectly, **and** prescribes something for man directly.

So then, the primary function of God’s covenant with man is so that man may know God intimately, and be conformed unto God.

God, in a sense, says “Man, you were made to look like Me (God). This is what I look like (Jesus). Therefore “be becoming” what I’ve shown you in Christ.”

In other words, be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect ^(Genesis 17:1; Deuteronomy 18:13; Matthew 5:48; 2 Timothy 3:17; James 1:4). So you might begin to see that sin is a transgression of not only the *law* of God, but of the *covenant* of God, of the *Ethos* (character and authority) of God.

James 4:11-12 tells us that if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. God is the only judge though; he alone lays out a standard for us to live up to. This scripture is clear; either you are a doer or a judge, not both. We are only to abide by the standard. Jesus says

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if ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love ^(John 15:10).

However, when we judge the law of God, we attempt to supplant the Lawgiver. For the Lawgiver and the Judge is one, as implied by James 4:12.

So in summary, the way in which the *ethos* of God and the *ethos* of man relate is thus: (regenerate) man is in a covenant with God; which was made by the grace of God; purchased by the blood of Christ; and secured (sealed) by the Holy Spirit so that man might be conformed unto God in Christ having his primary focus on his character.

Again, how does the *ethos* (character and authority) of man relate to the *Ethos* of God? Man is supposed to sanctify his *character* unto God. Said otherwise, man is to set apart his *character* for development and use by God. And we will find that God has sanctified authority unto man in Christ.

However if man will not be conformed unto Christ, he will not come into the true and proper exercise of his authority. And in that man, the scripture is fulfilled "from him shall be taken even that he hath ^(Mark 4:25) „

Furthermore, it is imperative that we appreciate that, in as much as God authority flows out of His character (i.e., that He is Holy). Likewise, man's authority is apportioned to him on the basis of the conformity of his character to God. That being the, anyone seeking to promote authority without (or above) character (or power above purity) is a wolf in a "sheep suit." He is a robber seeking to come into the fold by another way. Flee from him into the truth of the way of God. The way of God is character first, followed by authority (*ethos*).

Seek first the character of God; and the authority of God will be bestowed upon you accordingly. Such is the development of man's *ethos* in conformity with God's *Ethos*. -SOMW-

David L. White

of it all the days of your life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of your face shall you eat bread, until you return unto the ground."⁽²⁾ Without exception, this is the experience of every "son of Adam." While some of us may have been born with a "silver spoon;" the word of the Lord does not return to Him void. In light of this we understand why Jesus could say, "Take My yoke upon you, because My yoke is easy and My burden light."⁽³⁾ Our Lord's offer would not have mattered to us if this declaration did not stand in stark contrast to our own labors.

What's that, Solomon?

Solomon said whether you win or lose ... whether you cross the finish line first or last ... whether you die with the most toys, or not. The outcomes are the same. Solomon said it this way, "All things come alike, to all: there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean"⁽⁴⁾

In some of my circles, we have a phrase we use when someone seems to be working up lather over something and as a result loses sight of the "real" goal. We say "be watchful of your investment or involvement in "this or that" because it won't "cross over." Solomon said it like this "Whatsoever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, where you're headed."⁽⁵⁾

So we see that Solomon wasn't the first to say it; and he wasn't the last to say it. Jesus said it like this, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever will save his life shall lose it: and whoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it."⁽⁶⁾

Whatever you do "in this life" as it pertains strictly "to this life," will all result in vanity. So says the two wisest men who ever lived (Jesus &

Solomon). That being the case, you have what amounts to two choices. We can “run and hide our heads in the sand,” until the shooting stops (not preferable). Or we can seek counsel from the Word of God.

All is not lost. The Lord tells us very certainly and very sweetly, how to navigate these choppy waters.

Here is some insight, to this somewhat dismal situation; followed by a bright and shiny bit of revelation as a crescendo.

The scriptures say that God cursed the ground and said that no good thing will come from the “work of man’s hands” (as a way of life). But work we must (it is a command of God).

Why the dichotomy, Father?

First, Father, You say that “if a man doesn’t work he ought not eat.”⁽⁷⁾

Then, my Lord, You say, that all of man’s labor is for his mouth, and yet his appetite is not filled.⁽⁸⁾

What is the reason for this seeming contradiction? The Lord whispered it to Solomon.

