



A seed will serve Him . . . Psalm 22:30-31

The Implanter

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THE PERPLEXITY OF THE MATTER

by Stacy R. Wood, Jr

The quandary, brought about by old and new thinking, often causes one to ask, “*Why have we afflicted our soul by giving up so much? We have sacrificed much, but the Lord has neither heard or answered us.*” The word of the prophet still rings clear, “*Behold, in the day of your fast, you find pleasure in exacting all your labors.*” (Is. 58:3) Do you understand what is being addressed here? There is a deeply rooted error in the thinking of many of Christians, for most believe they must *do* something or cease from *doing* something to show themselves faithful. Many still do not understand true affliction of the soul and what God requires during this feast. Remember. The soul is the natural intellect, desires, resolve, emotion, intuitive impulse, and sensual portion of the human make up. God said, “*In the seventh month, on the tenth of the month, you shall afflict your souls and do no work at all.*” This applies to God’s people, as well as, the alien or foreigner who lives among them. (Lev. 16:29, 31, 23:27, 32; Num. 29:7). May I ask, who then is exempted? Where can one go that they are not among God’s people? Yet, we must be careful not to become cranky like Israel during this time of fasting, who then demanded that others do what they could not do. Sound familiar?

DEALING WITH THE SOUL

The method of dealing with the soul needs to change. So often the disappointment and hurt one experiences in their walk with the Lord has been brought on by incorrectly afflicting the soul. Remember. “*The merciful man does good to his own soul, but he who is cruel troubles his own flesh.*” (Pro. 11:17). Moreover, whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles. (Pro 21:23). Thus, we are not to hate or “*kill*” the soul, as some have thought, but to truly afflict the soul is to silence the natural intellect, desires, resolve, emotion, intuitive impulse, and sensual portion of the human make up THROUGH the gentle and loving application of God’s word. (Eph. 5:25-27). For the Lord

is in his holy temple; let all the earth (soul) keep silence before him. (Hab. 2:20; Psa. 24:3-5, 62:1-2, 103:1-5131:1-3; Pro. 19:8). Let us remember, there is a fast for preparation of the Day of Atonement, “*at-one-ment*”, or “*union.*” This is a day of union, the long awaited marriage of the soul to the spirit of Christ. We can find this fast in Isaiah 58, here the Lord says “*In the day of your fast, you find the things that give you pleasure and you let somebody else do all the work.*” The soul wants to boast in its marriage or “*at-one-ment*” with God. It also wants more of the lofty revelation, so it can talk about it. The soulish say, “*Let the Fundamentalist and Pentecostal, or somebody else do the work.*” “*We will sit still and wait for “someday,” all the while preaching, someday Jesus is coming, someday everything will be set right when the son’s of God manifest.*” Many times the soul flaunts its knowledge, but never gets down to the nitty gritty of manifesting what it knows. Remember. Revelation without manifestation is merely information. We are chosen with a purpose in the mind of the One who has chosen us. It is in the fulfilling of that purpose that we experience all things working together for good. (Rom. 8:28).

You see, Israel got in trouble because they quit doing anything and sat around belittling those who were still active in doing the work. That is, they ceased to function in the chores of life and gave over their responsibility to others. I am convinced today this same problem exists in the midst of higher knowledge saints. That is, those who have a “*deeper word*” and consider themselves to be “*seventh day,*” “*third day,*” “*new day*” saints, have quit doing any work. God is seeing a people who have been afflicting their soul by taking upon themselves a word and an identification that has truly cost them something. However, they would rather sit around and talk about what it cost them, and who they imagine themselves to be, rather than doing the works they are called to do. I say this because *until* they demonstrate or manifest their state of being it is only in their own mind. They relish in their mind their oneness with God more than becoming

Proclaiming the Good News of the Happy God, Who Is Savior of All and Condemner of None!

what they think they already are.

This inactivity does not make one acceptable to God. It will not make us more desirable or more accepted among the human race. (Rom. 14:16-19). We have a work to do and we cannot leave it for others, because God has equipped *us* to do it. Isaiah goes on to say, *"You shall not fast as you do today, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast and a day pleasing to Jehovah?"* (Isa. 58:4-5).

When I looked at Isaiah 58, God began to deal with my heart because of what I saw. I not only noticed that we gave somebody else the work to do, but we look for delight in our inactivity, striving and debating with others over insignificant matters. Often striking out the fist of guilt, shame and accusation.

I could touch the natural, but I want to touch the spiritual. You see, we have not been given this revealed word so we can argue with others. Some of us are *"devil's advocates"* and good ones to say the least, because we like a good debate and we are as controversial as we can be!

