

BACK TO THE BASICS OF FAITH

Seated at the King's Table

A lot of folks declare that they will not carry the baggage from 2009 into 2010. They may feel the urge to unload certain relationships or to switch professions or jobs. Others will take drastic measures like filing for divorce or moving to another state, or another country for that matter. Well the truth about this whole thing is that none of these changes really have a chance of working unless a person is willing to take a good long look at themselves in the mirror. If we would have the courage to do that, we would probably find that we don't have to make such drastic changes at all. Sometimes a small internal change is all that is needed to prompt an external one.

It sounds simple enough, to make a small internal change, but most of us will not commit to it; partly because we don't think we have to. The fact of the matter is that we must be constantly checking ourselves, preparing to rid the old and embrace the new. God set up everything in the universe to work this way, and if we set ourselves against it—agitation will surely be the result.

Salvation is the great awakening. It begins a coming into consciousness about who we are through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Most of us take a gradual approach, if indeed any approach at all, to our spiritual growth after salvation. We must realize that the slower our stride towards the things of Christ, the slower our progress in life; for the power of Christ is obtained through the knowledge of Christ. We could not have been saved if we did not hear or read first that it is indeed available. Faith comes by hearing, so the more we hear and read the word...the more we study its precepts...the greater we will be.

The mind and the heart are the epicenters of faith, and to be established in the faith of Christ is a goal that God has set before every human being. The greatest thing you can do for yourself, all those you love, and most importantly for God, is to learn to masterfully employ faith. Your job is to so trust in the goodness of God that you learn to call those things which are not as though they were. You must learn to walk by faith and not by sight. God wants to help you expand your vision to see what He sees, but He cannot do that if you refuse to look up.

In Matthew 22, we have a very good example of people who thought they knew all they needed to know. Refusing to see what was right in front of them, they were so completely persuaded that their way was the right way, that they would not even entertain the teachings of Christ. Incredulous that he sought to wake them up from wrong believing, they sought to lay their hands upon his person in order to harm him and stop his ministry.

We must remember that Christ was in the "*waking you up*" business. It is as true today as it was back then, that folks didn't want to be awakened; they wanted to remain asleep. They wanted things to continue on as they always did so that they could remain comfortable in their ignorance. As long as a new piece of revelation fit within the context of their own personal religious viewpoint, it was fine, but if it shook them up too much...if it required them to think in

ways that they hadn't before, they would dismiss the information, get angry with the person who brought it forth, and try to eradicate and devalue both the information and the person. History has borne this out time and time again.

We all think we can get by only knowing what we know now, but we should desire more and more of the Word of God. What we know now is just the tip of the iceberg, and we need to be able to crack that bad boy wide open to see what's waiting on the other side. In many ways it is good to be skeptical, particularly as it relates to those who are not of Christ and try to persuade us that they are. 1 John 4:1 KJV says *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."* God has told us to beware of false prophets and to groom ourselves to be wise discerners of the spirit.

1 John 4:2-3 goes on to tell us that every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that doesn't confess this isn't of God. So here we have our test so to speak. In verse 4 of this same chapter we have the verse that really seals the deal. It says *"You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."* False prophets don't have a thing on those who truly know the Lord Jesus Christ and have his spirit abiding within them.

These verses in 1 John 4 both warn us and assure us of our standing in Christ, but some of us misuse them, much the same way as the Sadducees and Pharisees did in Matthew 22. We use them as our excuse to stay stuck in bondage rather than the true purpose for which they were intended, which is to help us walk in liberty and truth.

In the parable of Matthew 22, Jesus told of a great feast prepared by a King for his son's marriage. How apropos it is that Jesus chose the union of two beloveds for this parable; there are very few celebrations of joy that rival it. And even more so fitting was the likening of this parable to the Kingdom of Heaven, for God has made such exorbitant, extraordinarily grand provisions for us, yet few of us seem to grasp the greatness of them. We travail in struggle continuously without realizing that Heavenly Father has given us such a magnificent way out through Christ.

The King is God. He is King of Kings! And Christ, none other than the Bridegroom. Christ is revealing to us in this parable the lavishness of our entitlements as sons and daughters of the Most High. He unveiled all the privileges and blessings of the new covenant that he, himself, made available through his life, death, resurrection, and ascension; privileges and blessings like the pardon of sins, the favor of God, the peace and joy of sweet fellowship and communion with Him. We have His promises which include abundance, good health, and the capacity to maintain fulfilling and meaningful relationships. We have been given access to the throne of grace and can approach it without condemnation, and let us not forget the comforts of the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the hope of eternal life. There is nothing in all of the earth that can compare to what the Father has made available to us.

Verse 6 says that the King sent his servants out to call in all the invited guests, but they would not come. Can you imagine that, being invited to the King's party and not showing up? Well when our lives do not reflect the joy and abundance that God has made available, that is exactly how it looks. It appears as though we were invited to sit at the head table, but we reneged.

There is nothing lacking but our understanding and comprehension of what has been freely given, because if we understood it—we'd be walking in it. We need only stretch our minds to take in the enormity of what God has accomplished for us through Christ. If only we would allow ourselves to rise above and reach beyond our comfort zones to walk in the greatness of what is available to us. God has laid out the most elaborate spread of goodies for our partaking; nothing has been left out, no good thing has been spared.

With all that He has given us, think of how ridiculous it appears when we come to the head banquet table with tears of sadness, crying that we still don't have enough. How hardheaded we must seem when we say to God that we can't figure a way out, when a "way out" has already been made. Jesus had an answer for this frame of mind. In Matthew 22:29, he responded to the unbelief of those who opposed him by telling them "*Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*" This is how all of us make errors. This is how we get into situations that do not serve us well, by not knowing the scriptures. The truth is liberty. It frees you from bondage. It isn't that God has not provided enough. That could never be the case. It is that we need to remove the blinders from our eyes so that we can see the new thing He will do in our lives.

We don't set out to ignore God's invitation to the party, but we have a responsibility to insure that our actions do not convey that. You are ordained, appointed, and called out to be your very best self all day every day. You are overjoyed and running over with abundance because that is who God made you to be. Anything contrary to that is not the truth of who you are. It may look and feel like the truth, but you're a saint of the Most High. You don't set your compass to what it looks like, you set it how it's going to look when the Father gets done with it.

If you have been praying for the Lord to do a mighty work in your life, don't be afraid and run from the very things that He has appointed to aid you. You are not like the person who was not arrayed in wedding garb, and was thus turned out. Praise God that through Christ you are beautifully adorned in every lavishness of spiritual attire. You're wearing designer duds so act like it. Expand your mind to accommodate what can be done through your faith. Let God in your heart in a greater way by getting excited about what He is doing in, with, by, and through your life. Thank Him, and call it done in the name of Jesus Christ.

Always remember that you're seated at the King's table. Open your mouth wide, take a gigantic bite, and feast on what He's laid before you.