Now, we’ll want to listen very carefully to this next portion. ...

The Lord said to Solomon, “this sore travail (or painstaking labor of futility) has God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith.”⁽⁹⁾ “What in the world does that mean?” you ask. This means that the Lord has placed us in this precariously futile situation to give us a good “working over.” He has thus situated us, so that we would at length understand *WHY* He told Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

He winked it to us, again, when He described, through Moses, why the children of Israel were lead through the wilderness. God said that He led Israel through the wilderness to “*take them the shortest route to Canaan*.” Oh, wait ... I’m sorry ... that came from the “*Your Best Life Now*” version of the Bible. The “adapted” KJV Bible

says it this way; “the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to prove you, to [make known] what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments, or not.”⁽¹⁰⁾ I think we all know what came of that situation.

Now lest, we sit smugly in our “lazy boy” lifestyle, and judge Israel for their wicked hearts; allow me to pass the mirror. Israel is not the only nation God led through the wilderness. There is a nation of “priests and kings” who is in their wilderness experience right now. And for the VERY same reason that Israel was led there; to humble us, and to prove us, to [make known] what is in our hearts, whether we will keep His commandments, or not.” From the looks of things, we’re not faring much better than Israel did, are we.

The scriptures say this of *us*, “For the creature (all created things) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope.”⁽¹¹⁾ **Translation:** *For all created things were made subject to vanity and futility, not directly of their own volition, but for reasons that flow out of the Sovereign wisdom of Him who hath so assigned creation (to vanity; for the purpose of provoking hope in the creature. All of this to provoke hope!?! But why?!?*

Because we are saved by hope!!!⁽¹²⁾ *Hope* (if genuine) leads to *Faith*, which leads to *Charity* (Love); which is the fulfillment of the Law.⁽¹³⁾

In the beginning, when Adam disobeyed, we were plunged into “sowing by the sweat of our brow and reaping vanity.”⁽¹⁴⁾ Said otherwise, we sowed to the wind and have since been reaping the whirlwind.⁽¹⁵⁾ Vanity, all is vanity.

So what again, is the purpose of our labor under the sun?

There is a sense in which the purpose is not so much what you *get* by your labors that matters.

It is what you *become*. As many as received Him, to them He gave power to *become* the sons of God, even to them that believe on (or hope in) His name.⁽¹⁶⁾

Now Solomon summarized his analysis of “all things vain” on this note:

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.⁽¹⁷⁾

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ Ecclesiastes 1:2-3

⁽²⁾ Genesis 3:17-19

⁽³⁾ Matthew 11:30

⁽⁴⁾ Ecclesiastes 9:2

⁽⁵⁾ Ecclesiastes 9:10

⁽⁶⁾ Matthew 16:26-25

⁽⁷⁾ 2 Thessalonians 3:10

⁽⁸⁾ Ecclesiastes 6:7

⁽⁹⁾ Ecclesiastes 1:13; 3:10

⁽¹⁰⁾ Deuteronomy 8:2

⁽¹¹⁾ Romans 8:20

⁽¹²⁾ Romans 8:24

⁽¹³⁾ Romans 13:10

⁽¹⁴⁾ Genesis 3:17-19

⁽¹⁵⁾ Hosea 8:7

⁽¹⁶⁾ John 1:12

Wrong ... Ask Again

For all the promises of God in *Him [that is Christ Jesus]* are “Yes” and in Him, “Amen” ... (2 Corinthians 1:20)

His answer is “Yes.”

Your question is wrong.

JoAnn C. White

about God if we haven’t heard of Him. On top of that, we can’t hear about God without a person giving us information on who He is (a preacher). The plot continues to thicken because a preacher can’t give us the information if he hasn’t been officially “sent” by God.

Wow, what a maze of steps that must be taken just to be able to “call on God” for help. Paul finally gives his conclusion or summary for all of the steps. He says, “So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing comes by the word of God” (Romans 10:17 KJV paraphrased).

Now, many of us have read this scripture, but may not have applied it to developing a “standard” response to God. We usually focus on how we come to have faith in God. But, let’s take a moment to go backwards and unveil another revelation in this same passage.

The second part of the passage says that “hearing comes by the word of God.” First we will get a definition on what “hearing” really is. And, as is regular practice, we will use Webster’s Dictionary. It says that “hearing” is the ability to perceive stimuli through the auditory senses. Simply but, our ears allow us to become aware of activity using sound.

