

First Light Herald

Jeff and Cerise Welter...sharing the tree of life with you.

HOW IMPORTANT IS WHAT YOU SAY?

- For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matt 12:37
- What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Ps 34:12-13
- The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. Ps 37:30
- I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue. Ps 39:1
- Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Ps 50:19
- Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah. Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue. Ps 52:2-4



THE TWO PRODIGALS

Once upon a time were two brothers. They lived in the same home, had the same father, ate the same food, but were two very different boys. They were very different in all but one way; both didn't know their father's heart. One brother wanted to leave his father and make his own way. He had big plans. He took no time to consider his choices and the consequences of those choices. He lived for the moment and was very much about himself. The other brother, the elder brother was a thinker. He was slow to move or act. He was very methodical. He stayed at home and did exactly what his father asked of him. He never took unnecessary chances and always considered the consequences of his choices, but he too was very much all about himself and not about his father.



When we read or hear the parable of the prodigal son it's easy to overlook the elder son. (Matthew, Mark and John did!) We relate to the guy who goes off and wastes his life with riotous living. OK, so our lives may or may not have been AS riotous as his was, but on some level we relate to him. We all want to do things our own way and then because reality always bites in the end we see ourselves coming back to the Father when we hear about the "I did it my way" son, but there were two prodigal sons.

Let's take a moment and consider ourselves in the OTHER boy? He was a good boy. He did things the right way. He was up early doing all the things expected of him. He took care of his father's stuff. He was dependable and forthright. He went to the right "school" and avoided the school of hard knocks. Sounds good huh? Let's now look at what was behind all that "goodness", shall we? He was selfish or self centered. You hear it when his brother returns after "wasting all his father's living with riotous living". The father has thrown a big party because he knew his younger son was back from the dead. He used to stand at the end of the road every day looking and waiting for his son to return and now he was home! All of this bugged the elder son.

Luke 15 25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. 28 And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and entreated him. 29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed

THE TWO PRODIGALS.....CONTINUED

I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: 30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. 31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. 32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

The elder son was angry inside. He felt ignored, abused, unappreciated and wronged by his father. He'd been so faithful to obey yet his father hadn't had a party for him and his friends. He kept all the rules and never had any fun. Sound the least bit familiar? You ever feel angry when you see the wicked enjoying life? They never seem to suffer for their "crimes"? Clearly the elder brother was clueless to what had happened in the life of his younger brother. Again, he was all about himself. In his mind his younger brother deserved what he got. He'd taken his father's living and had "devoured it with harlots".



This story is all about judging others and proclaiming self righteousness. You have to look around the inner story to get the gist of what is happening. The Lord is talking to the tax collectors and sinners because they came to hear him. The Pharisees and scribes are murmuring in the background (Have you ever murmured in the background?) The Pharisees and scribes are mulling around angry because the Lord is eating and receiving sinners! Isn't that what a Savior does? He saves and feeds the hungry and needy? We can all find ourselves judging others when we've been "good" and done the right thing when others are doing their own things. We must always remember to come with a servant's heart to the Father. When we come to Him all puffed up with a list of all the things we've done right, we've forgotten where our righteousness comes from. The Lord reveals this when he says, "...and all that I have is thine". The gift of righteousness is just that, a gift. It was bought by God with a really high price, the price of His son's life!

As you leave off from reading this newsletter do what the elder son didn't do. Go thank God for His goodness and His love. Go have a party and enjoy the life you're living now. We've been given "all things richly to enjoy", but are we doing it? You don't have to go off and live a life of riotous living. You can walk in holiness and still enjoy life, but only when you recognize that righteousness is the gift of God.

THE DANGERS OF OFFENSE



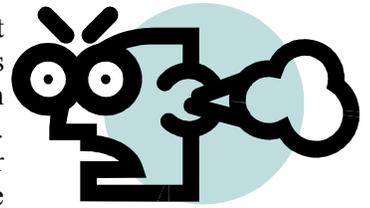
I never understood that getting offended was perilous to the believer until God began showing me how His love works. When I learned that all the promises of God are obtained through faith, and faith works or is employed by love I began to look at whether or not I was walking in love. God is love and therefore love is at the base or root of all faith filled works. Faith trusts what you've heard God say is true. When you hear (by the spirit) something God has promised or said and believe it you will act upon it. You can know you've heard God if you see the "fruits" of the spirit in what you've heard.

Galatians tell us that the fruit of the spirit are: love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Tied up in everything you do by faith is the need to recognize the attributes of God or love. Lots of "believers" never go beyond a surface understanding of love. Their idea of love is pretty selfish; all about the old, "me, myself and I" of life. BUT to go to higher places, to have hinds feet on high places one must really delve into love. God doesn't love He IS love. Allowing Him to work through you is what our lives are all about. God doesn't require us to use our love to reach out to those in need, but to tap into HIS love. When we attempt to love someone in our own strength we can find ourselves offended. When you love someone led by God and in His power

Faith works by love...

