

FISHERS OF MEN

"And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." - Matthew 4:19

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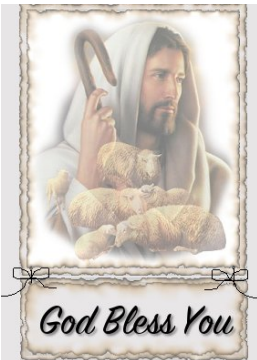
Fishers of Men Ministries
Jesus Loves You!

A Newsletter For and By Saints of Christ in Prison

Children of God Are Who We Are!

“Beloved, now we are children of God...” 1 Jn. 3:2a (NKJV)

Scripture Reading: I John 3:1-3; Rom. 8:15-16



By the grace of God – through faith – we have been born into the family of God, we are children of the Most High.

A lot of times – most of the time – we are so pre-occupied with the earth and earthly mentality that we don’t keep our thoughts (and actions) on “what is above” (Phil. 4:8). We are distracted with struggles and our daily warfare that we become too entangled and forget that we are a part of God. In verse 3 of I John 3 it says that we purify ourselves because God is pure. We already have the victory in Christ Jesus – we are more than just conquerors. We struggle when our focus gets distracted into the physical.

Yeah, we are still in this world, but we are not of this world. Children of the earth usually bear resemblances of their parents (i.e., physical appearance.) We, as children of God, bear the likeness of God. We bear the fruit of the Spirit and when we finally appear before Him (face to face) we will be like Him (v. 2.) We see darkly now; but then we will know completely (I Cor. 13:12.)

Thought for Today: The more we walk and live in conformity to the will of God, the more we look like Him. This takes purity, total consecration – submission to His will. This takes the Holy Spirit working in our wills.

Christ Above All, Walter



Spiritual Warfare

By: Brother Marshall Jones

Seeking spirituality, forever grasping on to God’s word
Gradually changing; now transformed from a troubled soul to one that is made whole...

Transitions are easy to make, but hard to keep

Like giving birth to a brand new day

From the first glimpse the love in your heart is centered on it

But along the way, obstacles come to test your faith

Sometimes it is manifested through the ones you love

Impressed with the approval of crowd-pleasers, an argument ensues

Forgetting the Holy Spirit dwells in you

It’s not necessarily the test that causes the majority to give up and give in to sin

Hopeless thoughts on an uphill battle can cause a man to slide back

Instead of returning to that stale old state of mind, I pray to my Lord

Asking His Majesty to work magically in me to face adversity with LOVE

Survival depends on my hands outstretched to God

A sincere heart I how possess and the diligence to fight through the war in my spirit breath by breath



Longing for God



“Then Job answered and said, even today is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! That I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which He would say unto me. Will He plead against me with His great power? No; but He would put strength in me.” (Job 23: 1-6)

Job’s seventh response ignores his friends, focusing his case toward God. He repeats his longing for God and affirms God’s righteousness. He confidently believes that, if he could find God, he would put strength in Him. As I read the 23rd chapter of Job, I was reminded of the time when I longed for God as Job did. Nevertheless, unlike Job, I know that God would not have said to Satan of me, “Hast thou considered my servant Juan, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and shuns evil?” (Job 1:8) I was actually everything opposite that statement, but like Job, my longing for God was there.

Have you ever been presented with truth and facts about God by family or other men and women of God pertaining to your condition and relationship with God, but no matter how it is presented to you, you still feel confused or misunderstood? I did. The following is a brief look at my search and longing for God.

For a long time I looked for a sign. When I was on the street, I had sudden urges to go to church and I did. On one occasion as I entered the church, one of the ushers greeted me at the door. I told him that I wanted to talk. I felt void and I needed answers. I really wanted to see a sign from God, something, somehow. Suddenly I started to weep. I could not even speak, the weeping I was caused by the longing that I had for God, but at the same time my flesh was resisting. I thought of the life I was living and I felt chained to it. I had and enjoyed what everyone coveted...money, women, a leader of an organization, and all the prestige that comes with it. Yet, my quest to encounter God remained. If there was anyone to save me from the mess I had made of my life, it was Him, because I sure could not do it. However, I was still under the impression that I had to be perfect and righteous in order to get God’s attention. My hope to encounter Him in my condition remained. Maybe He would change His mind. Finally, the only words that came out of my mouth were “I want to change, but I can’t.” With that I got up and left the church. As I think of this, I am reminded of Jesus’ words in John 15:5, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. For without me, ye can do nothing.” I want to remind you that I am writing of a time when I was dead in sin and trespasses, walking according to the course of this world, having no relationship with God, and leaning on my own understanding.