The scripture says that “hearing” comes by the word. We already know that the Holy Spirit is the living word of God. As a result, we can understand that the Holy Spirit “speaks” revelation to our human spirit directly from God. He makes us aware of God and what God wants us to know.

This is a really powerful principle. Many people (Christians in particular) say that God never talks to them. Well, this is an interesting concept since the Holy Spirit is the one that makes us aware of God and His presence.

When the Holy Spirit causes us to “know” something about God, He is in fact “speaking” to us. And, when He speaks, we are then able to “hear” Him. As a result, we obtain revelation, information, knowledge, and wisdom that we would not otherwise have available to us. What an awesome God!

As we continue to work our way backwards, we need to look at what happens when we are able to “hear” God. Scripture says that “faith” comes by hearing.

This means that once we become aware of something about God, something else can happen....faith.

Now, it may sound as if faith is an automatic outcome of hearing God. But, this is definitely not the case. How we respond to hearing God is our choice. Indeed, Romans 10:16 lets us know that not everyone who hears the word responds in faith. This is what our discussion is all about. We have an option as to how we respond to God. We can choose to respond in faith or we can choose to react to what we hear God saying depending on what He says at any given time.

For example, recently God was dealing with my husband and me on a decision we needed to make. God wanted us to leave a particular group we've been involved in for the last three years. Once we understood what He wanted us to do, we knew the next step would be to contact our leaders to let them know of our decision to leave the group.

We were well aware that the news would be surprising and not easy to take. I thought it would be best to email our leaders and keep the message short and to-the-point. Well, God apparently disagreed with my intentions because right after my husband and I agreed on our course of action, God caused us to run into our leaders in the grocery store that same day.

Meeting them in the store was totally unexpected. In addition, we were not prepared to tell them what we were just talking about. But, as they greeted us and we all began to engage in "small talk," God specifically told me to tell them what we had just decided. I then motioned to my husband and he agreed. So, I told them the news about our decision to leave the group.

While the news was not easy to hear, they let us know that they understood and they supported us. We all hugged and they thanked us for telling them in person as opposed to sending an "impersonal" email.

My point is that I "heard" God pushing me to tell our leaders about our decision. I really didn't have to think long about it because I have developed a "standard" response to any and everything God says to me. My standard response is "faith." With this faith comes obedience.

As believers, it really doesn't matter what God tells us to do. We can (and should) plan a "standard" response to God. That is, we should decide that we will always respond in faith (and obedience) to Him. With my personal story, I didn't know exactly how our leaders

would receive this news, but I knew that since God told me to tell them, He would handle what happened after that.

Developing a standard response of "faith" to God has to do with our commitment to trust Him. We have to choose to believe that He loves us and that He will protect us in every situation. He will never allow anything to happen that is not in His plan (so long as we follow His directives).

One of the benefits of developing a standard faith response is that we don't waste time waffling back and forth trying to decide what we are going to do **EACH** time God tells us things that may not be easy to digest.

Developing a standard response of faith means taking the position that no matter what God says, we will let Him know that we believe in Him and that we trust Him. In addition, it means that we will do whatever He tells us to do when we "hear" Him. We may not fully understand every detail about what God wants us to do. But, as soon as we know He spoke to us, we are to immediately respond in faith.

This may mean that we simply acknowledge that we heard Him and we agree with Him. So, let's walk through a short, prayerful response of faith.

"Thank you Father for speaking to my heart. I agree with you. I may not fully understand or know how to do what you have placed in my heart. But, I believe I heard you and I will put my trust in you. Thank you for guiding me, providing for me, and protecting me as I do my best to follow your instructions in Jesus name, amen."

This is how we develop a standard response to God. By doing so, we greatly reduce any damage the enemy (or our own flesh) will try to do tossing thoughts into our minds for us to try to figure out whether or not we are going to submit to God's individual instructions.

Our strategy is to plan to submit to **ALL** of God's directives. As soon as we "hear" Him, our goal is to respond in faith.

Until next we speak, I encourage you to develop your "standard" response and practice, practice, practice!

