

Do you hunger for the character of God?

Last month we discussed the Church, what it was, and what it's supposed to be doing. This month I would like to discuss the character of God, and how we are too manifest the character of Jesus Christ.

In Matthew chapter five Jesus is giving the beatitudes. In which He reveals how we are to conduct ourselves, as those that claim to follow Him, which ultimately is following the Father. In chapter 5:43-48 we read some very interesting characteristics of God.

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more [than others]? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Notice the very high standard Jesus sets for us in verse forty-eight "...be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This is not some verse to try to reinterpret--or as others have tried to say only means to be complete--but a very high standard of which Jesus sets for us. He does this so as to create a constant hunger and yearning for our Father's character.

Does it matter to God that you try and reach for this goal? Yes! Jesus would not have said it if He did not believe it. It's sad that many Christians do not feel the hunger, or drive to seek God's character at all. Many Christians would rather read the Word then analytically chop it to pieces. Why? Because they cannot reason that God could have wrote in such simple terms using profound statements.

Many Christians feel no real need to exercise Godliness unto holiness; they are more concerned about other things, and less concerned about what God thinks of them. Remember you and I belong to Jesus Christ He paid for us, and He expects us to act like His children; not like children of the world.

And you [hath he quickened], who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world,

according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised [us] up together, and made [us] sit together in heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in [his] kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: [it is] the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:1-10).

We have been made for something better than to have just "fire insurance." When you look at the person of Christ, being the full and complete revelation of God Himself, what do you see? A savior? A prophet? A good man? But what do you see? It should be, God manifested in the flesh showing us God as God transferring the promise of life eternal and fellowship with God to those who believe.

Colossians 1:11-14 says.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated [us] into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, [even] the forgiveness of sins."

The word translated in [Gk. methistemi] to remove, translate, to transpose, transfer, or remove from one place to another. It carries the meaning of going from one place to another without traveling in between! The idea I'm trying to put forth to you is this. You're not apart of this world anymore if you have been translated from the kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of Light! Have you? Do you realize the responsibility you have?

Being sold out to Christ has become a bad word in the Church today. Many are afraid family and friends will turn on them and call them Jesus freaks or worse. Dear reader, you cannot follow Christ with that attitude. If you are controlled by family and friends, or if you are more concerned about what they will say or do than Christ is; you have a serious lordship problem. Manifesting the character

of God will get you into trouble. It will cause divisions in homes and between friendships but hear what Jesus says about that.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law And a man's foes [shall be] they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me (Matthew 10:32-40).

Dear readers, live for Christ now! Sell your self to Him now! Serve Him now! Don't wait don't say tomorrow for many of us tomorrow will not come. Stop acting like a child of the world and start today, right now, acting like a child of God! Look around you and examine your life carefully and ask God to show you those things that you and Him together need to remove.

I would like for us to look at another passage and consider its application. It's found in 2 Peter 1:3,4.

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the *divine nature*, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Peter says, through the Holy Spirit, a number of things. First, it's by His divine power that we receive all things that pertain to life and godliness. Second, it's through the knowledge of Him that we receive exceeding great and precious promises. Third, by all of the previous mentioned things were partakers of the divine nature. Fourth, the reason is because we have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

When the words divine nature appear many, though perverted, would say "there you see we are little gods." No, it does not say that at all; it says nature meaning character, ways, manner, habits, and so on. Because we have the

divine nature it does not mean we are divinity. God has, through the calling of Christ, promised us everything that we need for life and Godliness. He says we can be partakers or sharers of His divine nature. This divine nature will surface out as we give our selves over to Him more and more. Again, Jesus went through a lot to set you free; He desires that you act like one of His!

Be concerned with Him and Him alone. Get alone with Him tell Him you want Him. We're saddened and amazed at so many that treat so great a salvation as something that is just a part of the day like eating or drinking. Dear reader, it has to be more than that, it has to be greater than that, it has to be real. We have to be real! Until next month, God look upon you and guide you in all your ways.

Amen!