OFFENDED.....CONTINUED

(the power of the Holy Spirit) we can do anything. WITH God all things are possible. That doesn't mean God can do everything (although He can) it means a human WITH God's power can do anything. Consider Peter walking on the water. As long as his eyes were on the Lord he walked, but as soon as he got his eyes off Yeshua/Jesus he began to sink. Why? Because he was suddenly self aware and his own knowledge kicked in. Remember he was a fisherman. He was quite accustomed to floating in a boat on the surface of the water. He was also familiar with the properties of wind and of the waves. Wind and waves cause boats to capsize.



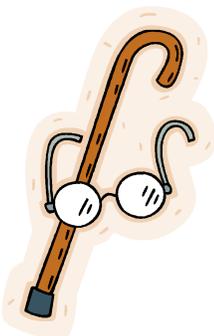
The Lord repeatedly told his disciples that he wasn't doing a thing; it was the Father who was doing the works. He wasn't being humble in the way we normally think; he wasn't being falsely humble he was completely depending on the strength and power of God.

When we commit to do the will of God we must be aware that storms are coming. When they come we have to know that God has given His word to be with us in trouble. He doesn't specify what sort of trouble He is willing to be present in; He just gives the promise of trouble. If you look back to Peter's situation you must realize that he created the problem he was in. It wasn't the Lord's idea for Peter to step out of the boat and onto the water, it was Peter's! The Lord couldn't very well say, "No Peter it's not me." He wouldn't say, "Peter you better stay in the boat, only the pure and perfect can walk on water." The Lord wanted his disciples to take his place once he left planet earth for heaven for the spirit realm. He wanted all his disciples to walk on water (so to speak).

If you've ever read the parable of the sower which sowed his seed you see that trouble and persecution can cause us to become offended IF we allow it. The promise or word we are standing on can "wither away" with offense. Actually what happens is that you walk out of love when you allow offense into your heart. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (which is the law of faith) requires us to love God and to love others as ourselves. If we become offended we try to "save ourselves" and not trust God to be God.

Trouble and persecution are coming to every single human on the planet. Why? Because we have an enemy who comes to steal, kill and destroy anything he can get his hooves on. The Lord came that we MIGHT have life and have it abundantly. Walking in love and the fruits of love can help us walk above offense. When we consider ourselves dead in Christ we aren't sensitive to the weaknesses of other humans or the devices of the enemy. We simply walk on the water as we keep our eyes on the one who has already overcome this world. It takes grace and of course He has plenty of that to go around. It can be a wonderful thing to walk on the water with the Lord. It's an awesome thing to walk in the power of God's love and YOU can do it!

YOU'RE NOT GETTING OLDER



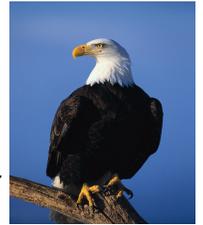
When I wake up in the morning like I did today, all achy and feeling old, I HAVE to remind myself my body ain't me. (Sorry dad, I know how much you hate slang and poor grammar.) I am spirit and my body is a temporary dwelling place. That's right, the body I have is like a coat that I will take off one day. Until God changes it from corruptible to incorruptible like He did for Yeshua/Jesus, I have to work with and in it. That means when I wake up inside my carcass I have to take authority over it and cause it to function.

God told man when He first put him on the earth "to have dominion over all the earth". We are basically in dirt bags and are supposed to have dominion over our dirt. (Genesis 1:26) There are some religions that believe in "soul rest". That means they believe we close our eyes and aren't conscious of anything. I'm not sure where they get that, but I'm sure someone passed it off as

YOU'RE NOT GETTING OLDER.....CONTINUED

truth.

2 Corinthians 5:6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.



We are made in the likeness of God; spirit, soul and body. He is spirit, has a soul and resides in a body. His whole plan from the beginning was to dwell in men eternally. Of course the adversary worked to separate God from man so he could steal man's body. He had lost his beautiful body (Ezekiel) and had been cast to earth. His first occupation of a body was that of a serpent in the garden, but he would work until he could occupy man. God knew this was coming and planned before the foundation of the earth the answer! 1 John 3:8

He satisfies my mouth with good so my youth is renewed like the eagles...

All of this is truth, but I digress. God wants us to know that He has promises to strengthen us in old age. Even though these bodies are aging, we can take part of promises that help us bring forth fruit even in old age. I've done a little work looking up some promises and will share them with you.