-PIP~

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

talking about is not working. There is a sense in which the more we seem to talk about “the things of God;” the further away from the truth of God we are removed. Can’t tell?!? Just walk over to the window and look outside ... look at the world around us. The scriptures teach us that righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. ⁽³⁾ Our nation is not being exalted, is it? Probably not! But, why not?!? One guess ... because the salt has lost its savor. We are the “salt of the earth.” ⁽⁴⁾ Doesn’t that just make you want to curl up in the corner and sleep until all of this “blows over?” Unfortunately (or fortunately) that is not an option. You’ll notice that when our Lord shared this very deep and broad truth with us in the Sermon on the Mount, He didn’t say that “we ought to be the salt of the earth, so act like it.” He said that we ARE the salt of the earth, whether we act like it or not. So that if the earth is not being salted (or changed by our presence in it) then it doesn’t therefore mean that we are not salt. It means that we have lost our ability to change our environments. (Not good.)

We ARE the “light of the world.” ⁽⁵⁾ What does “light” do exactly? Well ...

Jesus was introduced to the world by John as the “*light that lights every man that comes into the world.*” ⁽⁶⁾

The scriptures say that when Jesus began His ministry “*The people who sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” ⁽⁷⁾ This is what light says.

Jesus, Himself, said “*I AM the light of the world: he that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*” ⁽⁸⁾ Here, He is showing us what light does. He says, “JoAnn or (put your name here) you are of the Light of the world, if anyone follows your way of life, they should not be walking in darkness (should they).” Our Lord genuinely meant to drive this point home, so He says further, that *when you light a candle, you put it on a candlestick. Why?!? So that it can give light to everyone else in the house.* ⁽⁹⁾ As if that were not enough, we are admonished to “*let our lights shine, so that men may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven.*” ⁽¹⁰⁾ Are we beginning to “see the light?” (No pun intended)

But as a body of believers that’s not what we are doing, is it? If the world gets any darker, we’ll have to turn off the sun.

Our Lord is returning for a bride whose light is shining brightly, in a very dark world. We get a hint of that in the parable of the ten virgins. ⁽¹¹⁾ But how, you ask, do we get “there” from “here?” We get there by way of the “Ministry of Reconciliation.” ⁽¹²⁾

First we “live it;” then we ‘give it.’

It looks something like this: Jesus is the light of the world. And he said, that if any man would come after Him ... said otherwise, if any man would be the light of the world, in the same way that He is the light of the world ...

- 1) They must *deny themselves*,
- 2) They must *take up their cross*, and
- 3) They must *follow Him*. ⁽¹³⁾

Follow Him? For about 33 years Jesus traversed the breadth and length of the land. Follow Him where, exactly?

This next journey is a more specific stroll along the “Via Dolorosa” (the road that leads to Calvary).

We like to think of journeys as delightful events; set about with exuberant anticipation. Sometimes that’s true; but this journey is a sobering look at the work of sanctifying the soul. This will be an awakening exploration of the processes of “setting the soul apart to God.” The Spirit of God, by way of the human spirit, purposes to draw the attention of the soul to its duty to comply with the mandates of the Word of God.

One of the many things that make this a sober undertaking is that we have allowed ourselves to become so entrenched in the system of this world that we shutter to contemplate a “returning to the God of our salvation.” But if I would be honest with you, we are going to “shutter” either way. It’s what happens “after” that should determine our course of action.

It is unnerving to learn that the things (in this world) that we seek after, strive for and upon which we place an inordinate amount of value won’t “cross over.” The phrase “to cross over” means that when we stand before the judgment seat of Christ ⁽¹⁴⁾ to give an account of the deeds done in this body, many of the things that we spend our time and money on will turn out to have been a *liability* rather than an *asset*. Many

of them, dare I say most of them do not have an eternal weight of glory. And if we are not careful, they may cost us our soul, in the long run. We are taught that if we seek to save our lives in this world, we shall LOSE it. But if we are willing to forsake (or lose) our life in this world for the sake of our Lord and His Gospel; we shall FIND it unto everlasting life.⁽¹⁵⁾

What is this talk of “losing” one’s life? It is the way of the Via Dolorosa; the road to *your Calvary*. This is the way to your personal place on the cross of Calvary: the way of suffering; the way of grief. It is what Jesus meant when He said “blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.”⁽¹⁶⁾ Mourn? ... Mourn for what? To mourn is, in one sense, to express sorrow over something lost. What has been lost? Our *place of intimacy* with the Living God, has been lost. Paul says it this way “*For we know that the whole creation groans and travails ...and not only they, but ourselves also ... even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting ...*”⁽¹⁷⁾ What are we waiting for? *We earnestly desire to be clothed ... for we that are in this body do groan ... not that we would be unclothed, not that we would die (per se), but that we would live ... so that our mortality might be swallowed up of life.*”⁽¹⁸⁾

