

We Belong to God

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

Think with me about the things that belong to God.

Psalm 62:11 says that power belongs to God. In verse 12 of Psalm 62, mercy belongs to God. In Psalm 3:8, we read that salvation belongs to God. In Daniel 9:7, righteousness belongs to God. Furthermore, according to Hebrews 10:30, vengeance belongs to God.

When it comes right down to it, *everything* belongs to God. The earth and all the fullness of it are His. He owns the cattle upon all the hills. The sad thing is that so few Christians recognize their value to God. So few recognize that they belong to Him. A great need of this age is for people to belong to something, and the Lord says that we belong to Him. We are His, and He is ours.

At salvation, you belong to God, and God belongs to you. Why? Because He purchased you with His own precious blood (Acts 20:28).

You have been bought with a ransom (Mark 10:45). Please pay attention to this: You belong to God!

As this booklet shows, this great relationship exists because God wants to use His children to reveal His glory in this world. We are in the midst of a world filled with souls who need to hear God's Good News, and we are the ones who have the privilege to share it.

Chapter One

THE HARVEST IS WAITING

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

“And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

“And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

“I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours” (John 4:34-38).

Follow this with me. The Word of God says that Jesus Christ had great compassion upon the multitudes because He saw that they fainted. He saw them as sheep having no shepherd. “The harvest truly is plenteous...” is what Jesus said

in Matthew 9:37. Then He followed that statement with this conclusion (which I think is very sad), "...but the [reapers] are few."

This is what He was saying: "These people won't accept Christ. Look at them. But, the reason why they are not accepting Me is that the laborers are few." Have you ever thought of that? It is so simple, but I hadn't thought of it. Now watch this carefully.

The woman at the well, a Samaritan, accepted Christ as her Savior when Jesus approached her with divine wisdom to draw out of her what she was doing in her life. Then, as she left to bring back more Samaritans to meet Jesus, the disciples brought Him some food.

This woman had been living with five husbands, and the man that she was living with at the moment was not her husband. And now she was bringing souls to be saved—bringing them to Jesus Christ. Immediately, she simply went and told them how she got saved. That's all.

The disciples, occupied with earthly needs, said, "Jesus, You have not eaten. Would You like some food?"

And He said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). Then He made this very unique statement:

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?...Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

Lift Up Your Eyes

So, the problem was not that people were rejecting Jesus Christ. The main problem was that He couldn't get people to go into the fields.

May I say, that is the problem in every single age. Lift up your eyes. Don't say, “Maybe in four months.” Lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white and ready to harvest.

Now, the last thing that the Lord Jesus Christ communicated to His disciples was this: “I want you to go into all the world and disciple people and preach the gospel to every creature” (see Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21, 31; and Acts 1:8).

What was on the mind of Christ? It was this: People have tremendous needs. People are suffering. Don't accept their surface attitudes of pride and arrogance, because underneath their pride they have real, serious problems. And because they have these very real problems, if they are presented the Gospel in love and in the power of the Holy Spirit, many of them will indeed get saved.

These people just need someone to tell them that they can belong to God by simple faith in Christ.

The Word Delivers

Once, a woman told me how she had been liberated after living for twenty years in bondage, as a slave to guilt. She had been molested as a child and could not even look at herself in a mirror because she felt so unclean.

"I heard the Word of grace" she said. "I heard words of love and words of compassion from the Holy Spirit. God did something that had never happened to me in all those years, and I was liberated. I was set free."

The Lord Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, revealed to her that she belonged to Him. Though she was a Christian, this woman of God could not step out of this devastating bondage, and she could never look into a mirror. She was set free when she finally realized that she truly belonged to the Master.

Chapter Two

“I AM MY BELOVED’S”

“For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward” (Mark 9:41).

Because we belong to Christ, people who help us shall not lose their reward. Why is that true—that they will not lose their reward? They are giving help to somebody who belongs to the Master.

In Song of Solomon 2:16, the Shunamite woman said, “My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies.” Then, in Song of Solomon 6:3, she said, “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies.” At last, in Song of Solomon 7:10, she said, “I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.” She progressively understood that she truly belonged to God.

It is important to understand to whom we

belong, because in 1 Samuel 21:7 it is said of Doeg, an Edomite, that he belonged to Saul. Doeg belonged to the wrong kingdom. In 1 Kings 1:8, however, it is written that Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet were among "the mighty men which belonged to David." These men met in the cave of Adullam, and they belonged to David. They were in debt, they were distressed, they were depressed, and they were in the cave. David was in trouble, running from Saul and hiding out. These mighty men met and talked together, and they loved each other in a united need. From that day forward, they belonged to David, and David belonged to God.

Where Shall We Go From His Presence?

The Psalmist said in Psalm 139:7-8, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there." Then he made this great statement: "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." How could he say that? David was a believer, and God has said that He will never, no never, no never leave a believer, nor forsake him, nor fail him (Hebrews 13:5).

