

Kingdom News

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

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His Kingdom or Yours?

You decide

When we begin to hear the voice of God, we begin to see His character. We then begin to wonder about Him; ...to desire to know more. As we contemplate Him with a sincere, godly curiosity; we begin search for Him; be begin to draw near to Him (Jer. 29:13-14a; Heb. 4:16 KJV by reference).

He then begins to reveal Himself to us. The more we see of Him, the more we see of ourselves. As we see how Holy and how Righteous He is; we see how "undone" and "how desperately in need of a Savior" we are.

Now in this era of "I-can-do-anything-I-put-my-mind-to" attitudes and positive thinking; this truth begins to unravel the very foundations of an erroneous belief system. This system of beliefs renders us portentous; as if we are sufficiently good in and of ourselves. And that a "belief in" and "reliance on" God is no longer necessary. I know....I know...of course we would never outwardly admit this fallacy; we wouldn't dare. In fact we outwardly admit our need of and dependence in Him; while inwardly we continue to live our lives without Him. We do not consult His wisdom for our day; we do not trust that His providence governs our affairs. Or when we do as His direction, we do not

His Kingdom or Yours?

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The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

Leadership & Grace

Did you know that often people follow people that they believe in? Think about it. If you don't have confidence in a person's ability to lead, would you follow them ...if so, for how long? There is also a saying, "people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care." This tells us that caring is a leadership tool. One way to express caring is by administering grace (forgiveness, affirmation, instruction, etc.).

Recently one of my peers had to make a tough decision. He had to terminate a couple of his staff members. He'd done everything he could to work with these two employees, but to no avail. Once he'd let them go, others in his department, as well as throughout the organization made him out to be the villain. When I saw this, I pulled him aside. I encouraged him to share with me some of the details of what had happened. Once we talked it was clear that he'd followed the requirements of meeting with each of the terminated employees (prior to the termination), walking through a plan to improve performance and documenting the unacceptable behaviors. Still, he felt badly about the events.

I told him that I supported him. I affirmed his value and I let him know how proud I was of him having taken the steps to work with each person prior to having to terminate them. By doing this I extended grace to him.

As he was leaving my office, he thanked me for allowing him to vent, and for being supportive of him. The ability to administer grace is such a powerful leadership tool. It's also amazing that when a person needs grace, they can receive it from a variety of people (not just from the person they may have offended). God made it this way because often the people who were offended may have taken offense on their own; or they may not be willing to forgive, even after being asked. Therefore, if the offender could only receive grace from the person s/he offended, and if that person was unable or unwilling to extend grace, the offender would be without hope. But, thanks be to God that he has empowered us to administer grace in time of need. Now, this manager often calls on me when he needs help. And, he makes himself available when I need him.

When we administer grace to others, whether or not we were the object of the negative interaction, we engender alliances. And, when people are allied with godly leaders, God is glorified, and humanity reaps the benefits!



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

For additional information you may contact us at leadershiplivinginc@yahoo.com

Bite-Sized Wisdom



An opportunity to have a relationship with the God of Creation, the Governor of the Universe, may not have cost us anything for Him to make it available. But it will certainly cost us to apprehend and maintain it.

It is in our natures to appreciate those things which cost us. – JoAnn C. White



expect Him to answer; so we do not await His direction. Do we not fear that our Father's directives will be far from our own intentions; and not much to our liking? [Like a child who briefly pokes his head into his parents' bedroom and asks (or tells) them that he is going to the playground with his friends. He never waits for his parents' approval or other directives. He states his position, or desire, as if to ask permission "with his mouth." While his actions, speak loudly, his intent to do as he pleases.]

Whenever we embrace a system of beliefs that does not hold Jehovah God, creator of the universe, as preeminent; we construct towers of Babel, monuments to our own self-worth and greatness. When we build to ourselves such memorials; we encroach on forms of self-worship ... idolatry, even. We make ourselves gods.

Now if that is your intention or goal, then by all means proceed; your current course of action will serve you well in that regard.

But may I counsel you to take along with you this one consideration? Every "god" is responsible for his own kingdom. There is only one King in the Kingdom of God. When you become "self-sufficient" (as opposed to finding your sufficiency in God) you must then create our own world(s) ... your own successes. You must also fight your own battles; the promises in 2 Chron. 20:15, 17 (KJV by reference) do not apply to you. You cannot wage your own wars and then in the heat of the battle surrender the fight to God. He will fight only the battles that He wages. If you will be your own god; then you must fight your own battles. You must also open your own doors (Luke 11:9-10 KJV by reference). Indeed the Lord has promised to both fight our battles and open our doors; and He has given a host of other great and might promises. But these promises are only for citizens of His Kingdom; not kings of other kingdoms. Why, that would be like buying a Toyota and taking it to a Lexus dealership for repairs; expecting them to honor their illustriously, advertised (48 months/50,000 mile) warranty. The warranty is only for Lexus vehicles (although owned by Toyota), and only for the models for which the warranty was written.

On the other hand, when we see ourselves as needing God to sustain us, to guide us; to fight for us; then we find our sufficiency in Him. Then we see his faithfulness (1 Cor. 1:9 KJV by reference). Then we

submit ourselves to His government.

