2023 01 29    OUTSIDE/INSIDE

**PETERS STORY UPDATE**

**CHORUS:**Keith Green    “what can be done with an old heart like mine?”

Do you ever feel like you are talking to yourself when you think or speak to God, does it seem like a monotone, with no feeling either way from you or God, no answers, deep thoughts, understandings – just, a ok ‘I’ve done that, better get on with the day.’

Days like these take away our excitement in our living and in a way, we just get on with it -living robot like. Faith does not dull or fade but it lacks the smile -at least for me it can. What has changed!

The words spoken by our God through Micah, we hear God saying “what have you got against me, what have I done that has *wearied you*!”

God challenges the people to state their grievances and disappointments to the mountains and see if they will listen to them.

Have we become weary in our living in God??

Psalm 139 tells us that God is always knowing where we are and no matter where we try to be – God is already there. (*quote v1 -18, 23,24)* Trust comes out of this when it becomes a part of us.

Should we try harder, pray more, read more, do more, withdraw and sit on an ant hill or whatever.

Consider a few people: Job – thought that he was righteous and that is why God blessed him, but when God allowed all his physical security to be taken away, and he lived in agony and his wife told him to ‘get it over with and die’, and his best mates told him it had to be his own fault.

Job protested his innocence. Then God said “face me and answer this –‘where were you when I set the stars in place and determined their course, do you know where the deer gives birth or …” Job was opened up to himself and saw himself as God saw him and repented. Job repented of his self-righteousness and said the most wonderful words of self-awareness and repentance and he could face God with open face and soul and spirit and cry out– ‘once I knew about you Lord God but now I know YOU”.

There was a monumental shift from self/physical to God in his spirit and a change in his soul.

This is what we are searching out – the difference, and the growth in knowing ABOUT God, and knowing God – growing in it day by day. There is a biblical principle that growth comes through troubles or testing – some become bitter and some gracious - there are many verses to support this and there is the corresponding promise by God “I will never allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear but will with the temptation make a way of escape – a way to live victorious in it.” We can couple that with, or lock that into, the Lords sending the Spirit or Presence of God to be our guide and comforter and teacher. Always present – bringing Jesus to us.

*Would anyone like to tell us of a time when they knew that wonderful deep presence of Gods Spirit being in them? Sometimes it is the smallest thing that makes us have a quiet smile or a deep peace.*

*C.S.Lewis wrote “you can search for joy and not find it but one day you will turn a corner and be ‘surprised by joy’*

There was a very wealthy and sincere young man who came to Jesus to ask about coming to God, to walking in God’s presence in life and death. The Lord said “you know the commandments, keep them and you will live”. Now this young man was seeking God and had an honest and open soul and he said “I have all my life kept these – our Lord loved this young man, his sincerity and desire were real, yet **Jesus’ love** saw past the keeping of the seven “do not” commands to the first three -  he loved wealth or maybe the position it gave him – more than he loved God. “there is one thing that you lack – go sell all that you have and give to the needy, and you will have treasure in heaven” -  he could not. He loved something before God and that negated the physical do nots and keeping of religious observances - the law. I like to believe that he came back.

When Jesus sent out the 70 disciples to tell the news to the villages they came back excited that they had healed people - “even the demons obeyed them” again the physical that did good and helped people – the Lords response was - not physical emphasis but spirit, soul excitement – “do not rejoice because the demons were obedient to you but rejoice that your names are written in Gods Book of Life.”

And one of the saddest/most devastating statements that Jesus ever made was in response to: “Lord in your name we healed the sick, we drove out demons we – we – “The Lord Jesus reply: “go away from me you sinners – what you did was not authorized”. Their motives were self, I, me, law obedience, not “love the lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind” only out of that comes “love your neighbor as yourself”.

Be extra diligent in the comfortable times to be thankful because complacency, comfort, can settle in and we can run in our own energy reserves.

What can we bring to God, how do we picture, feel experience God: judge, awesome to be feared, ever distant, watching us OR sharing life with us as the Father of our Lord Jesus the Christ. Can we see the God that Jesus showed us? Jesus is the exact representation of God.

What can I bring to God – READ Micah 6:3,6,7,8.

“God has provided for Himself/God has provided HIMSELF an offering to cleanse the darkness of our natural self ness. *I am naturally rebellious and do my own thing – even now after a lifetime of believing in Jesus I know that I do not like the word “obey”. “Jesus became sin for me that I might become the rightness of God in Him”.* This is the offering that we come to God in. This is our security, this brings us to what you did WAS authorized “well done good and faithful servant - no - well done good and faithful child of Mine.”

It is out of total love from God that OBEY ceases to bring a rebellious attitude and becomes living free and living joy. It is not a dictatorial thing but a love thing.

“God loved us before we loved Him – when we wanted nothing to do with God”. The response of our love back to God, choosing to follow His ways, is what brings us into the closeness of the Spirit.

V4 “I have redeemed you, paid for you, brought you out of the house of slavery and sent you a leader” we have, in the Son of God, in God giving Himself for us become clean and have the Presence of God as our Companion and Guide. Father, Son, Spirit, the unity of ONE Whom we have our being in, whom we live in.

We can hold to this trust even when the joy is not there, when there seems to be a distance yes we can …

Micah 6:8  “do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with our God”. In this there is a certainty, a quietness that is always the base of us, even when stress and loneliness are dragging us down or boiling on top of us. *I love diving under a wave – all that tumult above yet a space of calm under it all. Stay above and try and swim through it and its power will toss and twist and dump me but dive under and it is bliss. It is a place of trust that bring peace and joy.*

Trust is like that.

“in quietness and in confidence ‘and thankfulness’ shall be your strength.”

*“be still and know that I AM your God”.*