

Milk & Honey

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Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

Self-Promotion

Steve Hulshizer

Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king:... 1 Kings 1:5

Scriptures tell us there is a sinful nature within every child of Adam. Two of its primary characteristics are *pride* and doing that which is contrary to the will of God – *disobedience*. Adam, the head of the human race fell when in his attempt to elevate his position he disobeyed the Word of God. (Rom. 5:19) This of course was exactly what had been Lucifer’s same reasoning. “But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. I will be like the most High.’” (Isa. 14:13–14)

King David’s life was coming to an end. He had previously named his son Solomon as his successor (1 Kings 1:1; 1 Chr. 23:1; 28:5) Adonijah was Solomon’s older brother and under normal circumstances would have become king upon David’s death. However, it is not uncommon in Scripture to find the older serving the younger. Joseph’s older brothers are a good example of this. Joseph had dreamed a dream which pictured his older brothers bowing down to him. This infuriated them to the point of selling him into slavery. But by God’s sovereign hand Joseph was brought to power and the day came when his brothers bowed before him, not knowing it was Joseph. (Gen. 37:5-8; 42:6) This pattern of the older (1st) serving the younger (2nd) is repeated in Scripture.

The ultimate example is of course the Lord Jesus. God’s eternal plans were never centered in the first man Adam, but in the second Man, the last Adam. (1 Cor. 15:45-47) Christ came in humility and did the Father’s will and allowed Him to do the exalting. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:9–11). May we too be willing to wait and allow God to do the elevating, if He so chooses. “It is not good to eat much honey; So to seek one’s own glory is not glory.” (Prov. 25:27 NKJV)

Now Adonijah the older brother has his ideas and took things into his own hands and made himself king. It turned out to be king for a day! (1 Kings 1:5–7; 24–25). He spoke with Joab and Abiathar the priest and they followed him in his plan to be king. Now the faithful followers of David, Nathan the prophet, Zadok the priest, along with Benaiah were not invited to the coronation of Adonijah, no doubt because they would never have gone along with the plot. Solomon was also excluded for obvious reasons.

Working through Bathsheba they got the news to David and Adonijah’s plan of self-promotion were soon thwarted. (1 Kings 1:50-53) “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov. 16:18) “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” (Matt. 23:12)

Since it is the natural tendency for the flesh to promote itself, of which Adonijah is a clear example, it is wise for each of us to be alert, guarding our hearts (Prov. 4:23) Be reminded, it was Christ’s disciples who desired a high place in the eternal day. “They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.” (Mark 10:37)

Christ spoke to this very issue in Luke 14:7–11 (NKJV). “When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

The apostle Paul spoke in a similar way. “For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.” (Gal. 6:3) Perhaps Diotrefes falls into this category. (3 John 1:9-11) Loving to have the preeminence he would exclude any he perceived might undermine his “number one” position. In response John exhorts the saints, “Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good.”

Noticing that Scripture speaks a great deal to this issue, it is obviously a common temptation. May we all be alert to Satan’s encouragement for us to promote ourselves, but rather follow the example of Christ as given in Phil. 2:5-9. *

The Perfections Of Christ

J. N. Darby

The Lord Jesus...is the summing up of all possible beauty and perfection in Himself.

What was then the life of this Jesus, the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? A life of activity in obscurity, causing the love of God to penetrate the most hidden comers of society, wherever needs were greatest...this life did not shelter itself from the misery of the world, but it brought into it the love of God.

Adam's first act was to seek his own will but Christ was in this world of misery, devoting Himself in love, devoting Himself to do His Father's will. He came here emptying Himself. He came here by an act of devotedness to His Father, at all cost to Himself, that God might be glorified.

The only act of disobedience which Adam could commit he did commit; but He, who could have done all things as to power, only used His power to display more perfect service, more perfect subjection. How blessed is the picture of the Lord's ways!

The more faithful He was, the more despised and opposed; the more meek, the less esteemed: but all this altered nothing, because He did all to God alone: with the multitude, with His disciples, or before His unjust judges, nothing altered the perfectness of His ways, because in all circumstances all was done to God.

The Man Christ Jesus grew in favor with God and man. He was always the servant of every one. The first thing that struck me some years ago in reading the gospels was, Here is a man that never did anything for Himself. What a miracle to see a man not living to himself, for He had got God for Himself.