In Psalm 139:9-10, David said, "If I take the

wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." When I forsake the presence of God, His right hand upholds me. That stands for the Finished Work. After His ascension, Jesus was seated at the right hand of the Father, which speaks of the work being all finished. The finished work of God's grace holds onto us even if we go to the uttermost parts of the earth in failure.

A beautiful thing is revealed in the text of Psalm 139:11-12. It says, that the darkness of sin shall not cover me from God. Darkness shall not hide me from Him, because even in my darkness, God's light is all around me, or with me—and the darkness and the light are both alike to God.

In verse 13-16, David said of God, "You have possessed my emotions and have covered me in my mother's womb. You knew all about me, and billions of years ago You wrote about me in a book. You knew what all my members—what my eyes and my hair and everything about me—would be like. We are that intimate. You knew in Your foreknowledge that I would accept You as my Savior in time. Millions of years ago, You said I belong to You. I belong to Your

grace, and I belong to Your mercy, and I belong to Your love."

God's Patience and Your Call

Because he was a murderer and backslidden in the desert for forty years, Moses did not feel qualified to lead the nation of Israel. God waited forty years for Moses to serve Him in his original call. How long will He have to wait for you?

God is waiting for some of you to come to church three times a week. God is waiting, and I'm waiting to see your faces. I appreciate certain families who have children with serious physical problems, but still they come to church Sunday nights. I really am proud of them.

When God said to Moses, "I'm going to send you to Pharaoh, and I will use you to deliver the children of Israel" (see Exodus 3:10-11), Moses said, "Who am I? I'm sure You know what I did. I killed an Egyptian, and You know I've been away forty years because I didn't want to be around You. Who am I that You would send *me* to deliver them?"

But later, in verse 13, Moses advanced his strategy of language and said, "By the way, if I'm going to go, who do I say You are? I don't know who I am, and I don't even know who You

are, really. This whole thing seems kind of ridiculous.”

God was very patient, He had waited forty years because He is the God of all patience. He waited for me. He has waited for all of us to do certain things.

God then said to Moses, “Tell them that I AM has sent you unto them. I AM—that is all you need to say.”

God and Moses were having an argument. The Lord had waited forty years for this character who did not want to be around Israel. The Egyptians knew what he did. Israel knew what he did. God knew what he did. Moses knew what he did, and he was scared to come out of hiding. But forty years is quite a long time to hide. Ultimately, he needed the burning bush to get the idea that God was serious.

In Exodus 4:1, Moses continued to present his weakness, his frailty, and his failure to God. “Nobody will believe me,” Moses said. “Nobody's going to believe me, and nobody's going to believe that You spoke to me.”

It finally got to the point where God had to say, in essence, “Shut up and obey Me.” (By the way, that is just my paraphrase.)

It is a beautiful thing that God made Moses

the meekest man of the earth. God used him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, and he realized a great truth. It is truly the weakness of man that gives place to the strength of God's grace. It takes a revelation of God's love to demonstrate God's mercy in the power of God's presence. Moses belonged to God, and God knew how to use him.

Despise Not Small Things

In Judges 6:11, God came to Gideon. Commentators will tell you that Gideon was a little man from a little tribe. He had no self-image, and his family was not preferred. But God came to Gideon and said, "I want you to lead the Israelites against the Midianites that are camped down below, in the valley."

Do you know what Gideon said? He said, "Who am I?" In so many words, he said, "I'm a little man from a little tribe that is not liked by anybody. So why would You get someone like me and make me a leader? I'm going to put out a fleece. Then I'll put out another fleece, because I don't really believe that You could use me."

Bob Jones Sr. used to say, "God is hard up. He'll even use you." Why? Lift up your eyes! The fields are white and already to harvest.

Truly, the harvest is plenteous but the laborers are few.

David was just a teen-ager when, through the grace of God, he defeated Goliath. He said, "I killed a bear and I killed a lion. I took a lamb out of the lion's mouth with my own little hands. That Philistine will be just exactly like that bear and that lion." But his elder brother Eliab despised him and told him, "Go back and take care of the few sheep you've got" (1 Samuel 17:28). "You only have a few sheep," (and he used the word "few"). He said, "What are you doing here? You are arrogant and puffed up."

Sounds as if David was a little cocky, but really he was just confident in the God he served. He said, "I'm going in the name of the Lord, and the battle is the Lord's." You know what happened. The slingshot, the stone, and it just happened to zero right in on Goliath, smacked the nine-foot-six giant right in the head. He dropped dead, and Israel was delivered from being in bondage to the Philistines. David ran down, took a sword, cut Goliath's head off, and jumped on top of him.

Before going after Goliath, David picked five smooth stones out of the brook. The four stones, I believe, speak of the Corporate Body, and the

fifth stone speaks of grace. In the spiritual analogy of proper application, the stone that destroyed Goliath is the Chief Cornerstone, of 1 Peter 2:6.

David knew he belonged to God, so he went to battle with confidence and strength.

