

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: To all who profess Jesus, are you going to Heaven or Hell?****To all who profess Jesus, are you going to Heaven or Hell?, on: 2007/12/17 22:53**

In Chapter nine of John we see the blind man being healed. There is a chronology to the order of the teaching taking place here. We have just seen hypocrites, Pharisees and "believers," dealt with by Jesus. They squirm and are exposed in His light. He told us in chapter eight that He was the light of the world and that light is awesome in its power to go straight to the heart of men and woman, straight to the hidden darkness.

It reveals what we cannot see, what we often do not know about ourselves. Many times we are blind to our faults and only through circumstances can they be revealed. To those who can acknowledge their weakness, their blindness and call out to the Lord, then there is spiritual healing, they are given "sight." Those who resist the workings of the Lord of providence, the Lord of circumstances, they are taken up by self denial, self defense, self in general. They fight to preserve the outer man, the flesh, and must remain in their blindness. It is so ironic that the self-righteous man who claims to see things as they are, is truly blind in this world, and the man who humbles himself and knows that there is something in him that is not right, he is the man who receives his sight.

This is the light of the universe. It is so powerful that it can only be released by measure. Jesus is the full measure of that light. Of course this is a human statement for this light, our God, has no measure. It is all in all. If it was not for the meekness of Jesus, restraining power, all men would have either been destroyed in His presence or converted.

And so this light reveals all of God's enemies. You will ultimately run from it and be lost in darkness or you will run to it and be consumed by its brilliance. Newly converted people, genuinely converted people are amazed by it. They have a portion of it and it is such a contrast to the darkness they have just been delivered from. It makes them dance for joy and so eager to tell others what they have discovered. If you have never had any of these experiences in your Christianity, can I suggest that you have merely taken the first step towards genuine Christianity and that you dwell in the Court of the Gentiles.

In order to move forward from a place of interest of the things of God, moving from being a "believer," to becoming a disciple, you must go through the next door. Jesus is the door as we will see in chapter ten of John.

If you had that wonderful experience of the light of Christ, that joy of knowing Him and wanting to tell others about Him but then quickly grew cold and did not move on to a victorious lifestyle, can I suggest that you are not abiding in Him. If you experienced that but are not abiding in Him then you must be a miserable creature at the core. It is not possible to genuinely experience the Lord and then just fall back, fall away from Him and live as you did before. There are those who will try and replace living in relationship with Him by becoming very "moral." You will speak a lot about family values and usually politics. Your hope will lie in the good that you create within your family and society at large. This will be your measure. And those who do not measure up to the standards that you have set, will be judged. Materialism usually goes hand in hand with the person who is in this position. Materialism and outward appearance. The reason for this focus on all things on the "outside," is because there is an inward bankruptcy. Fear will be the order of the day.

So Jesus is the light of the world. In the previous chapters Jesus was the water, the living water symbolized by the priest carrying water from the pool of Siloam to the altar in the temple. This was to commemorate the water that flowed from the Rock in the wilderness. This was done during the feast of Tabernacles or the feast of Booths. On the last day of this feast the people marched around the altar seven times to remember the seven circuits around the walls of Jericho.

So in the chronology of John we have Jesus being the water, the light and then the door. As we think about the seven circuits around the wall of Jericho and then the walls crashing down, this brings to mind the fact that the Israelites were now, at long last, leaving the wilderness and entering the promised land and engaging the enemy. This is the perfect illustr

ation for modern day Christians of how to come into the fullness of God, how to enter His rest and cease from their own works.

If you dwell in the court of the Gentiles , a place for people who are interested in the things of God, and want to enter the Holy places then you must come by faith and desire. There was a desire in this new generation of Israelites not to wander any more in the wilderness, but to go in and receive, take hold of, the place that was promised to them. If you are dwelling in the court of the gentiles, if you are wandering aimlessly in the desert and want to move on from that place into the fullness of God then you are going to have to engage the enemy of your soul.

The new generation of Israelites came by desire and by faith and obedience, crossing over the river and then being confronted by enormous walls. When you decide to answer this call from Jesus "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and dine with him and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with me on my throne as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne," then you will walk through the door, Jesus is the door. The first thing that you will encounter as you walk through the door or cross the river will be enormous, seemingly impregnable walls. These are the walls that have been built in your heart. These walls stand between you and the purpose of your life, to give to God all of you. He wants and must have all of you

It is impossible to make any further progress if you do not engage and destroy the walls and the enemy that lurks behind them in this, the mightiest of strongholds. It would be strategic suicide for you to try and move on into the Holy place by just going around these walls. Strongholds have to be dealt with, they are a place that the enemies of your soul can attack you from and then retreat back to. You would constantly have to look over your shoulder and would face the impossible situation of fighting your enemy on two front, in front of you and behind you.