As citizens of the Kingdom of God, we begin to live according to a completely different system of beliefs; a different set of precepts. We are affected by a different economic system. We see God for who He is; and we see ourselves for who we are; sans the “smoke and mirrors.”

In the economy of God, there is no lack. (1 Thess. 4:12; 2 Peter 1:3, KJV by reference)

We give; then we receive. We sow before we reap; and we reap what we sow. And we receive grace that provides abundantly.

Let’s be clear about some things. We do not enter the Kingdom of God seeking our own desires (to receive, to reap, etc.). We enter seeking His desires. Please don’t be mistaken, citizens of a country, or kingdom, live for the King. They don’t live for themselves.

In the Kingdom of God, the pecking order is this:

- ✚ God, His Righteousness and His Happiness
- ✚ Your neighbor’s well-being/Your well-being

We focus on God; He focuses on us. He helps us align everyone and everything according to its respective order of importance/value, from a kingdom perspective.

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Words of Wisdom from My Mentor

Charles G. Finney (1792 -1875)



The victory that overcomes the world implies that we cease to be enslaved and in bondage to the world in any of its forms.



Excerpt from *The Oberlin Evangelist* (Nov. 5, 1845)
Sermon - Victory Over the World through Faith
(ref. I John 5:4)
www.charlesgfinney.com/1845OE/451105_victory_faith.htm
For authenticity verification compare to original at www.GospelTruth.com Copyright © 1999, 2000

Passive vs. Active Faith

To Be ... or To Do

We believe. We have faith in God. We trust Him ... don’t we? Do we? How can we tell whether or not we trust God? By what metrics do we to measure our confidence in Him?

Here’s an even better question...how does He measure our confidence in Him?

Is it possible that we measure our faith in God using “Passive metrics;” whereas He measures our trust in Him using “Active metrics?” What? You’ve never heard of Passive and Active metrics?” You’re in good company, neither have I; but I will share with you what He shared with me.

Passive metrics are units of measurement of, in this case, “faith” that are simply known. We possess knowledge of these metrics. We mentally apprehend the precepts and principles of faith. We speak very highly of them. When asked what faith is, we say it is the substance of things hoped for; and the evidence of things not seen. When asked about our faith, we say that by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God (Heb. 11:3 KJV by reference).

Active metrics are units of measurement of, in this case, “faith” that produce action/activity; that produces works ... three-dimensional; time-bound; visible/tangible, effective works. When the Lord talks about faith, He tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please Him. He goes on to say that whoever actually “comes” to God, must first believe that God exists. (So the journey begins with faith that believes; but it doesn’t end there.) Whoever comes to God not only believes that He exists; but believes that God is pleased to entertain our petitions; and that He rewards the diligent seeker (worker). (Heb. 11: 6 KJV by reference).

- ✚ Passive faith lodges in the intellect; its full expression is in the mind. Passive faith is a possession of knowledge.
- ✚ Active faith is also present in the intellect; but it infuses the will;

activates the neurological and muscular systems, and produces fruit. Active faith terminates in commitment and action.

- ✚ Passive faith exists; active faith works.

In Hebrews 11, we hear the Lord giving examples that can be considered active metrics of faith. He shows that:

- ✚ By faith, Noah ... prepared ... (vs. 7)
- ✚ By faith, Abraham ... obeyed and offered ... (vs. 8, 17)
- ✚ By faith, Sarah ... received strength ... (vs. 11)
- ✚ By faith, Isaac ... blessed ... (vs. 20)
- ✚ By faith, Jacob ... blessed ... (vs. 21)
- ✚ By faith, Moses' mother ... hid him ... (vs. 23)
- ✚ By faith, Moses ... refused and forsook ... (vs. 24, 27)
- ✚ By faith, the children of Israel ... passed through the Red Sea ... (vs. 29)
- ✚ By faith, ... the walls of Jericho fell ... (vs. 30)
- ✚ By faith, the harlot Rahab ... believed and received ... (vs. 31)
- ✚ By faith ... kingdoms were subdued; righteous wrought; promises obtained; armies were defeated; etc. ... (vs. 32-38)

And what of all this? Essentially, that faith that does not produce, is not faith; in the kingdom sense of the term. Passive metrics of faith are less than useless. They do not open any doors; they do not overcome any obstacles; with them there are no rewards of righteousness; they do not gain favor with God; they are even an insult and injury to work of the Kingdom.

On the other hand, Active metrics of faith, deliver the promises of God right to your door. They open to you the presence of God; they give access into the throne room. Active faith submits to the wisdom of God in providence. It trusts that all things do, in fact, work together for good, to those who love and have confidence in Him. Active faith knows that while God's answer delays, His promise is sure.

I must accept that you "believe God" when you say that you do. On the other hand, God accepts that you believe Him when your behavior supports your faith.



A Journey to Intimacy

Getting to Know Him

The Journey Continues

Last month, I shared with you the beginning of a journey to intimacy with God. Here are a few points of interest for which I required additional discovery and clarity.

