

## Devotional Thoughts :: ...as we walk along the way!

**...as we walk along the way! - posted by MaryJane, on: 2013/5/12 10:18**

We are now beginning to break out of our old-school thinking of attending a big building. We are realizing that it's not really a Priesthood of believers to have one high, holy man that makes all the decisions, controls all the money, and does all the teaching. We are realizing that's not in the Bible.

There might be wonderful people, genuine Christians in a place. Even the leader might be a genuine, loving man who knows the Scriptures and knows God. But there's still something wrong, and if we are honest we know in our hearts that, first of all, it's not in the Bible. It's not! No one can find that kind of thing in the Bible anywhere. It doesn't exist.

The second thing we know is that the fruit is generally bad. Many, many tragedies happen in that situation that never needed to happen. Do we realize that most of the major tragedies that have happened in Christianity amongst members, pastors, families, children and marriages, we have created ourselves? It's because we've built poorly. We've created a world where you "attend" something. You attend someone or something and listen to a speech and go through some actions. Simon says, "Pray." Simon says, "Sing." Simon says, "Stand up." Simon says, "Sit and listen to a sermon if you can stay awake long enough."

That isn't in the Bible, which is a very important point to me. They had thirty years recorded in the book of Acts by the scientist Luke to give an orderly account of what the church looks like, and there are no Sunday morning services in there. There is no sermon-giving and no "dress-up and attend" sort of thing in there. It isn't about meetings. It's about quality of Life that looked like Jesus walking with the twelve. "As we rise up, as we sit down, as we walk along the way."

That is the message of the New Testament. That's what it was for 3,000 people in a single day as they "...rise up, and sit down, and walk along the way." Together! That's the message of Jesus Christ and His people, and it's very different from every other world religion. Islam attends a service on Friday, listens to a speech by a hired teacher (a "holy man"), and then half of the people fall asleep during the sermon. That's what we heard from an Islamic man. He was a taxi-cab driver in Cairo who described this to us and it sounds just like most of today's Christianity.

Now, I'm not saying that if that's what people do, then Jesus and His Blood don't wash them, forgive their sins, and take them Home. But what I am saying is that Jesus wants to build a Church that the gates of hell cannot prevail against.

He doesn't want us to be little babies ten years from now where we don't know any more of His Relationship and His Love than we did at the start. After ten years, we don't serve Him and bear fruit (every one of us is a priest in the Kingdom of Priests) any better than we did when we were one-year-old in Christ. He wants us to grow in wisdom and stature and favor and knowledge of the Godhead and explore our gifts. "In my Father's house there are many rooms." He wants us to explore His rooms and do His work and do greater works than He did.

We're not going to be able to do that by attending a big building or attending a little house. That will not set captives free. But Love and devotion one to another will. "As we rise up, as we sit down, as we walk along the way." It's by exploring the Life of God together, and in the process you see that look in my eyes like you would a little child. You say, "Brother, what's wrong with you?" And I say, "You're right. I had a little bit of temper in my home. I was frustrated with something my child did and you caught me. You saw the look in my eye and you know me and you love me." That's just like we would do with a child.

Many, many people know me that well in the church. That is the way the whole church ought to be: "...from the least to the greatest they all know Me." That's what the Bible says. The New Covenant is not about attending something. The New Covenant is that from the least to the greatest our lives are intertwined just as Jesus' was with the twelve. In Acts, the hundred and twenty were of one accord in the upper room, and the three thousand one hundred and twenty were daily in public and from house to house—no one counting their possessions as their own. ALL the believers were together and had everything in common. It doesn't say 10% of the committed nucleus lived that way and the rest of the people just attended something. ALL the believers—baby Christians from day one knew they were to be a Family. Those were ALL new Christians!

From the very first day, the believers in Acts 2 knew they were to be a Family and that their lives were to be poured into one another. None of them had ever before done anything like that. They weren't used to that. Before they became Christians, they were just like most people in the world. They lived how they wanted to live and worked where they wanted to work. Their family was their little fortress or castle. They would leave their fortress and go attend something. They'd attend work, or attend recreation or attend some family function. But their life was their fortress—their life was very much their own.

Jesus said, "It won't be that way any longer. Your life is not your own. You were bought for a price. You were bought by My blood and now you'll have a hundred mothers, brothers and sisters. If you'll forsake your life, you will have a hundred intimate relationships as close as you ever had with your mother or as close as you ever had with your child. You'll have a hundred intimate relationships.

"You will have a hundred mothers, brothers, and sisters, if you'll forsake your life instead of holding onto it—if you will deny your very self, take up your cross and come after Me." Get out of your shell, get out of your comfort zone, and get out of your bad habits of selfish living.