I believe in the reconciliation of all mankind. (2Co. 5:19-20; Col. 1:20). Yet, I do not agree with what I have heard some folks say, *"My God, people that do not preach reconciliation and yet see it are hypocrites. They are weak spined."* I must say, I have more respect for some of the preachers that say, *"Well, I really do not know what I believe as to the doctrine of reconciliation, but I know I am a reconciler."* Do you understand why I have respect for this stand? It is because this one does not argue over doctrine, but gets involved in doing the work of effecting creation. They become accepted at every level and proclaim the word that will get down inside the heart to produce the needed change in the lives of others.

You see, we are not in this thing so that we can prove ourselves to be something. It is not a contest to show who knows more, has more, or can do better than another. We have been chosen by the Father to become love servants of the creation. This is what God wants of us. He is looking for a lawful people, not a people that get this word in their heart who then become lawless.

LAWLESSNESS VERSUS LAWFULNESS

What do I mean lawless? Lawlessness is the rejection of all authority over one's life. The kind of attitude that says, *"I will just go my own way and do my own thing and you cannot stop me."* This is normally done among

the saints by saying, *"I will only listen to God."* *"I need no MAN to teach me."* I want you sons to know if this is in your heart, you will never have authority in God's kingdom. There is only one way to gain authority and that is to submit to authority. For he who is under authority will be given authority. Jesus said, *"If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."* (Mk. 9:35).

Now, if any of you have been in the military you will understand this principle. For if you do not submit to authority you will never gain rank and may even end up in the hoosegow or brig. If you submit to authority you will be noticed and will be promoted in rank to gain authority. (Mk 9:35, 10:44) The same principle works in the kingdom of God. He that is submitted under authority will gain authority. What happens to so many is they hear a word of revelation and before it is worked in their heart they try to share it with others. Yet, without the authority it will not affect others with life.

There are those who pull out from the corporate expression to do their own thing. They often create their own church and do their own work. My God, we have churches on every corner, do we need another one? So often I come to a city and there are gatherings of saints on the west side of town and some on the east side of town. This is good, there should be many gatherings. Yet, when we come to minister they will not gather together into one locality. No one seems to know why the division exists. One gathering emphasizes who they are in God. The other believes since they are the anointed of God, they must simply start being what they are and begin touching creation to set it free. Thus, they have gone their separate ways. They believe in the same God. They have basically the same vision. Both believe God is the Savior of all humanity. However, one believes it is already *"finished"* and there is nothing left to do, but talk about who they are and what will manifest someday, and the other believes this becomes manifested as they as participate as ambassadors, on Christ's behalf, inviting people to be reconciled to God. (2Co. 5:20). Because of this difference they refuse to come together and fellowship the Christ.

God has placed authority over us. I pray he *soon* teaches us to submit to the authority he has placed in and over our lives. Some day we will deal more completely with how to recognize true authority. All I have time and space for in this message is to mention that authority does not exist because someone says they are an authority. There is a manifested nature that comes with authority. This nature is a principled life that sees what

is started through to its' manifestation. It will breed lawfulness into the heart instead of lawlessness. This little word *lawfulness*, trips some folks up, but all I am talking about is a principled life. If you do not believe your God is a God of law and principle, read the Bible. God is lawful and principled and he wants us full of and walking in the spirit of the law. In lawfulness we may boldly say, "*The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do to me.*" We are told to remember them who have the rule over us, who have spoken to us the word of God. Moreover, we are to imitate, that is "*follow their faith*" considering the conclusion of their behavior. For their lives demonstrate "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.*" (Hebrews 13:6-8). Those who have been given true authority demonstrate steadfastness and stability within their life. Something sadly missing in so many who claim to be authorities.

If you do not believe in the need to become "*lawful*" read Romans chapter eight. It says, "*The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; SO THAT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW MIGHT BE FULFILLED IN US, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*" (Romans 8:2-4). You will see we are to be so full of the law that the law becomes replete in us for the world to see. We are to become a principled people.

Some are thinking, "*Brother, you cannot condemn us. For now there is NO CONDEMNATION for those who are in Christ Jesus.*" (Rom. 8:1). You are right! I cannot, it is impossible for me to condemn you since you are in Christ. However, if someone feels that this has been a ministry of condemnation, could it be that they need to recognize where they may not be? All of that to say, God did not give this word so that you would feel like a bullrush and in false humility hang down your head saying, "*Oh God, we failed.*" That is not what this day is about, it is not to bring gloom and doom upon the people. Quite the contrary. God wants to teach us how to be truly one with him. Thus, he begins to express what he calls "*THE TRUE FAST.*"

LEARNING GOD'S FAST

Let's read Isaiah chapter fifty-eight beginning with verse six "*Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed ones go free, and that you break every*

yoke? Is it not to break your bread to the hungry, and that you should bring home the wandering poor? When you see the naked and cover him; and you not hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break out as the dawn, and your health shall spring out quickly; and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of Jehovah shall gather you." (Isa. 58:6-8).

Now let us look at the fast that truly prepares us spiritually for the Day of Atonement. We can also apply all of this to the natural world and human race and it never hurts to do so. However, all the food, shelter, and clothing programs have not set creation free from the power of sin. (Rom. 8:20-22). What we need to understand is what this scripture says in the spirit.