The gospels display the One in whom was no selfishness. They tell out the heart that was ready for everybody. No matter how deep His own sorrow, He always cared for others. He could warn Peter in Gethsemane, and comfort the dying thief on the cross. His heart was above circumstances, never acting under them, but ever according to God in them.

Self-pleasing, self-exalting, self-advancing are ever the principles of men's actions, but in the blessed Lord there was true devotedness of heart and affection, and service, without the smallest particle of self-seeking. The very thing man so much covets, there was the perfect absence of in Him. "I receive not honor from man."

We find admirable affections in the apostles...we find works, as Jesus said, greater than His own; we find exercises of heart and astonishing heights by grace but we do not find the evenness that was in Christ. He was the Son of man who was in heaven. Such as Paul are chords on which God strikes, and on which He produces a wondrous music; but Christ is all the music itself. *

Possession And Practice Of Salvation

K. E. W. Prior

One of the marks of Christian maturity is that we get a deepening sense of our own sinfulness before God. Paul, at the very end of his life called himself the chief of sinners but there's another mark of the Holy Spirit that accompanies it and that is His sanctifying work. The more we see desires for holiness, those desires for better things that we never implanted ourselves, and which we attribute to the Holy Spirit Himself — every thought of holiness is His alone. Oh! if ever there was a truth that gives the whole glory to God, it is the doctrine of sanctification in Holy Scripture!

And then also, because it is God who is working within us, it means this: that whatever God does He finishes. God's work is never an unfinished symphony. Oh yes, we're sometimes like this; we sometimes fail to finish what we intend to do. But God, never. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul gives a word of confidence that I've often written in people's Bibles when I've been asked for a comment: "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." [Phil. 1:6]

I think somehow that the last two chapters of the first Epistle to the Thessalonians were really an expansion of these very verses. In those two chapters, as Paul gives injunction after injunction to his readers, to do this and to do that in their Christian lives—to guard against evil in this way and that way—in other words, challenging them to work out their own salvation: this is how he brings it to a conclusion. This is how he turns their thoughts back to the God Himself who sanctifies: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then that glorious concluding statement: "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." *

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The Impeccable Christ

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York Bible Study Program

September 9 **Faithful Youth In** Mark Shelley
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10 AM - 3PM, Lunch served.

The Lord's Way Of Meeting The Doubt Of The Disciples

H. Bonar

"He shewed them his hands and his feet." That which they doubted was, whether this Stranger Who had come to them and Who looked so like their old Master were in very deed Himself. If He were, then He must have risen from the dead; for they saw Him die, nay, they had buried Him. If this were He, then all had come true which He had spoken of Himself, and which the prophets had spoken concerning Him. He was now doubly demonstrated to be the Christ. That which He had spoken to them concerning His rising from the dead was no vain thing; and now they saw in Him, not only all that they had seen before, but much more. As the dying Christ, He was much more to them than the living Christ; but as the risen Christ, He was more than the dying Christ. The seed had not only been sown and taken root, but was now springing up into a glorious tree.

His object, then, in shewing them His hands and His feet, was not only to convince them that He was no spectre, no shadow; but that He was the very Christ Who had been crucified. The nail-prints were the proof, not only that He had died, but that He had triumphed over death; that, though "crucified through weakness, He lived again by the power of God." The sin had been borne; the blood had been shed; the sacrifice offered up; the penalty paid; the law satisfied; righteousness honoured; Satan baffled; death overcome. Of all these things the nail prints assured them. They were the chief of the "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3) given to His disciples of His true resurrection. *

The Supreme Mission Of The Holy Spirit

Guy H. King

"He shall glorify me" John 16:14

The supreme mission of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus. Let me suggest three of the chief ways in which He does it. The Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus by writing a book about Him, the Bible. It is all about Jesus; the Old Testament is the Preparation, the Gospels are the Presentation, the Acts the Proclamation, the Epistles are the Personification, the Revelation is the Predomination. The Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus by finding a bride for Him, of which Eleazer's search for Isaac's bride in Genesis 24 is a picture. So is the Spirit in this age seeking and preparing the Church to be His bride. The Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus by making a believer like Him. Every Christlike Christian brings glory to His Name, and that is a quality of character which only the Holy Spirit can produce (the last phrase of 2 Cor. 3: 18). It is what Galatians 5: 22 calls "the fruit of the Spirit ." *

