

IT SHINES MORE AND MORE

I've met many Christians in my life that relate to their Christian life as a series of events. Many prayed the sinner's prayer 30 years ago. They were baptized and joined a church that they like. They accepted the scriptural interpretations and doctrines of their denomination, and have faithfully attended all of its church meetings. They volunteer to support all of its programs and they tithe to fund the operation of their church.

They've become very comfortable performing these things over and over, and have effectively built a wall around this experience and go no further with God.

I'm sad to say, that this is quite often the picture of the normal Christian life in America and it satisfies most people.

Unfortunately, it doesn't satisfy God's desire for His children and it doesn't enable them to lay hold of His mind-boggling inheritance that He has made available to them

The Father sent Jesus to manifest His eternal life and pay the ultimate price so that we can be supernaturally born of His Spirit and possess that same life by inheritance.

In John 1.12 amp, John explains our supernatural entrance into God's family.

But to as many as did receive and welcome Him, He gave the right [the authority, the privilege] to become children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name— who were born, not of blood [natural conception], nor of the will of the flesh [physical impulse], nor of the will of man [that of a natural father], but of God [that is, a divine and supernatural birth—they are born of God—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified].

The Apostle Paul outlines our new position as His children.

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading again to fear [of God's judgment], but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons [the Spirit producing sonship] by which we [joyfully] cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies and confirms together with our spirit [assuring us] that we [believers] are children of God. And if [we are His] children, [then we are His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance]..... Romans 8.15

Jesus also declared what is available to us in this inheritance as His children and how His Holy Spirit will make it ours. He said,

He (the Spirit) will honor *and* glorify Me, because He will take of (receive, draw upon) what is Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you.

Everything that the Father has is Mine. That is what I meant when I said that He [the Spirit] will take the things that are Mine and will reveal (declare, disclose, transmit) it to you. John 16.14amp

I've said many times that the Gospel is like God. It's supernatural, spiritual, and eternal and God is the only one in the universe who can do it.

It's not enough for us to have our sins forgiven and have our personal needs met by God. He wants us to lay hold of our inheritance that He has provided for His children so that we can manifest Him in the earth.

Jesus said, "the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I've come that you can have My Life in abundance." (John 10.10) He's offering us more than we personally need so that we can be the ambassadors of His Kingdom to this entire world.

God has made it quite clear that He wants us to have an ongoing increasing eternal relationship with Him, not just faithful church attendance.

Let's look a few scriptures where Jesus illustrates His intentions for His children.

In John 4, Jesus told the woman at the well that whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but the water that I give him, he will never thirst again, but it will become a well of water within him springing up to eternal life.

He wasn't offering a temporary drink to meet her current need. It becomes the possession of His eternal life in us, that we can live on forever.

At the great feast in John chapter 7, Jesus shouted out "if anyone is thirsty let him come unto me and drink and rivers of Living Water will flow from his life."

Again it wasn't just for personal consumption. It becomes the eternal life of God that pours out of our life to minister His life to other people.

Jesus also illustrated with a parable about a woman who put leaven in 3 measures of dough until the whole lump was leavened. This Gospel of the Kingdom is designed to swallow up every part of our lives and not just be a limited temporary experience.

When we disciple new believers, we tend to lead them into the church experience that we value and are comfortable with. God has commissioned us with the ministry of reconciliation as the ambassadors of God's Kingdom. We are to lead people into this eternal transforming relationship with God, which actually IS eternal life.

Ephesians 4 shows the purpose and the outcome of Gospel ministry.

When Jesus ascended to Heaven He gave gifts to the church.

And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. And speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ....

God's intention for our life is that it wouldn't be just a series of events that stagnate, but it would be an continually increasing eternal relationship with God.

Proverbs 4.18 declares that the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day. Jesus is not a concept or a teaching. He is the Living Word and the ever living One. (Hebrews 4.12 and Revelation 1.18) And He made us completely one with He and the Father. (John 17.22)

God wants us to accept His incredibly lavish love for us and His supernatural work on our behalf to make us His bride, and for us to fall hopelessly in love with Him. Our relationship with God is our response to His love for us. We love him, because He first loved us. 1 John 4.10

We didn't pray a prayer, do some catechism, or join some organization. We accepted a blood covenant made available to us by Christ's death on the cross. Blood covenants signify that everything that one party has and everything that they are is available to the other party and it's a mutual giving of oneself to the other person.

In every wedding that I've ever been to, the preacher looks to the man first and says; "will you forsake all others and love and cherish this woman, in sickness and in health until death do you part?" The man says, "I do". Then he turns to the woman and asks, "will you forsake all others and love and cherish this man, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?" She says, "I do".

Ponder this for a minute. The man has already chosen the woman and committed everything that he is and has to her. When the woman says, "I do", she is actually choosing to be chosen. God has committed His unwavering covenant love for us and expects us keep His covenant and love Him back.

He told the people of His choosing early on what their part of this covenant was. "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." But they often broke His covenant.

When King David slept with Bathsheba and had her husband killed to cover it up, God sent the prophet Nathan to confront him. Please note that he did not say to him, "how could you do something so stupid by sleeping with that woman and having her husband killed?" He said, " why have you despised the covenant?" 2 Samuel 12.9

The word "despised" is not open hatred for God. David loved God very much, but at that moment David didn't think that his covenant with God was that big of a deal. He did what his senses compelled him to do.

But apparently this isn't a new problem. Paul faced it with the Corinthian church. He said, I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you *as* a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity *of devotion* to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11.2

The Apostle James also scolded his church. You are like unfaithful wives having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God! Do you not know that being the world's friend is being God's enemy? So whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God. Or do you suppose that the Scripture is speaking to no purpose that says, The Spirit Whom He has caused to dwell in us yearns over us and He yearns for the Spirit to be welcome with a jealous love? James 4.4 amp.

God takes His covenant very seriously. Hebrews 10.28 reads; Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

God not only gave us His covenant but also placed His own personal oath on top of it. Heb 6.17 reads; In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

I'll conclude with one last scripture. I'll let God show us His covenant. "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they will be My people. They will not teach everyone his fellow citizen and everyone his brother saying, "Know the Lord," for they will all know me from the least to the greatest of them.

Please note the operative words in this covenant are; I WILL, I WILL, and I WILL.

We have a choice. We can continue trying harder to modify our behavior and do our best imitation of Christ. But Jesus said, "It's the Spirit Who gives life, your flesh profits absolutely nothing.

Or we can accept God's covenant love for us and offer ourselves completely to Him, like little kids, and allow His Holy Spirit to transform us into the image of Christ. Roman 8.29

Jesus said, "unless you are converted and become like little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom. Matthew 18.3

God is not asking us to fix our old nature inherited from Adam and Eve. He is asking us to inherit His eternal life that He has made available to us by faith in His supernatural work.

I say, "Thank you Daddy"

God bless you.

Jim Fuller

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