My perspective of God was that He did not even look upon me, that He only looked upon the “righteous.” Satan had me believing that God could not forgive me because I had committed sins beyond forgiveness. I told many people including my parents one time, “If God wants to use me or if He even remembers that I still exist, I want Him to crack the Heavens open, thunder from on high and tell me what I must do!” I was very adamant that God would show Himself and speak to me. Preachers were not enough for me. My parent’s sermons were not enough for me. I needed to hear from the Most High myself. Only then would I order my cause before Him. Understand and be understood, but I failed to realize that I was not the one to set forth the rules. I also failed to see that God was already speaking to me through my parents and the men and women of God that abided in Him, and He in them. “To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ stead, be ye reconciled to God.” (2 Cor. 5:19-20) I did not recognize His voice, because in essence I was acting like a scribe and Pharisees when they said, “Master, we would see a sign from you. But He answered and said unto them, an evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.” (Matt. 12:38-39) We know that Jonas was in a whale’s belly for three days and three nights because of his disobedience.

When I landed in jail, my father said, “Son, look around you. You said you wanted a sign, well, here it is!” At first, I was puzzled, I did not understand. Later I realized that I myself was in a whale’s belly. All I could do was fall on my knees and tell God that I knew He was out there and that I needed help --- now! I asked Him to forgive me of my sins. As hard as it was for me to accept God’s forgiveness for all I had done, I took a step of faith. This was just the beginning of many things to come.

One night I had a dream. In that dream, I approached a very bright light and out of that light a hand was extended out to me. And in that hand there was an open Bible. Then I heard a voice quoting to me Joshua 1:9, “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goeth.” My father always quoted this scripture to me. The significant thing about the dream that also caught my attention was the hand with the open Bible. That’s what I needed to do. Read the Word. It is then when my confusion started to go away. God started to speak to me in the most fascinating way. He was giving me wisdom and opening my eyes to the understanding of His truth.

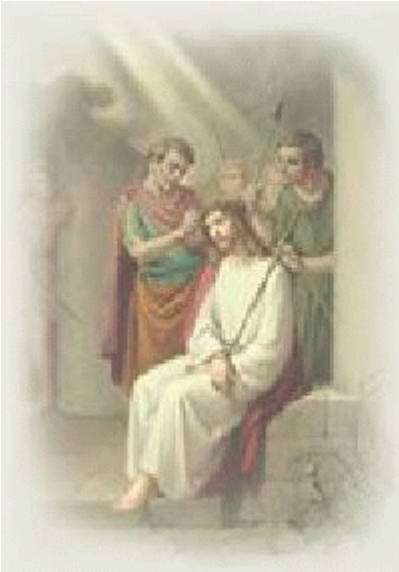
He was giving me wisdom and opening my eyes to the understanding of His truth. My encounter was finally taking place, and that wasn't the only one. This was just a small portion of my journey that continues with the Lord. I learned how much God loves me and that He truly had forgiven me. Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us." To see how God was always there for me was very overwhelming to me. As I reviewed my life, I started to see how God's hand was at work all along in my life, for before I was in the womb of my mother, He already knew me. (Jer. 1:5) God had placed in my heart too long and thirst for Him.

Beloved, there are still times when we all may feel even as Job did, "going forward, but He is not there; and backward, but you cannot perceive Him; on the left hand where He does work, but you cannot behold Him; He hides Himself on the right hand, that you cannot see Him." But we can be assured and encouraged by this, "But He knoweth the way that I take; when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:8-10)

His Servant, Juan

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## ***TRUE WORSHIP***



I truly believe that the Lord is leading me to write some thoughts relating to worship. Merriam Webster defines worship as "reverence offered a divine being; the expression of such reverence; extravagant respect or admiration; esteem; respect; honor; revere."

In John 4:23-24 we read, "But the hour is coming, and now is when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." (NKJV Bible). A question that may come to mind may be, "What is worship in the spirit?" The logical answer is one must be born of the spirit (born again) in order to worship "in spirit and truth." The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 6:63, "It is the spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life."

The words of Christ make it clear that "the flesh profits nothing." Another thing we can see in John 6:63 in that "the words that I (Jesus) speak to you are spirit and they are life." This is self explanatory; Christ words are spirit and also life. The answer to the original question is that one must worship according to God's words. Once we are born again according to God's words, we must also follow His instructions in His words to be able to worship Him "in spirit and truth." We also know from His word that Jesus Christ is truth. "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" In John 16:13 a-d, we read, "However, when He, the spirit of truth (Jesus) has come, He will guide you into all truth."