The Heart Longing After The Person Of Christ

Hebrews 13: 8

C.H. Mackintosh

Nothing is of any value that does not spring from personal love to, and communion with Christ Himself. We may have scripture at our finger ends; we may be able to preach with remarkable fluency, a fluency which unpracticed spirits may easily mistake for 'power'; but oh! if our hearts are not drinking deeply at the fountain head—if they are not enlivened and invigorated by the realization of the love of Christ, it will all end in mere flash and smoke. I have learnt ... to be increasingly dissatisfied with everything whether in myself or others, short of abiding, real deep, divinely wrought communion with, and conformity to, the blessed Master. Crotchets [unfounded beliefs] I despise; mere opinions I dread; controversy I shrink from; all isms I esteem as utterly worthless. But . . . I long to know more of His own precious Person, His work and His glory. And then, ah I to live for Him: to labour, testify, preach, and pray, and all for Christ, and by the working of His grace in our hearts. *

Joy

W. Graham Scroggie

One of the evidences of fellowship with God is joy, and where joy is wanting there is something wrong. Surely, if we were joyful in the Lord as we should be, the world would listen to us. If we have lost this spirit of exultation in our God, there is need for restoration. *

Shepherding Conference

September 21 - 23

John Gordon (NC), Bruce Hulshizer (PA),

Mark Kolchin (NJ), Bob Spender (PA)

Register @ www.GreenwoodHills.net

For men of all ages – 16-20 \$50 off of full conference

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Likeness To Christ

C. H. Spurgeon

A Christian should be a striking likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have read lives of Christ, beautifully and eloquently written, but the best life of Christ is His living biography, written out in the words and actions of His people. If we were what we profess to be, and what we should be, we should be pictures of Christ; yea, such striking likenesses of Him, that the world would not have to hold us up by the hour together, and say, "Well, it seems somewhat of a likeness;" but they would, when they once beheld us, exclaim, "He has been with Jesus; he has been taught of Him; he is like Him; he has caught the very idea of the Lord Jesus, and he works it out in his life and every day actions." A Christian should be like Christ in his boldness. Never blush to own your religion; your profession will never disgrace you: take care you never disgrace that. Be like Jesus, very valiant for your God. Imitate Him in your loving spirit; think kindly, speak kindly, and do kindly, that men may say of you, "He has been with Jesus." Imitate Jesus in His holiness. Was He zealous for His Master? So be you; ever go about doing good. Let not time be wasted: it is too precious. Was He self-denying, never looking to His own interest? Be the same. Was He devout? Be you fervent in your prayers. Had He deference to His Father's will? So submit yourselves to Him. Was He patient? So learn to endure. And best of all, as the highest portraiture of Jesus, try to forgive your enemies, as He did; and let those sublime words of your Master, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," always ring in your ears. Forgive, as you hope to be forgiven. Heap coals of fire on the head of your foe by your kindness to him. Good for evil, recollect, is god like. Be godlike, then; and in all ways and by all means, so live that all may say of you, "He has been with Jesus." *

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The Unchanging Christ

A. C. Gaebelien

All about us is change and decay. Our years come and go. Our loved ones and friends leave us. There is nothing stable, nothing secure, nothing certain. But there is One who does not change, who cannot be affected by the changing things of time-One who remaineth, who is always the same-our blessed Lord. With Him, the Lord who changeth not, who remaineth, who is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, we are united by faith; and we are in Him through Grace, and He is in us. Well may we remember this most precious fact, and, in the midst of constantly changing scenes, cling to Him, trust Him, and find Him the same loving, compassionate Saviour, the same gracious and all sufficient Lord He has always been, and will always be, to His people . . . Thus we rest in Him, the Lord who changeth not. This is the true rest of Faith. Let all change, let all fail, let all disappoint - He remaineth, the never changing Lord. Let us, beloved in the Lord, draw nearer, still nearer to Him-to Him who loved us, who has washed us in His own blood from our sins. Nearer-still nearer! We need it as it is getting darker. Under the shadow of His wings we shall abide. *