So again, I ask “What is this talk of “losing” one’s life?” Well, it is more than “talk.” It was more than a *discussion* that lead Jesus down the via Dolorosa. One of my mentors says it like this (posthumously) “If we embrace only the *vocabulary* of this kind of life, we involve ourselves in the cruelest of all deceptions.”⁽¹⁹⁾ This way of life is an expression of the glory of God; and the things that relate to God’s glory can only be found in a people who are utterly abandoned to God.

And so off we go, down the Via Dolorosa with our cross in tow. If “die” we must; then “die” we shall. For in three days we get up.⁽²⁰⁾ -BC-

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

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

- (1) Romans 3:4
- (2) John 17:17
- (3) Proverbs 14:34
- (4) Matthew 5:13
- (5) Matthew 5:14
- (6) John 1:9
- (7) Matthew 4:16-17
- (8) John 8:12
- (9) Matthew 5:15
- (10) Matthew 5:16

- (11) Matthew 25:1-12
- (12) 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
- (13) Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23
- (14) Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10
- (15) Luke 9:24-25; Matthew 16:25-26; Mark 8:35
- (16) Matthew 5:4
- (17) Romans 8:22-23
- (18) 2 Corinthians 5: 2-4
- (19) Art Katz, Apostolic Conversion: Pretext or Reality?
<http://letters.jesuslifetogether.com/Apostolic-Conversion-Pretext-or-Reality>
- (20) John 2:19

PSALM 1

Blest is the man who shuns the place
Where sinners love to meet;
Who fears to tread their wicked ways
And hates the scoffer's seat

But in the statutes of the Lord
Has placed his chief delight;
By day he reads or hears the word,
And meditates by night

[He, like a plant of gen'rous kind,
By living waters set,
Safe from the storms and blasting wind,
Enjoys a peaceful state]

Green as the leaf, and ever fair,
Shall his profession shine
While fruits of holiness appear
Like clusters on the vine

Not so the impious and unjust;
What vain designs they form!
Their hopes are blown away like dust,
Or chaff before the storm.

Sinners in judgment shall not stand
Amongst the sons of grace,
When Christ, the Judge, at his right hand
Appoints his saints a place

His eye beholds the path they tread,
His heart approves it well
But crooked ways of sinners lead
Down to the gates of hell

The Psalms and Hymns of Isaac Watts

the “Persons and the Promises;” the Person of Jesus Christ; the Person of the Holy Spirit and the promises of God. And every promise God ever made, resolves itself into the Person of Jesus Christ. And the Holy Spirit bears witness, in that, it is said that when He comes, he will illuminate the Logos (thoughts, words and deeds) of Christ. Essentially, we can further reduce the object of faith to the “Promise.” For the most part, the Person of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are both “Promises.” The Father promised the Son; and the Son promised the Holy Spirit. ⁽⁴⁾

Faith is able to substantiate hope because faith is fixed upon a promise. In the Kingdom, faith cannot be conceived until our attention is fixed upon either the Person of Jesus Christ or the promises of God. From a Kingdom perspective, there is nothing outside of these to have faith in. We often hear the phrase “you’ve got to have faith in yourself.” I haven’t read every single scripture in the Bible “yet.” Nevertheless, I’m certain you won’t find a supporting scripture (if properly interpreted) for ones faith in himself. The ONLY things that the scripture supports our investment of “faith” in, is the “Person of Jesus Christ and in the Promises of God.”

“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.”⁽⁵⁾ How do we understand this by faith? Well, because God “said so.”

But without faith it is impossible to please him. ⁽⁶⁾
Translation: Without our eyes being fixed on the Promises of God, it is impossible to please Him.

CHARITY (*loves what Faith sees*)

Again, what does faith “see?” Faith sees the promises of God, whereby hope is substantiated. Charity loves the Promises of God. And love keeps the commandments of God.

The prevailing prayers of the righteous operate on this order. “If we ask anything *according to His will* we know that He hears us...”⁽⁷⁾ How do we know the will of God? God’s will is revealed by His promises. His character is revealed in His testimonies.