A born again believer is confronted with choices daily; moment after moment, again and again. Our Lord will not violate our free will. Worshiping in the spirit and truth require that we surrender our will to His will. Let's remember that "Born Again" is the work of God through His word. "Having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, through the Word of God which lives and abides forever." I Peter 1:23. Our Lord made an awesome promise to all believers in the Old Testament. "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will keep my judgments and do them." Ezk. 36:26-27

We can clearly see from the above mentioned scriptures that the new spirit we receive at re-generation (Born Again) will cause us to walk in His statutes; keep His judgments and do them. Here we can truly see the work of grace. He (Our Father) will enable us if we are willing to obey Him. Praise the Name of Jesus!!! Being Born Again is the work of God's grace and to continue walking with God we must trust His grace. Someone has suggested that the word(s) for Bible mean (B) Basic, (I) Instructions, (B) Before, (L) Leaving, (E) Earth.

We must follow in total obedience what the Holy Father, Lord and Savior Jesus said in His word. Again, the choice is ours. We must surrender our will to His will. Worship requires obedience. Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15. It is wonderful to know that, "In Him (Jesus Christ) we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. 1:7. The Greek word for redemption here is apolutrosis meaning "to liberate by the paying of a ransom (His blood) in order to set a person free." Our Lord paid the full price for our redemption and set us free. We must make the choice to follow Him in servitude. He will not force us to serve Him. He will not violate our free will. He is an awesome, wonderful Savior. Hallelujah! Amen!

In Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, we read, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, including

every secret thing, whether it is good or whether it is evil.” The primary focus of man (born again) should be to “fear God and keep His commandments.” True worship must be in spirit and truth. That is our whole duty. True worship in spirit and truth requires that we offer unto the Lord true sacrifices. In Romans 12:1 we read, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice. Sacrifice always cost something. We must always remember that it is only “reasonable” for us to offer unto the Lord our “bodies a living sacrifice.” There are times when we don’t feel like offering unto the Lord sacrifices of thanksgiving. “I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord.” Ps. 116:17. When we don’t feel like giving Him thanksgiving and we choose to do it any how, it becomes a sacrifice of thanksgiving. That is true worship. When we truly realize redemption, we would be able to say with the Psalmist, “And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore, I will offer sacrifices of joy (joyous shouts) in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.” Ps. 26:6. That is true worship. When we can get away with doing wrong and in obedience do the right thing, it becomes an offering (or) sacrifice of righteousness. “Offer the sacrifices of righteousness and put your trust in the Lord.” Ps. 4:4. That is true worship. In Mal. 3:3, we read, “He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi (the priest), and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer the Lord an offering in righteousness.” Let’s remember that we are the priest. “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” I Peter 2:9. Priests are priests to offer sacrifices. That is our duty. There is a sovereign scripture in 2 Cor. 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what He has done, whether good or bad.” If you are reading this message and you are not sure about your eternal salvation, then I plead and urge you to surrender your life to Him who created you and died for you on the cross. Once you are sure about your salvation then you will be able to offer unto the Lord all of the above-mentioned sacrifices and when you appear before the judgment seat of Christ, He will reward you according to what you did for Him through love. This should be more than enough motivation to consider true worship. Remember true worship is a lifestyle.

*Christbondservant, Preacher*



### *A Message from Momm*



*You know, sometimes we miss the things that are going on all around us. Did you know that this month a son has been transferred closer to his family? Did you know another son’s sentence has been reversed? Did you know that another son was saved? Did you know that another son lost his mother this month? Next month, take time to really talk with those around you. Perhaps someone is hurting and needs a friend. Maybe another has received magnificent news (or better yet, received the Lord) and the news will cheer you up, also. Take a minute to really listen to your brother (or sister) and you will be blessed. Also, take time to enjoy this newsletter.*

*If the newsletter has been given to you by someone else, write Fishers of Men Prison Ministries, c/o Bethany Church, 5403 North Second Street, Loves Park, IL 61111. Include your name, number and address, and your name will be added to the FOM mailing list. Our request is that when you finish reading your newsletter, please pass it on to someone else for their enjoyment and spiritual food. If your family wants to learn more about us, tell them to visit our website at: [www.fishersofmenprisonministries.com](http://www.fishersofmenprisonministries.com)*

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