

/// I Know Your State

Philippians 2:12 – 26

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~ The great sin for the average Christian in the church body today is a total and complete ignorance of the Word of God. If doctors didn't know more about medicine than their patients know, people wouldn't live very long. If a pilot flying an airplane didn't know more about aeronautic physics than the businessman sitting behind him, that plane isn't even going to leave the tarmac. Because the average Christian is literally Biblically illiterate, the church is anemic and ineffective at saving souls. Further, many of those churches draw huge crowds with a hive mentality for Jesus. Some people confess Jesus in every other sentence; but there's never been any genuine conversion of their hearts or lives; there hasn't been a transformation in their character — because they have no earthly idea Who the Lord Jesus Christ is — according to Scripture. Frankly, that concerns me tremendously. It is why the True and Living church presenting Christ crucified and raised from the dead is on its deathbed.

It's tragic to see so many church members who are as woefully and pitifully confused in Scripture as they are in everyday life. This Spiritual Safari goes beyond urging people to study the Bible; we insist on a daily, sincere, educated, systematic, Spirit-filled and Spirit-led, proper, correct and complete consideration of the Word of God. We all need a program that will take us through the entire Bible, friends. A fractured and disconnected cursory review of Holy Writ is unprofitable and unhelpful. We need the Holy Spirit to fill our minds every day and teach us both; or neither of us will ever learn anything.

We need men and women who are wholly committed to getting the Word of God out to the entire world. We need more people who make Christ Jesus top priority in their lives. When and if we see that happen, then we will see a change take place in the home life, the church life, social scenes and in the business world; that's when we may see revival if we are to see revival again in this world. I suppose it could happen — but I'm skeptical....

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

~ In order to work *OUT* our own salvation, we have to have salvation worked *INTO* our hearts first! If you never have salvation, you cannot work it out. Once we are saved, then we can work out our salvation; by allowing God to work it out. Oh, yes, I mean every word of that, friends. Faith plus *nothing* equals salvation. Faith alone saves; but the faith that saves is not alone! I have emphasized that again and again on this expedition through the entire Word of God. James say, “.... *show me your faith without your works; and I will show you my faith by my works.*”

God knows the true condition of our heart. He knows if we truly have saving faith in His Son. He knows what we do. The problem is: our neighbors cannot see saving faith if we don't do something for the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, we're talking about works of faith and not works of the law. Do people get the immediate impression that you are a Christian without you even talking about or mentioning Jesus or religion? Or do you need a t-shirt that says “**Jesus is a Friend of Mine**” before anyone would ever know you are a Christian? ~

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

~ Paul is talking about the Old Testament drink offering in verse seventeen. The burnt offering and the drink offering were the first offerings. This offering fully encapsulates what the “*Christian life*” should be: poured out. That’s when Paul could rejoice in his suffering, friends. Don’t miss that. When Jacob went back to Bethel, he “.... *set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon*” — Genesis chapter thirty-five verse fourteen. The drink offering was poured out over a red-hot burnt offering. The liquid would hit the searing hot surface and burst into a cloud of steam. In Leviticus, the drink offering is not even mentioned with the first five offerings. Those offerings speak of Christ; the drink offering speaks of *us*! The drink offering was never consumed. It was always just poured out! The cup was simply refilled again and again and again. When we all get into this mind of Christ, then we bring real glory and joy to God. This is one of the rarest, most stunning and most valuable gems in the entire canonical collection, my dear readers....

18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.

20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

~ Timothy was like-minded with Paul. Those who pray for this safari missionary ministry — and read or share reports are, likewise, like-minded. Paul had a mind of humility; he had the mind of Christ. When two people have the same thoughts about the Lord Jesus, they’re really going to be together. It doesn’t take a united world council of churches to bring people together — only the mind if Christ is required. Just as Paul called Timothy his spiritual son, there are some of you who could be labeled my “*safari children*.” I don’t really know if I have ever led anyone to the Lord, but I do know that I have been faithful to my calling regarding teaching the Word of God and sowing the Seed of Holy Writ. God is the One Who said I would reap what I sow, so....

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

~ You better believe that's negative. These people in Paul's day who had gone away were *".... doing every man that which was right in their own eyes."* Just as they did in the Book of Judges when there was no king in Israel. Every man was glorifying himself. Well, how do you respect others who are standing for the Word of God, friends? Now, there is room for appropriate and constructive criticism as long as there is no strife or vain glory mixed in. When we are of the mind of Christ, envy and jealousy cannot be; it would simply be impossible. If you want unity, peacefulness and togetherness, then get your mind in Christ together. Two like-minded Christians can be very close; even though they be physically thousands of miles apart. Nothing can possibly bring Christians together more closely than having the mind of Christ and His direct will being done in our lives according to the Word of God. This is also one of those things that money could never buy, by the way. This is one of the most wonderful truths in the entire Bible....

22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me.

24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.

25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.

~ Make no mistake: Paul fully expected to be acquitted and released from prison. He never took an *'oath of poverty'* — or any crazy thing like that. He hadn't done anything wrong. Some traditions say that Paul was, in fact, released for about two years until Nero rounded up Christians by the millions and executed them. I don't see Nero releasing Christians from

prison; seeing how he so loved to see them get eaten by lions or beaten to death at the coliseum. Either way, Timothy, Paul and Epaphroditus are all brothers in this ministry together – brethren in the Lord and serving Him. As our Spiritual Safari moves along from here, we’re going to see Paul had some very sick people to pray for. Interestingly, Paul wasn’t running around healing everyone now – he was just praying for them. Well, I hope you are praying for me, dear readers, as I am always praying for you. If we do that, Christ will be glorified forevermore. A-men ~

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