

Kingdom News

Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever... (Matt. 6:13)

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I Made My Choice...

Have You?

A young man was away on business. As he sat at dinner a young lady was watching him from across the restaurant. He noticed her, noticing him. But he never gave it a second thought. She studied him and his environment. He was a very handsome man; well dressed, clean shaven; and no wedding band. He had a presence about him and he seemed alert to his surrounding. She also noticed that there was only one place setting at the table. Surely he was not expecting anyone; she assessed. As time passed, she made her way to his table. She said, "Good evening." He responded, in kind. She asked, "Dining alone?" He replied, "It would seem so." She asked, "Would you like some company ... tonight?" He politely declined. She inquired, "May, I ask why not?" He said, "I made my choice." A rather unusual response, perhaps he didn't understand my question, she thought. She pressed, softly, "...made your choice ... about what?" He said very gently, "Two years ago, I chose Jesus. I don't need any more company tonight, thank you." She nodded, and left the restaurant, quietly.

What about you, have you made your choice?

Life will, repeatedly, place us in situations that will

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

Getting Rid of the "Victim" Mentality

As Christians, it's helpful to embrace the principle that "Nothing happens *to* us, but all things happen *for* us." This principle definitely has to do with our perception of situations, but it also goes a bit deeper. It involves benefits.

I don't know about you, but I tend to be pretty time-conscious. I keep all of my daily appointments on my Microsoft Outlook calendar. I even go so far as to have a time allotment for each task. I know you are probably thinking that I am a total nerd for doing this, and you would be correct. At any rate, this allows me to effectively manage my schedule and budget my time.

Well, a few months ago, the Lord had to sit me down and give me a good, firm chastisement because of my attitude. I found myself getting angry and frustrated when things came up that forced me to have to change my plans. For example, key people would not show up for meetings that I'd scheduled, after having accepted the meeting invitation. Or, I would work my schedule as planned and then all sorts

of seemingly “preventable” emergency meetings and projects would come down from my superiors and/or colleagues. Of course, there were a number of other things that would happen “to” me that caused me great frustration. I would be particularly upset when I couldn’t get my projects completed as scheduled.

So, one day God reminded me that as a leader I needed to realize that he is always helping me to do the things I needed to do. He also helps me to “not” do the things that I shouldn’t focus on at a particular time. He told me that every time something happens in my life (not just with my schedule, but in every area of my life), I needed to accept it as something God has done or allowed “for” me; instead of seeing it as something unfortunate that happened “to” me.

This paradigm shift has to do with me seeing myself as a victor instead of a victim. If I know that the event is “for” me; then I am to look for the benefits that the event supplies. For example, when I schedule an important meeting with key staff from various departments; if there are people that don’t show up, God did this for me. Clearly, those people that didn’t show up were not on **God’s** “guest list” for the meeting, even though they were on my list. This is how I am to see the event. This way, I can move forward with confidence that God is leading not just me, but the whole situation.

I’ve been practicing this new perspective about a year or so. And, I can tell you that my life has changed significantly; as

well as my levels of stress. I could give you countless examples of seemingly negative events that I was able to benefit from just by having a victor mentality. So, I encourage each reader to experiment with this concept that every event happens “for” you, as a serious believer; and that nothing just happens “to” you. This way, you can begin to look for God in every situation. I’m a witness that if we look for God (in faith), we will see His hand guiding us through every circumstance.



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challenge us; sometimes to the core of our existence. Character challenges ... integrity challenges ... honesty challenges ... challenges-challenges. For the Body of Believers, for citizens of the Kingdom of God; that would not the time to engage in a decision-making methodology. If we chose Jesus, we’ve made our choice. Everything after that is simply an opportunity to execute on the principles of the Kingdom ... a time to honor God with our decisions, our words and our actions.

The question is never, “whether we’ll do the things that honor us or whether we’ll do the things that honor God.” These challenges are simply times when you execute according to the rules of engagement for the respective situation. These are the times when we remember, that we’ve made our choice.

Hmm, let’s see ... choose in favor of what I want? ... Or choose in favor of what God wants? Wake-up call. This does not constitute a “choice,” for those who have given their lives to Jesus. Certainly, at any given opportunity, you have the chance to change your decision about your relationship with Him. But in the

sense that our commitment obligates us, our choice of “means” is made when our choice of an “objective” has been made.

Another way to see this is that if you send your child to college, with a promise to pay for their first two years of tuition. Each month, when it’s time to make that tuition payment (provided you pay monthly); in one sense you have a choice to forego paying. But in another very real sense, you would probably say, “I don’t really have a choice, because I’ve already made the commitment; which therefore obligates me to fulfill the ‘means’ (i.e., to make the payment).”

For the sake of this discourse, “means” should be interpreted as the interim activities or choices required to enable us to fulfill our ultimate objective/commitment.