Ahh, *Faith, Hope and Charity*, and the greatest of these is *Charity*. Charity loves the Persons and Promises of God.

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ 1 Corinthians 13:13

⁽²⁾ Romans 8:24-25

⁽³⁾ Hebrews 11:1

⁽⁴⁾ Genesis 3:15; Romans 1:1-4; Luke 24:49

⁽⁵⁾ Hebrews 11:3

⁽⁶⁾ Hebrews 11:6

⁽⁷⁾ 1 John 5:14

The Difficulty of Conversion

Strait is the way, the door is strait,
That leads to joys on high;
'Tis but a few that find the gate,
While crowds mistake, and die.

Beloved self must be denied,
The mind and will renewed
Passion suppressed, and patience tried,
And vain desires subdued.

[Flesh is a dangerous foe to grace,
Where it prevails and rules;
Flesh must be humbled, pride abased,
Lest they destroy our souls.]

The love of gold be banished hence,
That vile idolatry,
And every member, every sense,
in sweet subjection lie.]

The tongue, that most unruly power,
Requires a strong restraint;
We must be watchful every hour,
And pray, but never faint.

Lord, can a feeble, helpless worm
Fulfill a task so hard?
Thy grace must all my work perform,
And give the free reward.

The Psalms and Hymns of Isaac Watts
Hymn 161

Hopefully, what the Lord will share with us (here), will answer a great many of our questions.

At this time, I'm not sure exactly how the Lord will moderate this column, but I don't mind saying "we're excited" to have received His permission to include it.

This month, we'll share a quick testimony that will lead to the particular super foods that we'll highlight this month.

Life in Nature

As Ambassadors of Christ, it is an abomination to be a slave to food. This is my own personal testimony. The scriptures speak to us about the destruction that follows those; whose "god is their belly."⁽³⁾

Although I had studied natural health all of my life; from time to time I would get caught up in the current of this world. I would eat what was socially acceptable and was a departure from what I knew to be a healthy lifestyle. Of course, I would reap the consequences of this behavior. The laws of the Lord are perfect.⁽⁴⁾ They are not respecters of persons.

A while ago, I purchased a number of "herbs, seeds and super foods" to supplement my nutrition. Not long ago, the Lord told me to purchase more of them. I use them in my morning *power drink*. At that time, I still had a small, but sufficient, amount of the "herbs etc." in the freezer. I mentioned this to the Father (as if He didn't know what was in my freezer), silly me. He gave me that "look;" the one that I had so become accustomed to. You know, like a parent giving the child a directive, and the child coming back as if to explain away the parent's commands. The parent then "looks" at the child as if to say, "I'm sorry, which one of us is in charge here?" That "look."

So I ordered them. Shortly after receipt He began to tell me how to combine them and who to apportion them to. I did. And as I began to resume my healthy regimen on top of regaining my energy and vitality; I came across someone

else's research and experience with a few of these herbs. It was then clearer to me what the Father was doing. I'd like to share with you, what I have learned and what I am presently learning.

This month, and possibly the next few months we will spotlight two very important super foods: Spirulina and Chlorella.

Both Spirulina and Chlorella are algae (aka seaweed). "These micro-algae contain an astounding array of nutritional elements: vitamins, macro-minerals, trace minerals, essential fatty acids, protein, nucleic acids (RNA and DNA), chlorophyll, and a vast spectrum of phytochemicals. They are thought to contain every nutrient required by the human body. Yes, you could literally live off these micro-algae. You wouldn't need to eat much, either, since they are so nutritionally dense."

I know you're asking which herbs I mix in my morning power drink. Here are *some* of the herbs and seeds used: Wheatgrass, Barley Grass, Alfalfa, Kelp, Spirulina and Chlorella. I also add chia, flax, sesame and poppy seeds.

This is just a snack to whet your appetite. For those of you who don't already do this, when you have a moment, do a bit of research yourself. Here is one place where you can find a wealth of information: <http://www.chlorellafactor.com/>

Next month, we intend to expand on some of the benefits to adding Spirulina and Chlorella to our nutrition plan.