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Another very challenging teaching for me. The realization that much of how I have and do live can be attributed to selfish living. Its easy to think well they did church that way back in Bible times(Acts 2) because it was easier for them to do so then it would be for me to do so today...but is it really? JESUS calls us to die to self and love one another, loving another costs something to me on a personal level. Truly loving the way JESUS did/does cost HIM and HE is our example...what has my walk with other believers cost me????

Just some things on my heart this morning.

God bless  
maryjane

**Re: ...as we walk along the way! - posted by MaryJane, on: 2013/5/13 14:06**

Our brother brought up that unless you are born a second time you cannot enter the kingdom. There is no such thing as a once-born Christian. If you've not been converted, not forsaken your life, and not taken up your cross, then you can't be His disciple. You cannot be a Christian according to the Bible. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11:26). Disciples and Christians are synonymous terms. If you haven't forsaken your very life and taken up your cross, then don't claim to be a Christian. "You cannot be my disciple if you won't pick up your cross and come after me" (Luke 14:27).

When we begin to relate to each other on that basis, we begin to see that we are all priests of God. If something comes up, we need to talk about it, and not silently judge each other and separate and pull back. We need to care for and love each other just like we would with our children. We have to love each other enough to talk about things that we see and hear. You know to do that for your child, yet we've been trained to be afraid of having that same kind of relationship with each other. So let's get over that. Let's grow up.

You will know a twice-born person by their fruit. You will see it in their life "if you claim to be in Jesus, you'll walk as Jesus walked" (1Jn 2:6). "If you love me, you'll obey me," Jesus said (John 14:15). You'll begin to see obedience in their life. You'll begin to see that when they've stumbled, they look upward instead of horizontally. You'll see the things of God that demonstrate that the Spirit of God is living inside of them.

If they have the Spirit, an Anointing that's real and not counterfeit, they won't continue to sin (1Jn 2, 3). They don't want to sin. "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure." (1Jn 3:3) The nature of Jesus living inside means we want to get rid of sin in our lives. We'll never get rid of all of it, but we want to. That's the proof of the Spirit living inside of us.

As our brother said, there is no such thing as a Christian who hasn't been born a second time, which means there's no such thing as a Christian who doesn't have the Spirit living inside. And that means there is no such thing as a person who is a Christian that wants to keep on sinning and gets mad when you talk to them about it! 1 John 3 says you can't be a Christian without the Spirit and the Spirit says, "Abba, Father, I want to be holy." That man says to his brother, "I need your help because I'm not a holy man yet. I want your help and I'm not afraid of you speaking to me about this

ngs.Â”

The Body of Christ is for Christians and for those who want to become Christians. The Church is not for people who claim to be members, but don't have the Spirit of Christ. That's wrong. That's leaven and, "A little leaven leavens the whole batch." As we live relationally with people, we can find these things out. If we live attendance-based, there will be no way to know who people are.

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Just wanted to continue to share what I am learning with some few...

God bless  
mj

**Re: , on: 2013/5/13 15:34**

Good thoughts on this post sister. Of course it has always been about the royal priesthood of believers. The enemy of our souls knows that as well of course. The Body of Christ is for Christians, that is true. And it is against this Body, this Church that the gates of hell shall not prevail against. I wrote this piece a couple of weeks ago, it may add to the thoughts...  
.....bro Frank

A long time ago the "Church" was redefined by men as something separate from the people. They created a building and a system and they called it their own. This is always the folly of men. Consider this, consider what men would do with this. Say, we had in our possession, the bush that burned and the sand that surrounded it when Moses encountered the Lord.

It would be venerated and visited by the masses of people and it would be worshiped. Yet all it would be would be a bush and some sand. It is the presence of God that makes the ground Holy, whether it is a bush, some sand, a building, a living room, a basement. God dwells within His people. They are the Church. They are living stones, built upon the chief stone, the cornerstone. When two or three of them gather together, then He is there in the midst of them. Two or three brothers and sisters.

Not one, for one can worship and pray alone and come before the throne, but to the two or three there lies the promise. This corporate presence of God is unique and beautiful and Holy and majestic. It cannot be compared. It cannot because it was created that way, praise the Lord. Now if I know that and you know that then the enemy of our souls knows that too. This, I would charge, would become one of his greatest tasks, to destroy genuine gatherings of the saints. He has had much success but has ultimately failed.

Just when he thinks he has done a wonderful job, then God begins to call all His children all over the world, His remnant children to come together for these, the final days. What seems like the enemy's greatest victory will become his ultimate defeat. As the saints begin to gather in defiance of his works, then he will reveal himself and come against them with hell and all of its fury. And then, in the midst of all of that, the Bridegroom returns for His bride.

The lion of Judah returns and He rides, not on a donkey but on a stallion. Not now as the Lamb but as the Lion. He comes to bring justice and judgement. There will be a fire in His eyes and a two-edged sword in His mouth, glory to God, glory to God.