And if we’re still unclear about whether we have an obligation to choose in favor of the things that please our Lord; it’s time for us to revisit our commitment and motives. Who’s your Daddy? ... I mean ... who’s your Lord? As citizens of the Kingdom of God, our allegiance is to our King. No citizen of a kingdom lives to himself or herself. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s (Rom. 14:7-8 KJV by reference) Our M.O. is to uphold the standards of the kingdom and to honor the King. (Eccl. 12:13 KJV by reference)

◇ 9&N ◇

We are for You

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Father, you are everything.

And you’re very good at it.

Amen

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He Saw God First

What you see first, determines what you see next.

When Jesus was lead into the wilderness to be tempted (Matt. 4 KJV paraphrased). Like clockwork the devil showed up, wanting to negotiate. He figured that it worked with Adam & Eve. So he proceeded to place his proposals on the table.

Proposal #1: I’ve been watching you these past 40 days. I know you’re hungry. If you’re the Son of God, turn these stones into bread.

✚ **Proposal Response #1:** It is not for man to place his own appetite first. Bread alone is altogether insufficient to sustain life. The words that proceed from God are sufficient to both give and sustain life.

Proposal #2: Come here, he says to Jesus, I want to show you something. This is a promise that God made regarding his Son (Ref. Psalm 91: 11-12). That He [God] has given His angels “marching orders” concerning the safety of His Son. That if His Son should in anyway be in endangered the angels would catch Him before He falls. He had taken Jesus to a very high place; and said “if you’re really the Son of God, jump. The angels won’t let you hit the ground.”

✚ **Proposal Response #2:** And tempt God? Not going to happen. It is forbidden to tempt God.

Proposal #3: This is my final offer, take it or leave it. Adam surrendered his earthly dominion to me in the Garden of Eden. Subsequently I have amassed the kingdoms of his descendents. But I’ll give them all to you, if you just bow down and worship me.

✚ **Proposal Response #3:** Worship belongs to God ... alone.

Picture yourself in that situation. I’m sure you could think of at least a dozen possible responses to each of these proposals. For example, one option for proposal response #1 could have been: “I am the Son of God and I don’t need to turn stones into bread to prove it.” An alternative response to proposal #2 could have been: “if you’re going to try and make me

an offer, the least you could do is to quote the scripture correctly ... Next!!” Or perhaps a response to proposal #3 could have been: “News Flash: Both the kingdoms of the world and you already belong to me. Now surely you don’t intend to sell me dirt from my own backyard.”

But no ... wisdom governed Jesus’ responses. He saw God first, in each of these situations. That being the case, While there may have been other potential responses; certainly there was no better response than those given by Jesus.

Let’s get a little closer to home. What do we see first? Our situation ...? What we want ...? Our dreams...? Our ... ?

If we will see God first, everything else will come clearly into view. If you can see the provision (response #1), the promise (response #2) and the preeminence (response #3) of God first, then you can understand all things. What you see first will certainly determine what you see next.



this could be.” That lasted, all of, a very few minutes as I was reminded of how awesomely, faithful God is. With that I agreed. After all, I too “have made my choice.”

I’m sure that, at times, I will be a bit embarrassed ... at other times ashamed ... and any number of other emotions. But more importantly, I’ll be obedient. I will share glimpses of my journey; as He reveals Himself to me; as He reveals me to my self; as He reveals my Lord to me; as He reveals the world to me; as He reveals sin to me; and as He reveals me to the world.

Will you go with me on this Journey to Intimacy?

Here is a glimpse of our first conversation (it took place on August 25, 2007). I asked the Lord for a different perspective of Him; essentially, more enlightenment and revelation. I know, I know, a typical request, right?

He said to me “In order for you to see Me (or more of Me) you must change.” “Oookkaayy !?” I thought.

Sidebar: One definition of “to see” is to have knowledge of; or experience with a thing.

But then I began to see ... this is just another application or modification of the law of “Sowing and Reaping.” I want something ... there most certainly must be a preceding investment. But what could that investment be?

Well, the scriptures teach us that the pure in heart, shall see God (Matt. 5:8). Not later ... the pure in heart shall see Him now. I begin to understand that as our hearts increase in purity, by a law of necessity, we will draw closer to God. Actually, there are at least two (2) reasons for this:

- 1) God is pure. And “all things pure” reside in Him. (1 John 3:3b); and
- 2) It is impossible to be pure in heart and not see Him.

My investment (what I would sow) is purity of heart; my harvest (what I would reap) is to see God; to get to know Him; to identify with Him ... to have an intimate relationship with Him.