The dysfunctions that lie behind the walls will sneer at the mere fact that you dare to even approach them. These enemies are well entrenched and have had full reign in your life for as long as you can remember. They are so entrenched that they are a part of you, they are unique to you. While many of their actions are common , we see this in alcoholics and drug addicts, controlling spirits, and so on, it is important to remember that you grew up in unique circumstances which makes every one of these enemies very dangerous. They are dangerous because they are so much a part of you. That is why there has to be a desire to change. That is why it is so important to draw all comfort and support from Jesus. This is particularly true for those who suffer from co-dependency, but generally true for all. If low self-esteem is one of your enemies, then Jesus is the answer. If pride and arrogance is the enemy, then again Jesus is the answer. In every conceivable case, Jesus is the answer. You cannot and will not get the answer from your spouse or significant other. They do not have it to give you. They can try, and may God bless the hearts of all that try, but it will always fail. Only Jesus can take down the walls that shelter the enemies of our soul.

If you have ever lived with someone who feels they are of little worth you will know that no matter what you say to them or how many times you say it, it will never be enough. That is because the source of the poison lies at the very heart of who they are. And so you now stand before the walls of Jericho. This stronghold represents the great sins of your life, the great weaknesses, the ones that can destroy you and all of your relationships, it stands where the brazen altar of the Lord belongs. For the brazen altar will burn up all that is sacrificed upon it. This part of you that lies behind the walls must be sacrificed and dealt with, there is no other solution.

So, the way to destroy the stronghold is already in motion. The mere fact that you have arrived at these walls, through desire to change your environment , through wanting to get out of the wilderness, wanting to enter into His rest, wanting to cease endless strivings and living a life of struggle, is the beginning. You have discovered through the Word that Jesus is calling you deeper and desires that you die in order to gain eternal life. It is at this point that the Holy Spirit will take over and give you directions, based on your own hang-ups and dysfunctions. It is so important that you follow directions, even if they make no sense to you. How much sense did walking around these walls make to the Israelites? Yet this was the precise directions given to Joshua by the captain of the Hosts of heaven . Perhaps one of your directions will simply be to say sorry to someone. Perhaps you will be directed in your spirit to pick up a phone and call someone that you have not spoken to in a long time. Perhaps you will be directed to go and put your arms around someone and tell that you love and forgive them. Please do not misunderstand, for some this will mean the death of them. What would seemingly seem so simple to some of us, will quite possibly be the hardest thing to do, for others.

Fear will have to be overcome. Fear of rejection might represent some of the larger stones in the walls of your Jericho. T

his has to be overcome. And the opposite of fear is going to be faith. If you hear the Spirit direct you to do any of these things, whatever, then at all costs it must be done. This is what brings the walls down. It is time for the running to stop, the cycle of endless wanderings and always coming back to the same place. Its not going anywhere, its never going anywhere, the only option is that it has to be destroyed. You cannot make a deal with it and you cannot compromise, that is not the way the Lord works. He died on the cross to give us complete victory over every circumstance of life and this is the promised land. Victory is the promised land.

If you are serious with God and determine in your heart to lay down all the obstacles that have prevented you from moving forward, He will meet you, you will meet Him. "I will come into him and dine with him and he with Me."

A word of warning, if you make this a half hearted commitment, simply seeking an experience, then you will fail. If you are prepared to die, and you have determined in your heart to move on at all cost, then you will meet Him. You will be engulfed and enraptured in His presence and the major obstacles of your life, the giant walls of Jericho, your lusts, perversions, anger, hatreds, drunkenness, bitterness, past hurts, will fall to the ground to the glory of the Living God. The struggle, the exhausting wearing struggle will be over for the giants in your life will have come crashing down in defeat. If you were an addict, you will be an addict no more. If you were full of hatred and bitterness, anger and wrath, it will be gone and replaced by the love and joy of the Lord. I am not saying that these things wont sneak up on you from time to time and try and slap you, for they will. What I am saying is that they will be defeated as a major enemy, the threat of imminent destruction will be gone.

The blind man in John chapter nine knew he was blind and needed Jesus for sight. When He was touched by Jesus he acknowledged Him as Lord. The Pharisees on the other hand did not know that they were spiritually blind and so did not require a touch from Jesus, did not acknowledge Him as Lord and remained spiritually blind because of conceit and pride.

As you read this you are going to have to think about your own walk. Be open to who you are and what your spiritual state is. Do not let your religion stand in the way of looking at yourself and knowing if you need a touch from Jesus. If He has only ever been your fire insurance, your ticket into heaven, your way of avoiding hell, if you have only ever considered Him as Savior but never as Lord then you need to read carefully. It is your eternal soul that is on the line.