Chapter Three

DYING TO REVEAL THE TREASURE WITHIN US

“For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:9-10).

Paul said, “Listen, I know I'm the least of all the apostles. I am the least. I understand that. I understand that I'm not even worthy to be an apostle.”

There is not a pastor who is worth anything if he thinks he is worthy of his position. I don't know why God always chooses those of us who are so weak. I am speaking of myself, fellows. Paul said, “I'm least of all the apostles.” And why does God choose somebody that is weak?

He does it so that no flesh can get the credit and so that Jesus Christ will get all the glory for operating in mercy and grace in a very weak sinner who dares to do it anyway.

“Who am I? I'm less than least of all the saints, but this grace was given to me that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (see Ephesians 3:8).

“I'm the chief of all sinners” (see 1 Timothy 1:15), Paul said. “But I'll tell you this. I am what I am by the grace of God.”

That is a beautiful answer.

“Who are the people in that church anyway?” Well, they are what they are by the grace of God.

“Who is that woman?” She is what she is by the grace of God.

If we can understand the grace of God, we can be, and we already are, a part of that army of Jesus Christ that goes out into the harvest field because it is ripe and ready to harvest.

Why is the harvest field so ripe today? First, it is because so many are in bondage to sin with all its devastating effects. Second, it is because pain, shame, violence, and crime have brought so much guilt and stain on the hearts of men.

The fields are ripe, and they are ready to har-

vest. We don't have to say "wait four months." All we have to do is go and win people to Christ and bring them into the Body of fellowship.

The Casket and Resurrection Life

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Corinthians 4:3-7).

This treasure is in earthen vessels. One synonym for an earthen vessel speaks of a cinerary or burial urn. We have a body of death (Romans 7:24), but inside of us is this treasure chest that holds the deposit of God's wealth. That is ex-

actly what the Greek translation indicates. Caskets are for dead people, and inside of our earthen vessel lies this treasure. Every single thing in our lives has to go down into death for the treasure to shine out. That is how God gets the glory.

There is a difference between retroactive positional truth (where we are crucified with Christ once and for all and forever in our position, according to Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20), and that of taking up our cross daily, which does not involve retroactive truth. It involves one thing—our present life, which is still alive, accepts the death of the Cross on a continual basis so that it may emerge in resurrection life.

In the isagogic understanding, the casket may have been full of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. That means that inside of our bodies of death—which we reckoned as “in Christ”—is the deity of Christ, the love of God, and the spices of the fruit of the Spirit. These things are inside the casket—God’s treasure chest inside of our earthen vessels, which reveals our death and the life of Christ in us.

Christ’s Life Made Manifest

“Always bearing about in the body the

dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

“For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

“So then death worketh in us, but life in you” (2 Corinthians 4:10-12).

We are always delivered unto death. Now this isn't talking about positional truth this time. This means that in my marriage or in my personal habits, in my personal life, in my personal needs, my natural life will go into death so that out of the earthen vessel, God's treasure can emerge—the deity of God's love and the incarnation of God's mercy and grace through my mortal body. We are delivered to recognize the treasure chest, to recognize the gold, frankincense, and myrrh that is inside our soul, so that “the excellency of the [surpassing] power may be of God, and not of us.” (2 Corinthians 4:7b).

Moses, it's all right. You can serve Him, because you are no longer considered to be a murderer. David, you can still be the prince of the Millennial Reign, despite your years of weakness, even until your last week upon earth (1 Kings 1:1-4). You will still be the prince in the Millennial Reign.

And Solomon, you will still write two books, even after you have ruined your life, because you are what you are by the grace of God, and God isn't through with you, Solomon. You belong to God and He is going to use you.

Saul of Tarsus, as you went out killing Christians, if you only knew what God had in store for you. You became the greatest apostle for Christ who ever lived.

Inside of your earthen vessel is a treasure. Just as God was to every one of those men who loved him, He will be to us (Hebrews 13:8). The treasure in these bodies of death will be revealed, because we belong to God.

CONCLUSION

This is one of the most precious truths, rarely preached, because many of us fail to understand that we are crucified, buried, and risen with Him. I have a human life in my body, and in my experience this human life gets tempted, tested, weary, broken, painful, and hurt. Yet, positionally speaking, I am perfected.

It is my human life that has to go down into the grave, concerning every detail of life, as I grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and use rebound when I fail. I must receive what is in the treasure chest in my experience so that Christ can manifest, through this mortal body, the power of grace, the power of love, the power of patience, and the power of God's joy.

How many Christians today instead of saying, "Who am I?" will say, "Here am I!" (Isaiah 6:8). We belong to Him. He desires that we see the ripe field and that we go out to reap the great harvest He has prepared.

My conviction is that messages such as this ought to move me to trust God and to experience victory, rather than to live in sin, because I have grace. When people know that God loves us this much, that we belong to Him, it will stabilize their relationships. They grow in a true process of godliness, of death that brings forth life, because of the Life Giver, Jesus Christ.