I wondered how the concept of “seeing something” and “identifying with someone,” were related. I then began to understand another truth or law; that of “Judgment and Conviction.” I recalled that the scriptures teach us to refrain from judging others. Because in judging others, we reveal what we see. Remember that “seeing” implies

Bite-Sized Wisdom



He assumes others dishonest, who is himself dishonest. The price of dishonesty is considered far too great a price to pay; unless one is willing to pay it himself. – JoAnn C. White



A Journey to Intimacy

Getting to Know Him

Introduction

I would like for you to share a journey with me. Not long ago, I asked the Lord for increased intimacy, with Him. He agreed and directed me to make this journey a part of this forum. In all transparency, I froze; ...well “choked” is probably more appropriately the term. Admittedly, I wondered “exactly how many shades of embarrassing

an ability to identify with a thing. Not long before this I had resolved, in my mind, that someone I had been dealing with was harshly judgmental of someone else. I was judging them about judging someone else. I was as guilty as they were. Of course, I couldn't see it because I was too busy judging them. Shame on me. To judge implies an inability to be guilty of the same infraction. Clearly, I am not in a position to judge anyone. This is why the scriptures teach us not to judge. It goes even farther, in stating that when we judge others; we automatically and immediately convict ourselves. Then I am not, nor will I ever be, in a position to judge another. And thus the Lord has revealed some characteristic of my self, to me (a tendency to be judgmental).

By then, my mind went back to the original point of our discussion; I cannot see or identify with God, without purity of heart. A pure heart is not judgmental; it is becoming very clear that I need to change ... in more ways than one.

I saw that there were varying degrees of purity, as there are varying degrees of ability to see or identify with God.

I found this to be true in nature. Generally, with the naked eye, our ability to see or identify with a thing is increased in direct proportion to our distance from the object. Or from a biological perspective, let's look at the work of Chemists and their ability to identify chemicals and elements. Chemists know both the characteristics and behavior of chemical elements. They know how to mix them, how to handle them and how to store them. They know how to interact with chemicals and how they interact with each other. They know this because they have knowledge and experience with them (i.e., they identify with them). On a good day, all of that would be lost on me.

According to Webster, to "see" is to either perceive with the eye or to grasp with the intelligence. All of these things coursing through my mind; I revisit the Lord's directive to me. He said, "In order for you to see Me, you must change." Again, He tells me that the pure in heart are blessed to "see" Him. Restated, "In order for you to "see" or grasp Me intelligently, JoAnn, YOU MUST CHANGE." I'm beginning to hear an echo, here.

As I was journaling this on 8/25/07, I envision a telephone conversation; where someone says to me, "I hear that you live near the TPC golf course. Can you see it from where you are?" I reply that "Currently I am sitting on my couch. No, I cannot see it from where I am. In order to see it, I would need to get up from where I am

and go out on the balcony and look due east. Then I have a clear, unencumbered view of the golf course." I repeated...in order to see it I would have to change, in this case, my position.

I begin to get it. I really began to get it. He has identified that in order for me to see Him, I must change. That I must purify my heart (Acts 15:9b KJV by reference). And that judgment has no place in a pure heart.

I would imagine that the next leg of this journey is for me to understand what it means to "change;" to move from where I am; to where He wants me to be. Conceptually I understand, but we don't live our lives by concepts and theories. Life is lived by application.

Now I am in search of the application. What does it mean for me to change?

◇ JoAnn ◇

Have You Made Your Choice?

A Call to Action

Have you made up your mind about God? <> Are you still weighing your options?

May I offer some food for thought?

No other "god" has offered/will offer the benefits offered by the God of the Bible.

No other "god" has made the claims or promises that the God of the Bible, has made.

No other "god" has designed and executed a plan of salvation or offered eternal life; like the God of the Bible.

No other "god" has, or will, die for your sins; like the God of the Bible.

No other "god" has, or will, offer you an opportunity to have a personal relationship with Him; like the God of the Bible.

And this entire package is offered to you through Christ Jesus. Don't let any misinformation that you may have learned/heard about Jesus Christ, stop you from letting Him prove Himself to you. Hearsay is inadmissible evidence.

Allow Him to be Your Lord. It will be the wisest, most far-reaching, investment you ever make. The return on this investment is incomprehensible.

 SUMMARY 

Choices ... choices ... choices. In life there are a great many choices to be made. But there are a great many more choices that can be made with one decision. What are you going to do with Jesus Christ? Once you settle your decision about Him; you'll have made your decision about a number of other choices in life. What a wise decision that will have been.

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Victim or Victor? Is life happening to you? Or are you happening to life? Who's doing what to whom? In the Kingdom of God, it only works one way; all things work together for good to those who love the Lord; and who have accepted His purpose for their lives. So don't misread your environment or its activities or situations. They are "for" you.

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For everything the enemy tried to bring to Jesus; Jesus pointed him straight to the throne. He saw God first; everything else second. What is your perspective on that? Do you see God first in every situation? Or are you blocking your own view?

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Getting to know Him, begins with getting to know me. I must choose Him; for He has already chosen me. Then I must pursue Him; to do that I must change. I must move from where I am; to where He is. That I may apprehend, that for which I am apprehended. That I may know His thoughts ... His heart ... His desires ... that I may know Him.

It's time to make a decision about Jesus. First see what he says about Himself; then see what your heart says about Him.

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