In order to truly consider your eternal state, let us think about three parables of Jesus that go right to the heart of what is the Kingdom of God and who will go there. First of all there is the parable of the sower and the seed. In this parable all receive the Word of God with gladness, so far so good, that is all of us who claim to be saved. Yet, some fell by the wayside and were devoured by the birds of the air. These seeds are gone. Some fell on stony ground and eventually withered away for lack of good soil. Others fell among the thorns and the cares of this world choked them. Some fell on good ground and produced a harvest. We will discover soon what the harvest is, it is not necessarily other souls being saved. Now I want you to identify what kind of seed best represents you. You need to be ruthlessly honest with yourself, it's a matter of eternal life or eternal death. Its not too late, but you must be honest, we must be transparent before God. You see, it is always those who recognize their condition that are justified. Going right back to Abel who knew that he was not right before God and sacrificed a lamb and bled it out on the alter and in doing so acknowledged to God that he was a sinner and God justified him, as opposed to Cain who thought he was right before God.

The second parable to consider is the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. It is vital that you know what category you fall into. There are many opinions about the parable of the virgins but here is what is undisputed. The scriptures say this of the five virgins who had no oil in their lamp "And the door was shut." And the foolish virgins called to Jesus, the master, and called Him Lord and what did Jesus say to them? "Assuredly I say to you I do not know you." Now who else heard those words from Jesus? Men who did miracles in the name of Jesus, men who cast out demons in His name, men who were involved in great miracles, even raising the dead, all in the name of Jesus. Please do not confuse what these men did as counterfeit miracles, there is no evidence, and the scriptures do not say, that they were counterfeit miracles. These men were simply vehicles used by God as opposed to servants. You might say, "well what's the difference." "A vehicle is merely a means by which God moves. These loud bombastic men who shout before the throne of all that "they," did have already been paid in full. They received exactly what they wanted. Their reward was money, reputation, living large. That is what their hearts wanted, that is exactly what they got, God is no man's debtor. The hirelings are paid for their services. When Jesus says to both these groups that "I do not know you," then their destiny is sealed, they are cast out into outer darkness.

Finally let us look at the parable of the talents. Perhaps the most abused of all the parables. Remember, it is a parable, an illustration, a story that will allow those who have an ear to hear to learn the truth. The "talent," is an analogy. This parable is not about money. Money is the illustration. Now, one talent was a lot of money. It was, roughly, the equivalent

lent of 6000 days wages. So, we are talking about 20 years worth of wages, in today's money it might be about \$600,000. So, the least of the servants was given \$600,000. The point being is that each servant was lavished with resources.

When a man or woman comes to Jesus He is lavished with grace and mercy, love and forgiveness. This is the heavenly currency. Now we have been invested in by Jesus and He absolutely wants a return on His investments. So the question is, how much of that grace and mercy that was lavished on you have you lavished on others? How much love have you shared? How much forgiveness have you given to others? Have you traded up? Is there more grace and mercy, love and forgiveness in the earth now because of you? The thing about the aforementioned gifts is that they have the capacity to increase on the earth because the source is infinite. Not like water, or oil or gold. There is so much of that on the planet, there is a finite amount and it can never change. And so, the man or woman who invests the gifts that God has given him enlarges his capacity to receive more. As is the economy of heaven, the more you give away, invest, the more that you will ultimately receive.

What happens to those who refuse to share and invest the gifts of grace and mercy, love and forgiveness that they themselves received? These are dwellers in the outer courts. Jesus orders these "unprofitable servants," into the outer darkness, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He takes back the initial investment and gives it to those who invested all that they had. Its ironic that the true servants of God, who constantly engage the darkness to bring light to it on this earth, are now ushered into eternal light. And those that avoided all contact with the darkness because they did not care for those who dwelled there, now themselves are taken and cast into that very darkness for all eternity. The faithful servant hears these words "Enter into the Joy of the lord."

So, what kind of seed are you? Are you a wise virgin or a foolish one? Are you a profitable servant or a wicked servant? If you refuse to forgive, if you refuse to love the unlovable, if you only love those that love you, if you do not show mercy and grace then you can see what category you fall into. All your good works will be as filthy rags before the Lord. It does not matter if God uses you to perform miracles, it does not even matter if you "give your body to be burned." All that matters is what did you do with grace, mercy love and forgiveness. If , after reading this you find yourself wanting, then you must act quickly for tomorrow is not guaranteed. You do not know when the master will come back , either for the world, or for you personally. You must come to the door of Jesus. You must come to the brazen altar and begin to lay down your hatreds and your bitterness. When you do you will have the challenge of forgiving your enemies, doing good and praying for those who hate you and spitefully use you. You will begin to return love for hatred and when you do these things then you will know that you have had an encounter with the Living Jesus, you will come into the Holy place of His presence out of which all of these things flow. You will enter into the joy of the Lord, right here on earth. Just a portion to whet your appetites for your eternal state.