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January 2018
His Mind In You

Dear Friend,

I enjoy going out to eat and I especially love it when they have great food. If you're like me, after enjoying a wonderful meal you can't wait to tell your best friends about your experience. A popular response to a good meal today is to take a picture of it and post it on Facebook or Twitter. Oh, the good old days when people would have laughed at even the thought of taking a picture of their food so they could show all their friends what and where they ate. Why do we do this? Perhaps, people just like sharing their good experiences with others.

I feel the same way when I hear a minister speaking on a subject that really blesses me. I want to share that message with others. So, consider this my snapshot of a great meal that I am sharing with you.

The other day I heard a minister delivering a very good message. He's the kind of minister who has a lot of good short statements that minister to you as much as the entire message itself. One of those statements seemed to grab hold of me and not turn loose. The exact quote eludes me at this moment, but the essence of what he was saying had to do with how often people claim the Lordship of Jesus while they continue living for themselves. **What a statement!** Think about it, when we give the lordship of our lives away to Jesus, **He is to be Lord from that moment forward.** Doesn't that make sense?

The point the minister was making was that we aren't supposed to continue to be in control of our lives, making all our decisions for ourselves, always having **our** best interest in mind with seldom a thought about what our Lord wants. When Jesus **truly** becomes Lord of our life then what's first and foremost in our life is the well-being of the **Kingdom of God, His will for our lives**, and not how God can benefit us and make our lives better. The latter part of that sentence sounds more like God works for us instead of us serving Him.

Imagine that; focusing our attention on something beyond ourselves, our little world, what makes us happy and comfortable, and looking to Jesus and

surrendering to His desires by placing them above our own. In so doing, we are actually making Jesus Lord of our lives and not just in word only.

“Mark, are you suggesting that if I live for myself, make my own decisions, and only go to God when I need something, like an ATM machine, that I have not made Jesus Lord of my life?” That is a question you are going to have to answer for yourself. But, understand this, saying Jesus is Lord and Him actually being your Lord experientially are two very different things. It’s like a family man who calls himself a responsible person but sits around the house day after day in his pajamas watching television instead of getting out and finding a job. **Actions speak louder than words.**

Keep in mind, surrendering every part of your life to Jesus doesn’t happen overnight. Confessing His lordship only takes a moment, but actually turning over every part of your life to Him takes the rest of your life. In other words, you don’t get saved on Sunday and by Monday morning at 8:00 am you are 100% surrendered to Jesus in every area of your life.

I believe this is where the “church” has failed believers. The “church” as a whole seems to have operated under the assumption that getting a person to pray the prayer of salvation is the sum total of their responsibility. It’s as though they think Jesus said; “Go into all the world and make converts.” That is not what Jesus said at all in Matthew 28. Jesus commanded His men to go and teach, which means to make disciples, disciplined followers, just as Jesus had done with them. (Matthew 28:19)

“Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Instead of giving people the impression that Christianity is simply about repeating one simple prayer and then you’re golden, you’re in, you’re going to heaven. We need to be honest with people and help them understand exactly what they are committing themselves to when they confess Jesus as Lord. “Mark, we don’t want to scare people off.” So, instead of giving them the truth about what God expects of them, the “church” has opted to center around being forgiven from sin and how they should try to stay away from sin in the future. **Does that sound like complete surrender to you?**

As a result, the impression most people have had after praying the prayer of salvation is that now they are going to heaven and as long as they live the best life they can, they won’t go to hell when they die. Along the way, if they need anything from God to make their lives better all they have to do is ask. If, by

chance, they don't get what they have prayed for one of the first statements made is; "I deserve it, God, I have lived a good life, I'm a good person." Living a good life and being a good person is not the criteria God uses to answer our prayers. Does that surprise you?

The truth is that God has obligated Himself to meet all of our needs according to His word. (Philippians 4:19)

"But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

How often it seems verses like this are pulled out of the Bible and used to try and force God into giving them everything they think they need. The problem goes right back to the root cause, the people have never really surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus. They are still in complete control of their lives and are only using God's word to try and get out of Him what they think they need. Notice if you will a few of the statements Paul makes earlier in his letter to the church at Philippi. (Philippians 2:4)

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."