Until then, may the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁽⁵⁾

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

⁽¹⁾ Daniel 1:8

⁽²⁾ Hosea 4:6

⁽³⁾ Philippians 3:18-20

⁽⁴⁾ Psalm 19:7

⁽⁵⁾ 1 Thessalonians 5:23

I DESPISED YOUR OBEDIENCE

I despised your obedience
How you walked, your way of life
I despised your obedience
How you were strengthened by the power of His might

I prayed that God would bless my plans; you prayed that God would plan you way
I prayed that God would have my back; you prayed to live your life at His feet
I was building bigger barns; you were breaking alabaster boxes, pour oil upon His head
I prayed for wealth and status; you prayed for poverty of spirit and a hunger and thirst for righteousness

I never understood, therefore
I despised your obedience
How you walked, your way of life
I despised your obedience
How you were strengthened by the power of His might

I wanted to win at every game; you counted all these things but loss for the Excellency of Christ
I feared the day that I would have to die; you daily bore about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus
I wanted to climb to the summit of every mountain; you were content with such things as you had

I despised your obedience
How you walked, your way of life
I despised your obedience
How you were strengthened by the power of His might

It was clear that you knew something that I didn't know. "But what?" I wondered
You told me it was not "what" you knew; but "Who" you knew.
I did not want to believe your *words*; but I could not ignore your way of life.

Then one day my heart was broken; as He spoke to me and said "you don't despise her obedience, you despise My obedience." But it is not necessary that you despise either; you may have obedience of your own. I was wounded for your transgressions, too. I was bruised for your iniquities. It was the chastisement of your peace that I took upon Myself. And your healing is in My stripes.

I believed Him ... and I received Him
Now I have obedience of my own

I used to despise your obedience
How you walked, your way of life
I no longer despise your obedience
For I, too, am strengthened by the power of His might

JoAnn C. White

Are You Sure?

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

I can just imagine Jesus standing before the fig tree, asking "Hey guys, what type of tree is this?" His disciples replied (almost snickering), "My Lord, it's a fig tree." And Jesus asks again, "How can you tell, that this is a fig tree?" His disciples reply again (almost bursting at the seams), "Teacher, we can tell by the leaves." Jesus once again, "Okay, let Me ask you guys one more question ... what is the purpose of a fig tree, if it won't bear figs." They all fell silent. Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, "Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit, My Father will remove. It will not be allowed to continue to make demands of (or trouble) the ground." ⁽²⁾ He looked at the disciples and walked away en route to Bethany. ⁽³⁾ So I ask again, how do we know that we have a personal covenant with God?

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

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

Perhaps we should take the next couple of weeks or months and grapple with this? Try to answer each question thoroughly in light of the scripture's mandates on each of these respective relationships.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. ⁽⁵⁾

Be Sure!

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

(1) Philippians 2:12

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

(3) Matthew 21:17-19

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

(5) Hebrews 13:20-21

~ SUMMARY ~

The Chief Cornerstone



If you search the scriptures, I believe that you'll find that whenever someone came willingly to the feet of Jesus their needs were met; their petitions were granted. Throughout the scriptures we find "the Mary heart" at the feet of Jesus.

Son of My Wisdom



Essentially, the ethos of man is designed to be a manifestation of the Holy One; of the Ethos of God.

As soon as we recognize that we are patterned after God, you come to realize that the law of God is descriptive of God, and prescriptive to man. God is. Man is coming to be...

Precepts in Practice



We can "plan" our responses to whatever God tells us to do. Why would anyone want to "plan" a response to the Heavenly Father? After all, isn't God spontaneous sometimes? Some would say that this is one reason why we get caught off guard, possibly causing a variety of reactions on our part.

Boot Camp



To "sanctify" essentially means to "set oneself apart; or to be set apart for God's use." It's noble to talk about "belonging only to God," but we often fail to undertake the journey that gets us there.

How does the Lord intend to sanctify us to Himself? "Great question," you say. Well the answer is even greater.

~ SUMMARY ~

The Leadership Corner

When God disagreed with Paul, He was letting Paul know that what He had planned was better and more appropriate for Paul than what Paul "thought" he needed or wanted in order to fulfill his purpose.

Journey to Intimacy



Solomon said whether you win or lose ... whether you cross the finish line first or last ... whether you die with the most toys, or not. The outcomes are the same.

Living Waters



Hope "does not see"
Faith "sees"
Charity "loves what Faith sees"

Nutrition, Health & Wellness



And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree.... (Genesis 1:29)

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Sr. Editor: J.C. White, sMHG

KingdomNewsletter@yahoo.com