

2020 06 14 a Pentecostal Calling

Genesis 18:1-15, 21:1-7. Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19.

Romans 5:1-8. Matthew 9:35 - 10:8-23.

"Behold/understand, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; show yourselves to be shrew as serpents and innocent as doves." (Mathew 10:16)

We kept sheep and they are useless without a leader - they will run in every direction, they get fly strike and foot rot and so on - yet oil from their wool can oil our skin and the grubby wool is made into beautiful garments and keeps us warm.

The thing is though - sheep have no natural protection mechanism - they just scatter and run and are easy pray for predators or hungry humans.

I have seen sheep in drought times - they walk away from their new born babies because they have nothing to feed them, I have seen the crows come and ... both to the babies and the almost dead sheep.

Why does our Lord and God describe us as sheep?

"They are like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36) - if we do not have a Shepard we have no direction, we are easily disturbed by false or weak shepherds, "beware or wolves in sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15) puts us on notice to "test the spirits to see if they are of God". (1 John 4:1-6)

Jesus is our shepherd - remember the story of one sheep wandering of and the shepherd, after making sure that the other sheep were in a safe place maybe with another shepherd - went and searched for the lost sheep and with rejoicing brought it back and shared his joy with all the other sheep and shepherds. (Matthew 18)

There was a time when Jesus in training his followers sent out 70 - 2 x 2 and told them not to take any provisions or money and to tell people that "the Kingdom of Heaven has come near". (Luke 10)

He said to them "in the world you will have tribulation, but take courage, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

It was on that occasion that he instructed them to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

We need to look to the night before his death to see where this wisdom and innocence come from. (John 10 - 16)

We have come to know that we can never in all eternity become 'good enough' to find our way into Gods presence - into heaven if you will - no matter how many lives we live, no matter how many good deeds, how much caring for others, there is the utter purity of God **and then there is me.**

Consider this quotation:

'[Jesus] is vilified and abandoned by everyone to an agonising execution - that certainly is suffering enough. And yet, in his life, that is not the particular nerve that twinges. The centre of his agony lies elsewhere. It lies in the fact that everything evil that men do to him is doubly terrible because he must measure it all against **what men were meant to be**. (Thielicke, *ibid.* page 103.)

Consider both the suffering indicated in this quote and also the extent to which Jesus took to inspire us to be 'all that we were made to be'.

Jesus did not just leave us to work it out for ourselves - to just survive, but to live life in the fulness of Gods Presence.

It is in the birth - life - death and the resurrection of Jesus that we become 'born again' - born new in our soul, in the new birth of our spirit - a new born person in the old physical body (John3) - (which one day will be made new like Jesus glorious resurrection body [1 Corinthians 15:35-58]).

We, from the moment of coming to faith in Jesus - not just belief but faith - trust for cleaning and rebirth in Gods righteousness and we receive the gift of Gods Holy Spirit - the very Presence of God who reveals Jesus in us.

(John 14:16) I will ask the Father and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him **because He lives with you and will be in you**".

(John 16:14) "The Spirit of Truth, when He comes, he will glorify Me for He will take what is mine and will disclose it to you,"

"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you" (v18)

When Jesus rose from the dead he appeared to the disciples - maybe only the 10 (Thomas was not there) but more likely there were other people there - especially the woman who believed in Him and to whom He appeared first'

When God created man of the red dirt of the earth it was not until God breathed the breath of life into him that he became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

In the same way Jesus "breathed on them and said 'you receive the Holy Spirit.'" (20:22)

"Receive the Holy Spirit" became a reality then in eternity but did not happen visually until sometime later in our time - and (Acts 10:47)

latter with a group of non-Jewish believers

What ultimately shows that we are Jesus followers and children of the Living God that we have the Holy Spirit ?

It is not the speaking of miracles or teaching ability or bible reading or prayer for itself or good works themselves but Who we look to in these things and in our life - who is our pivotal point.

(Matthew 7:21) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'what you did was unauthorised - I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

If I have a gift - when I exercise it *from myself* then it becomes a work - in Jesus name it is still valid and still "is effective" - you can see this in the record of the disciples complaining that some who were not of them were casing out demons in Jesus name (Mark 9:38) - but beware the warning in another account of the seven sons of Sever who used Jesus name and the demons overpowered them. (Acts 19:11-21)

In the living in our gifts, they are not our gifts but Gods. We look always to God and exercise the gift, flowing from God: - hospitality, giving, healing, helping others, teaching, cleaning, smiling, being a child of God. (Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 1 Peter 4:11)

We do not look at the gift but the source of the gift that the Holy Spirit has given differently to each of us as God wills. (1 Corinthians 12)

So then what is the outward evidence that we walk with Gods Presence in us?

Two things: when the Spirit was poured out;

1) "they spoke the word with boldness" (Acts 4:31) they were no longer frightened and timid and hiding away - even though they had seen the risen Jesus they were only confident, and eventually some were murdered, when Holy Spirit - the Presence of God came into them to live and walk with them permanently.

2) "By their fruits you will know them. (Matthew 5:17-20) The Holy Spirit brought the character, the love of our Lord Jesus into us and it is the growing in the 'fruit of the Spirit' that it shows the presence of God in us."

(1 Corinthians 13) love is patient and kind, is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, love does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails/never gives up."

We grow in these things - and we are never alone, when we fail and the old dead nature tries to stick a hand out of the grave, we come to the Lord and He washes our feet and we walk on and we grown and our new nature becomes more and more our instinctive first response.

1 Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

There are two sides - hope and trouble ..

3 Not only that, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that *suffering produces perseverance*; **4** *perseverance, proven character*; and *character, hope*. **5** *And hope does not disappoint us*, because God has poured out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us. (Romans 5)

There are many more things to write but I want to close with these words from C.S.Lewis:

"A new sort of life is spreading through our system: because now we are letting Him work at the right part of us. It is the difference between paint, which is merely laid on the surface, and dye or stain which soaks right through. Jesus never talked vague, idealistic gas. When He said "you be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)

He meant it. He meant that we must go in for the full treatment. It is hard, but the sort of 'compromise that we are trying to live in' is harder - in fact, it is impossible."

*It may be hard for an egg to turn into a bird he wrote but: it would be a jolly sight harder for it to learn to fly while remaining an egg. We are like eggs at present and you cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. **We must be hatched or go bad.**"*
(Mere Christianity)

We have the Spirit, the presence of God in us, we are not alone, we are to grow as Gods child.

Recommend a book: "Church Without Religion:

Free To Live The Christian Life". Vision has it on special for \$9. I can order if anyone would like one.

Discussion:

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