

CHIEF MINISTRIES

July 2020

Well, it's July. The month this country will celebrate its independence. For this, we should truly be thankful. I feel I must ask my readers, are you truly free! FREEDOM: The state of being free or at liberty, rather than in confinement or under physical restraint; exemption from external control, interference, regulation, etc., it is personal liberty as opposed to bondage or slavery.

In the natural, I guess none of us are truly free, especially those of us here in prison. I have bitter men, all the time wanting to bring me down or remind me that I'm here too, in prison, with them. And I love to tell them: "You and I may be in the same place, but unless you let Christ set you free, we will never be in the same position!" As an anointed minister of music, I tell my fellow band players, some of whom are very talented, "that they might be able to play well, perhaps master their instrument, but unless they spend time with the "anointer", they're just making noise. The anointing will cost you everything". And I'm here to tell some of you that Freedom will also cost you everything!

To understand and begin to really walk in the fullness of freedom afforded to us by our faith, we need not only understand freedom itself, but must also recognize and actively seek liberty from our former bondage. In His death and resurrection, our great King and High Priest Jesus Christ made full provision for total victory and absolute freedom in every area of our lives. Because this provision has already been made, and because in the Holy Spirit we have everything pertaining to life and godliness, then why do so many of us struggle with the old sins and old ways of thinking and doing?

The grace of God is a free gift; like any gift it must be received, and to be received it first has to be believed – not just in your head! But in your heart!!! So many are living beneath the call of God on their lives simply because they are ignorant of the extravagantly precious inheritance we have as saints – as sons and daughters of the Most High God. It has been said that Jesus came not only to get us into heaven, but to get heaven into us! Our salvation, the moment our names are written in the book of life, is only the very beginning of a lifelong journey into the progressive revelation of the true nature of our God and the things of His Kingdom.

Cultivating and ever-deepening intimacy with God is the primary call of our lives as followers of Christ. To know Him better today than yesterday, and to love Him and honor Him in all things, not out of a sense of obligation or compunction, but out of the overwhelming joy of communing and worshiping Him in spirit and truth.. As we learn to seek first His kingship and His righteousness all of the rest will follow. But when we seek Him and His kingdom for the sake of all that follows, we are no longer seeking Him first, we are seeking His blessings. Knowing Him is its own reward, and there is no other blessing or benefit that comes close to it. When we seek Him with reckless abandon and learn to trust Him deeper and deeper, things begin to change radically for the better – for His glory and for our benefit.

As believers, we live in the tension between two realities. The more readily apparent of these realities is the place we live and the ugliness we see and experience on a day-to-day basis, but the greater reality that we have the opportunity of living from, is the truth of our Father's Kingdom. Second Corinthians 4:18 says, "*While we do not look at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the*

things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” It takes absolutely zero faith to partner with the reality presented by your surroundings. Without believing in and partnering with God’s truth, we become beaten down and hopeless in the face of hardship; futility sets in, and we give up. We allow the way people treat us to define our wealth and value and grow bitter and resentful towards them. The flame of our childhood hopes and dreams grows cold, and we find ourselves small and empty, imprisoned.

Apart from God, the only way to overcome the cycle is to take on the yoke of this material world and find our pleasure and purpose in petty comforts and selfish ambition. We begin chasing riches, creature comforts, or worldly achievements and prestige, which only increases the appetite for more of what the world has to offer. People who climb the world’s ladder in their own strength can only make it so far before they end up needing to defraud and harm other people to successfully satisfy their now darkened desires.

To partner with Kingdom thinking is to unwaveringly believe in who God is, what He has already done, and what He wants to do. We must truly know what His heart is towards us. God is sovereign and He has ways of accomplishing His will with or without our participation. At the same time, God has trusted us to partner and co-labor with Him in bringing His light and hope to the darkened world around us. In fact, all of creation groans in anticipation for the children of God to realize their inheritance and bring His Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven! Jesus didn’t ask for a confession of faith and a Sunday morning spent in a building – He asked us for our very selves. He wants our whole lives laid down in a trusting surrender to His mercy, love, and goodness. *”Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it”(Matthews 10:13).*

As we learn to trust and surrender to Him He provides us with joy, peace and hope such as nothing in the world can offer. He does not change the world around us; He changes us and empowers us to change our world. This is a much greater glory than if He just swooped in and did all the work Himself. We have the honor and privilege of learning and growing in the works that we see our Father doing – He asks only that we believe.

The final hindrance of God’s will being accomplished in our lives and across the earth is this; God has an enemy who hates Him, and therefore hates us. Satan is real; and while he can never truly win or accomplish any lasting victory over God, he is content to hijack people, destroy goodness, and rob people of knowing God for as long as possible. The devil is the commander-in-chief over an entire kingdom of darkness, and he mobilizes his minions to kill, steal, and destroy at every opportunity. Jesus came to destroy the works of darkness and since we are called to walk as He walked; it should be our top priority to war against the powers of hell.

If you’ve studied the Old Testament, you know that our God is a God of justice, of vengeance, of wrath and of war. A common misconception in many streams of today’s faith is that since Jesus came and nullified the power of sin, God is no longer zealous to execute judgment on darkness. Jesus forever changed the relationship between God and humankind so that the Father now sees us as sons and daughters, and no longer demands continual atonement for sin.

Jesus really did pay it all, and we should spend our time here and hereafter thanking Him and praising Him for His mercy! However, being that God is the same yesterday, today and forever, we can trust that all aspects of God revealed in the Old Testament are just as true and as active as ever.