How often have you heard that verse mentioned in conjunction with: "My God shall supply all your need"? The truth is that we can expect God to supply all our need because we have surrendered our lives to Him and have made the needs of others more important in our lives than our own needs. Let's go one step further with this. (Philippians 2:5)

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

God was not thinking about Himself when He chose to make Himself of no reputation and took on the form of a servant. Consider what God did for us; for the sake of the salvation of mankind, **He humbled Himself unto death, the death of the cross**. His thoughts were not on Himself and His well-being. His focus of attention was on others, the well-being of humanity. This then is the "mind" that we are to have, a mind that is focused on the well-being of others and not ourselves.

After having said all of that, Paul, by the Holy Ghost, follows up that statement by saying: (Philippians 2:13)

“For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

Once we have allowed His mind to be in us and we are focusing on the welfare of others more than we are on our own needs, we enable God to work in us His desire, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. In short, we want to do what He wants us to do. When this happens, we can confidently follow the desire of our hearts knowing that it is His desire for us. “Mark, you can’t just go doing whatever you want to do.” No, you can’t if you have never allowed His mind to be in you. But, if you have allowed His mind to be in you, then you can follow the desires of your heart, and, you can know that God will supply all your need along the way because you are no longer focused on yourself, but rather on expanding the Kingdom.

I think the problem has been that we have looked at each other and determined that just because “so and so” claimed to be a Christian and yet they continued to live for themselves, then I should be able to do what I want to do. “What is everyone else doing?” That seems to be how we determine what we ought to do. We look at the rest of the “sheep” and head in the same direction as everyone else, right off the proverbial cliff.

“So and so says they are a Christian and they do this and that and this and that and they have this toy and that thing and they go on this great vacation and have that huge house. Wow, God is really blessing them”. So, let me ask you, is that God blessing “so and so” or is that a person who claims the Lordship of Jesus and yet they haven’t surrendered one ounce of their life to Him. Instead, they are living for themselves and doing a pretty good job of it. It’s only when they come to the end of their life that they will realize they climbed the ladder to success, but it was leaning against the wrong building.

The truth of the matter is that **God wants you to do what you want to do, so long as you have His mind in you**, which was also in Christ Jesus. Otherwise, what you want to do is tied to your flesh and you are still the most important person in your world. Jesus did not think this way and nor should you. Even when Jesus faced what had to have been the most difficult moment of His life, on the Mount of Olives just before the crucifixion, we see His personal struggle with having to put His own desires aside and follow the will of the Father. (Luke 22:42)

“Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”

This is the greatest picture of someone living a surrendered life to God. It's a life in which you don't get your own way. Instead, you follow the leadership given to you from above. But, you don't follow grudgingly. You follow Him out of that place of knowing Him intimately and desiring to please Him more than you desire to be pleased yourself.

You see, a life surrendered is born out of a level of intimacy that comes from spending time with your heavenly Father and getting to know Him. In other words, in order to embrace this level of devotion requires something more than a casual relationship with God. It requires time with Him until you see things the same way that He sees things, you think as He thinks, His mind becomes yours. This is what God expects of each of us.

God's desire for us is that we actually turn over the reins of our life to Him and give Him all rights to direct us into whatever path He desires, for the good of the Kingdom. “Mark, are you saying that my confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ 30 or 40 years ago with not one bit of evidence to substantiate my claim in all those years might actually mean that I really didn't make Jesus Christ the Lord of my life?” You will have to determine that for yourself. But, know this, Christianity is about much more than praying a prayer and having all your sins forgiven. Christianity is about surrendering your life to Christ and allowing His mind to be in you. When you do this, you won't have to wonder if you have done enough to spend eternity with Jesus, you'll know.

~ Jesus Loves You!

Mark Jenkins