I understood that in order to see God, I needed to change. I went in search of the concept of "change." I am asking Him for "intimacy;" He is asking me to "change." What exactly does God mean by the use of the term "change" in this context?

I also understood that only the pure in heart shall "see" God (Matt. 5:8 KJV paraphrased). And that being judgmental (that would be me) was inconsistent with being pure in heart. I went in search of the means by which I could be delivered from (made free from) being judgmental.

These are the courses of events that resulted:

In search of the concept of "change"

In order to change, there are a few assumptions, or admissions, that must be made. In order to change, one must admit that they are out of alignment with something. I had to admit that although I believed that I loved God and that I did my best to obey Him; I was still very far from what He required of me. And farther still, for having an intimate relationship with Him. Now this can be quite a sensitive and frustrating situation. To believe that you've done everything that you knew to do, and still find that you are out of alignment. I found that all of my efforts do not, (and did not) actually bring me closer to God. I knew things about Him, but I still didn't know Him. As I looked up, I noticed that although Canaan was just across the Jordan River, I was still marching around the mountain in the wilderness.

This is what I learned about "change."

- ✚ In order for a person to change, there must be a commitment to change.
- ✚ In order to make such a commitment, there must also be an understanding of the change(s) required.
- ✚ In order to understand what changes are required, there must also be a prerequisite apprehension of the objective/goal in mind; for which the change is required.

Objective Apprehended

The objective, here, is to have an intimate relationship with God. To not only know about Him, but to know Him; up close and personal. In order to desire such a thing, I must first believe that it is possible to have an intimate relationship with God. I must also believe that if I seek it diligently, that I may surely attain it.

Understanding Changes Required

Once I understood what it was that I wanted (the objective), I could then inquire about the means, or the ways in which this could be obtained. From there I could understand what changes I needed to make to align myself so that I could accomplish my goal.

One of the changes that I readily understood was that I needed “a new dictionary.” By that I meant that I could no longer rely on what I thought was right. I needed to deal with God on His terms; to make use of His definitions. For example, He said that “If you love me, JoAnn, you will keep my commandments.” (John 14: 15 KJV by reference) He said that “I am to love Him with all of my heart, soul, mind and strength.” (Matt. 22:37; Luke 10:25-28 KJV by reference) It was not enough for me to have “passive faith;” it is not enough to “know” these truths. I needed to have the “active faith,” which believes and obeys.

Commitment

Now that I understand the means of accomplishing my goal; I can decide whether or not I want to engage. I have a clear understanding of what is the objective. I now see what changes I must make in order to be able to attain this goal. The only thing left to do is to commit. Hmmm!!

Done, I’m all in.

In search of the means by which I could be delivered from (made free from) being judgmental

The Lord dealt with me on this point in a most interesting way. He told me to openly admit and apologize to someone against whom I was being judgmental. Now this person knew nothing of the judgments that I was leveling against them. Nor did this person know that any such activity was taking place. But the Lord directed me to have a face-to-face conversation with this person; to explain what I had done, and to apologize. My heart

sunk. I agreed to comply. I asked the Lord to arrange the time and place, and I would obey. The faithfulness of God, He did just that. He kept His promise; He enabled me to keep my promise. Can I just tell you ... that having to do that broke something in my spirit. In all transparency, I have no desire to ever do that again. But more importantly, I have no desire to ever find myself in a position of such dishonor with God that would require such actions.

The scriptures teach that we are obliged to know the truth and that knowing the truth will make us free (John 8:32 KJV by reference). Now how, exactly (you ask) does this apply here? There are innumerable applications, but here is one of them.

When it comes to passing judgment, the scriptures teach that the person, who is without sin (fault, error), is able to (judge the faults of others) cast the first stone (John 8:7 KJV paraphrased). Even if the case were that everything in our lives was acceptable, the very moment we begin to judge someone, we come under condemnation. We immediately become an outlaw, for it is at that very moment that we are in violation of known truth (Luke 6:37 KJV by reference).

Then He got very personal with me. He made me see, how easy it was for me to see the faults of others; and yet how difficult it was for me to see my own faults. He showed me that I would surely want Him to be forgiving of my faults. But that I needed to be as forgiving of the faults of others.

Finally, He showed me that when I pointed out, discussed or judged other peoples’ faults; I forced Him to do that same thing to me. Essentially, He would reveal to others my faults, and even make them points of discussion with others. He told me that I showed Him how I wanted to be treated, by how I treat others. The light came on, for me. While this may sound harsh, or may sound as if God could do no such thing; remember that by doing so, He is keeping His promise as given in (Matt 7:1-2). “Judge not, that you be not judged ... for which the same judgment you judge, you will be judged.”

He said, “I’ll make this very simple for you, JoAnn; when you see other people’s faults, go look in the mirror.”



∞ SUMMARY ∞

If we have determined that God is our Lord, then we have also determined that we will live by the precepts of His kingdom. In order to do so, it is imperative that we both learn them and do them.

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Grace and true leadership are synonymous. In our roles as leaders in your respective lives; we must look for opportunities to extend grace.

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Active faith is real faith. Passive faith is a danger and a liability.

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I now understand both the objective and what is required to accomplish this objective. I'm committed.

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It's time for you 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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