Yes, our God is kind and gentle. He is an endlessly patient loving Father. But He is still the God of all justice and will exact vengeance on His adversary. It may seem in today’s world that justice and mercy are at odds and cannot coexist, but in Him they are always in perfect harmony. Had the officer who put

his knee on George Floyd's neck been full of God's Spirit, we could guarantee what happened wouldn't have. Jesus the Lamb is revealed to us in the gospels; Jesus the Lion is revealed in Revelation. And we are closer to the end than the beginning.

"The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist." This quote may be from the movie The Usual Suspects, but the truth in this statement is absolutely on target. The devil is real, and he has many names. *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.* ^{v7} *The LORD said to Satan, "From where have you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it."* (Job 1:6-7) *"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."* (1 Peter 5:8). You must know your enemy. You must understand your opponents' strengths and weaknesses.

There is an army waiting to be released, to usher in the next great wave of His glory – it's time for the greatest revival ever! Many will be saved in this revival – many of those who were once wrapped up in the talons of the occult.

We should be the true ark-bearers, carriers of His glory, and we will embark on a new frontier. But just as those who came to America in search of freedom, we too, must etch out the moral dealings and take back what we have lost. If we could only see who we really are, with the dominion and power that reigns in each one of us, we would be armed and dangerous, strong and serious!

John Wimber said that faith is spelled R-I-S-K. I have always felt like faith is for things present, and hope is for things to come. As we believe, we will see God move. Now we know the Bible says that faith without works is dead (James [Jacob] 2:17). So while it is very important to have faith in our hearts and spirits, there is going to be some work that must accompany our faith. This may also come in the way of a little pruning and polishing by the Father, but the finished result will make us like gold. This refining means our minds must continually be washed by the Word, the Bible, and we must continue taking steps towards holiness, wholeness, loving and serving.

We must allow God to move in and through us, and that can often mean embracing change. By aligning ourselves with the Word of God, we become like Him, and that is where true transformation comes. More and more believers are hearing the call of the Lord and are stepping up in faith to actively fight against the darkness. We are winning!

Each of us is covered by God's grace and love through Jesus' sacrifice, and these already guarantee us a victory. I do not have to fight for victory, as that has already been achieved through the cross, and each of us has access to that victory. Amen! Now we simply get the privilege of walking out that victory in our personal lives, and helping others receive their same inheritance of victory. Walking out our victory is a daily, intentional pursuit, and I keep pressing on to the higher call I know He has for my life.

Claiming our victory means walking in the truth written in Scripture that helps us understand our true identity as His saints. We are the children of God of heaven and earth, made in His image, and healed by the stripes of His Son who laid His life down for each one of us.

I tested positive for Covid-19 on May 25, Memorial Day. There was one night that was so bad, I just couldn't breathe. I told my neighbor to watch because it was getting pretty bad. I laid down and told the Lord. "Lord, if you still have work for me on this earth then you've got to come and get me through this." I literally felt the arms of Jesus or an angel come and wrap around me and I felt peace and literally could immediately take deep breaths and I quickly dozed off. I got up the next day and continued on this journey He has for me. Praise God!

Our thoughts need to align with the truth in God's Word, but also the words we speak. Words are powerful! When we speak, we create and set boundaries for our lives. If our words are shallow or not aligned with truth, we may find our boundaries are limiting us from the fullness of Christ intended for us. Words are like arrows, and they will find their target. I urge you to be careful of the things you speak, for they go into the airwaves and they will return to you.

Remember that Satan is the prince of the air and hears what you speak. He takes great pleasure in trying to manipulate and pervert what is positive, while using the negative against you. Have faith that God will turn situations that appear to be bad into good, and speak positive confessions concerning the outcomes of situations, even if they haven't come to pass yet. Speaking further about life and death and the power of words and we get to choose. Will we choose life or death? *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit"* (Proverbs 18:21).

We are a three-part being: spirit, soul and body. Our soul is comprised of our mind, will and emotions. When we are attacked by Satan, it is usually in one of three ways: physical, mental, or emotional. Remember we have a free will and we consciously make choices. So, will we succumb to the devil's schemes and allow him to redefine our destinies? Or will we take the authority given us through the Father to resist the devil, confident that the Word of God says he must flee?

We have been created to have a relationship with God. Relationship is defined as being connected: kinship; being connected by blood or marriage; a continuing attachment or association between persons. We must be like the woman with the issue of blood (Mark 5:25-34) and press in and receive our miracles.

Please don't allow physical, emotional or mental challenges to keep you from a passionate pursuit of the Lord. The condition of our "feelings" has Many of God's people bound and spiritually hemorrhaging.

God has given you authority to manage your soul – mind, will, emotions – which means that your soul does not have the power to dictate to you. Unfortunately, so many people don't realize that and live their lives stuck between two thieves – the past and the future. The thief of the past tells them they are disqualified because of what they have done. The thief of the future tells them they can never be more than they are today, and to give up on hope.

The Hebrew word for faith is emunah, which means trust, faithful, stable and steady. The word for faith in Greek is pistis, which means assurance, to believe, be confident in, rely on, or faithful to confidently believe. One of the biggest thieves of faith in our lives is compromise. While compromise feels like a solution because it "meets in the middle", there is no room for compromise when it comes to the truths of God. Compromise will eat away at your faith and your confidence, often leaving you weary and tired. That is why it is so important to stir up the gifts that are given to you by God and allow Him to have your heart freely and completely. I found that putting my faith into action is key for me. It's also important to pay attention to the company you keep. "Show me your friends, and I'll show you your future." I love everyone, but I am an eagle, not a chicken. I can't be cooped up barely getting by, crying about what once was and now it's not. I fly with those of like minds – many of whom have forged ahead, paid the price, and have wisdom and revelation. I need that. Movers and Shakers.

So.....

Stay in the Word – *I APPEAL, to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of (all) the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies (presenting all your members and faculties) as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1 AMP).*