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2013/5/13 22:07**

Greetings Frank

I really appreciate what you shared here. I agree that it is where the two or three are gathered that we truly know HIS presence. I had someone once share with me that GOD did not want us to be like the "lone ranger" but rather to live one to another, joined together in HIM with one desire, one hope to see HIM glorified and lifted up!!

Its not about "doing" more meetings or programs or ministries, its about submitting and living unto to HIM and loving each other. You are right, as HE calls us out more and more those who are HIS will see and understand we are family... brothers and sisters with lives intertwined and knit together with the same desire to know our FATHER and live for HIM only !! Jesus said, "they will know you are my disciples by the love they see you have for one another—the love between

en disciples. Unbelievers see that Love and it's irresistible! That LOVE found only in HIM and demonstrated a thousand times over amongst the children of GOD does cause the enemy to take notice, it is a reminder that his time is short and his days are numbered!! JESUS will return and every knee will bow and confess HE is LORD!!

God bless  
mj

**Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2013/5/15 10:27**

One thing he brought out is that some people in this country call themselves born again Christians who are not. Just because someone pastes that label on themselves doesn't necessarily mean it's true. I like what was said about knowing if a person is twice-born by the fruit of their lives.

Another thing we have to deal with is all the "doctrines" we have inherited which aren't even in the Bible. We live in a society here in this country with so many people who wrongly believe they are following the Bible, but have very little or no knowledge of what it actually says. People believe they are born again without even knowing what that means. People believe they are disciples of Christ without knowing Christ.

You will be guessing and come across as judgmental and legalistic if you start pointing fingers at people in an attendance-based environment. But if you walk with them as you rise up, as you sit down, as you walk along the way, then you begin to see firsthand if the spirit of the world is in them, or if they have sinful attitudes or if they don't love the light. Jesus said, "This is the verdict: some love the light, others hate the light" (John 3:19-21). Some want their deeds exposed because they know they need help. They know they're not perfect, and they want the Word of God. Like a newborn baby, they crave the pure spiritual milk of the Word (1 Peter 2:2). A rock does not crave milk but a baby does.

If you begin to have a relationship with someone on a daily basis and they don't care about the Word of God, they're like a rock that could care less. They're not like a baby craving milk. You try to give them the Word and it just runs right off of them. In that case there's a good chance that person is not saved. You can begin to say that perhaps they're not a member of the church, of the Ekklesia. They're not a member of the Body of Christ. You bring two or three witnesses and tell the church, and if they still don't want help, you perhaps need to say goodbye to them. You would never be able to do that in an attendance-based environment. You'd never know who belongs to God and who doesn't because everybody looks spiritual on Sunday.

I remember in the '80s, Keith Green sang in his song that just because you enter McDonald's, that doesn't make you a hamburger. Or just because you sleep in a garage that doesn't make you a car...Or swimming in the water doesn't make you a fish. I think what we are dealing with is cultural Christianity. So many people who call themselves Christians and identify themselves with born-again groups are trapped in a cultural mindset. Their definition of what it means to be a Christian is based on what they see from the people around them. It is based on what they see their parents do or what they see their neighbors or their friends do. "They are doing it and so am I. Therefore, I'm a Christian."

I think the need is to bring people into a situation where they ask, "Have I really had my own crisis experience? Have I had that kind of encounter with the Lord Jesus that goes beyond just dealing with things that stand between me and Him?"

I know there are many people here in our country that see themselves as Christians and consider themselves to be Believers. It is probably an offense to those in the evangelical community especially, to hear that they are possibly not Christians, and they are unbelievers. I'm beginning to see why they feel such offense. It's because their understanding of being a Christian is based on what has been passed on to them.

So, the challenge for us and for anyone who wants to bring people into a Real experience with Jesus is to bring them true Christianity in the Biblical sense of the word. There are just so many coatings, if you'd like to look at it that way. There are so many coatings to get into the core of Christianity. It's not an easy job; it's not an easy task. We need the Holy Spirit working in us and guiding us even as we witness and share. We should go beyond the traditional, typical way of presenting the Gospel. We should not feel satisfied when a person makes a sinner's prayer. That is not necessarily a guarantee that the person has experienced New Birth! Who knows exactly when and where, or even if this person experienced New Birth?

It's a cultural thing and I don't think it is unique to our country. I believe every generation whether it's in the west or here, has developed some kind of cultural mentality as far as their understanding of Christianity. It has become a hindrance to people experiencing the real Jesus and true Christianity.

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Truly seeing it is about loving one another in HIM and knowing one another. Its about family life, working, living, laughing, crying, growing, together in HIM that makes for true and unique fellowship of the CHRISTIAN believer :)

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God bless  
mj