Psalms 103:5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. (What are you saying about your body; good things or what your body is screaming at you?)

Genesis 15:15 And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. (This was a promise to father Abraham. We are his seed by faith so we can claim this promise too.)

Ruth 4:15 And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age. (Ruth is in the line of Yeshua/Jesus and therefore we can claim this for ourselves.)

Psalms 91:16 With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation. (God has a job for each of us to do and that is share about salvation in His son Yeshua/Jesus. We need to do that work so we must demand that our bodies function as God designed them.)

1 Chronicles 29:28 And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honor. (This is speaking of David and he is in the blood line of our Savior. We can claim this as well because we are under a BETTER COVENANT made with BETTER PROMISES.)

Psalms 92:14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing. (Ok, so none of us want to be fat, but flourishing is good!)

Isaiah 46: 4 And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. (Don't you love this one!)



The world is full of bad news and scary reports. It is never too late to stand on promises. God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can think or ask, but it's according to the POWER working in us. His word is the power and the more of this we meditate and allow to germinate in our spirits the better. We must shut our minds off to thinking old thoughts. We have to think young and speak young. *As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.* God said that and I believe it. I have to change my mind or else I will speak things that are as if that's how they have to be. **Abraham called those things which be not as though they were. He spoke like God spoke.** Remember that God looked out across the vast horizons of time and space and saw that it was dark, but said, "LIGHT BE". We must do the same. Don't look in the mirror and say, "Wow I'm getting old". You aren't getting old, you never age. You are spirit and spirit doesn't age!

Last month I had a young man on the other side of our property call me "that old lady" not knowing I have ears that can

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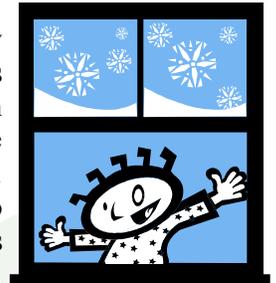


hear a pin drop in Africa. I began to let his words bug me. I was *feeling* as old as his words. The Lord spoke to me, “If he had called you a squid would you receive his words?” I laughed at his illustration, but His words spoke to my heart and I began seeing myself as God sees me. I had to pick up what I knew to be true rather than what this young man said about my flesh.

The world has all sorts of “sayings” that go along with aging. They prepare us to feel old, act old and die young. I can’t die before my time so I have to take authority over this bag of earth. You choose for yourself. Will you choose life and blessing or death and cursing?

LOOK BOTH WAYS

This year has been a full one; a year of challenges and of overcoming. It was the end of many things and the beginning of new things as well. The air has been full of bad reports and the world’s scenery is pretty bleak. With all of that said, we want to give glory to God for seeing us through each step of the way. He sent messengers with good news to encourage us along the pathway. He sent others with gifts to keep us fed, clothed, and moving and able to do the work of the ministry. With each challenge we faced an answer came. With each obstacle came the necessary direction to overcome and leap the hurdle. We’re growing and sharing with as many as will listen about His wonderful grace and truth, Yeshua/Jesus.



Back when Paul wrote the famous “love letter” to the Corinthians he spoke of looking through a glass darkly. Things may look dark in the world, but that means it should be all the lighter amongst the believers and in the body of Messiah/Christ. I know when I first walk into a dark room it seems so pitch black. My eyes have to adjust slowly, but a single match can illuminate a huge space! Dark can NEVER overwhelm light unless the light is put out. No one lights a candle and sets it under the bed. It will do one of two things; it will either set the bed on fire or it will go out. We must NOT let the noise of the enemy and his followers extinguish our lights. We must be the candle set on the table so that the whole room is illuminated.

We are going to hear more bad news, not less. There will be wars and rumors of wars. There will be earthquakes in various places. We are living in perilous times. A thousand may fall at our side and ten thousand at our right hand. Plagues will abound and famine increase. Do these words sound familiar to you? They should. I’m not saying anything that hasn’t been said before. Where is your faith? In what are you trusting?

I know without a doubt that God will be with us in trouble. He has said it and it is impossible for Him to lie! I know that trouble is coming because He warned us it was coming. So rather than worry and fret I think I’ll just settle in and thank Him for today. I am not hungry. I am not naked. I have a roof over my head and the bills are paid. I don’t have tomorrow so why bother worrying about something that isn’t even here yet? I am doing what I am supposed to today so that will have to be enough.

You can look through the window and see that everything looks dead. The snow is piling up (metaphorically speaking). It can look hopeless to you or you can see the opportunity to make snow angels and snow guys. You might even get to have a snowball fight, but the most exciting news is that God is with us in trouble. I like having Him around. How about you? Thanks Father, I sure love all the pretty snowflakes you sent my way.