LOOSE THE BANDS OF LAWLESSNESS

First, we need to loose the bands of lawlessness. This is speaking directly to God's sons. For lawlessness is what binds us, preventing us from accomplishing what God has purposed for us. This is not an easy thing to deal with because most sons hold to the bands of lawlessness fearing what will happen if they again submit to another. That word, "*submit,*" has become a dirty word among many in the kingdom. However, to loose the bands of lawlessness, we must begin to establish a framework of *lawfulness*. This will not win you a popularity contest among kingdom people, but it is something that must be done. This is teaching one what they truly "*BE,*" for all of God's sons are lawful. What so many do not understand is lawlessness is bondage which binds one from being able to manifest kingdom reality. Lawfulness is the freedom to demonstrate God reality to the creation. When I am lawful, I am free to do all that God has enabled me to do. When I am lawless, I am bound by the law of God. (1Ti 1:9) This could be used as an example of which I am speaking; If one obeys the laws of the land they are free to come and go as they please. It is when one is lawless, not abiding to the laws, they find themselves fined or confined by being thrown into prison.

UNDO THE HEAVY BURDENS

Secondly, we are told this fast is to undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free. Religion and religious leadership bind heavy burdens that are hard-to-carry upon men's shoulders. Yet, they do not put forth any effort to lighten or remove them. (M't. 23:4; Lk. 11:46). We must learn to bear one another's burdens so that we can complete the law of Christ. (Rom. 8:3 & 4; Gal. 6:2). Yes, we are to share in other people's burdens and let the oppressed or disheartened go free. All the while being careful not to break a bruised reed, nor

quench a smoking wick.

It is important to produce truth or victory within the lives of those God gives into our care. (Isa. 42:3; M't. 12:20). Sometimes it is something as simple and practical as watching children so a mom and dad can get away for a night. In the spiritual sense we need to be aware of people. We must become people watchers. If I only ministered to what I see on the face that looks like a burden, I would be in trouble. We need to become attentive to the heart and the spirit, taking notice of what flows out of others. (Isa. 11:3). If what flows out is from beneath heaviness we should seek to loosen or lift and bear the heaviness for the oppressed. We need to get under the load to help bear it for them. Let them know that it is okay to lay the burdensome weight on our shoulders. Bear it up and away from them and then when we get clear of them drop it. Do not bear it to someone else and make it their burden. Do you understand why you can afford to carry somebody's burden? It is because you have learned where to put it, because you have learned to cast it off ourselves and *on to* Jesus. (1Pe. 5:7) Sons know how to get out from underneath the cares and burdens of life by becoming yoked with the Lord. (Mk. 11:28-30). The world and most of Christendom does not really know how to become loosed from burdens, so we are the ones who need to get close enough to folks to lift up and bear way their burden. We can say, *"I want to bear with you in this thing. Tell me about it. I will bear up under it and you can trust me not to tell everybody."* We do not become a talebearer or gossip because no one will trust us again and rightfully so. A talebearer reveals secrets, but the faithful of spirit keeps the matter hidden. (Pro 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20-22). There are some who are oppressed by their debt, illness, unruly children, responsibilities even beyond their control. They are oppressed or *"over-pressed"* and cannot stand up or be joyful in the midst of life. However, we have the ability to go in and be practical, by helping to shoulder the burden.

I remember an incident where a church we ministered took this to heart. We had a number of single mother families, who were reliant on the welfare system. Irregardless of what created these situations the elders decided to see what they could do to rectify these problems. So the church took on each of these families, one at a time. Let me site one particular situation as I remember it. A mother with three teenage children. Her husband had divorced and left the family without support. Mom turned to welfare as a means of help. I

watched as the children became unruly and disrespectful. Finally, the elders spoke into the situation. They offered to take financial responsibility for the family if the mother would go back to school to find a way of supporting herself and her children. The family agreed and the test began. Three or four years later she graduated with a degree in journalism. I personally questioned if she had made a wise choice, but it was her interest and that is very important to success. There is a lot to this story, but we only have the room to tell part of it now. After graduation she found work and began to support her family. Welfare became a thing of the past and the children began to once again gain self respect. Shortly after everything started looking up, the family moved away and we lost track of them. Until one day I received a phone call. I learned the family had moved to follow the call of God. The children had finished their high school education and went on to get higher education. The daughter was an RN, the oldest son a doctor and the youngest was getting ready to graduate from West Point. Mom had written a book and it was now published and she was starting her second book. In all of it they gave God the glory for helping them find their true identity.

BREAK EVERY YOKE

Moreover, we are to *"break every yoke."* (Isa. 58:6). The yoke of religious tradition destroys more that it helps. A yoke is what links one with another so that every move becomes duplicated. This is what produces *"cookie-cutter"* Christianity. You can spot a Christian that has been produced with a *"cookie-cutter"* mentality. They dress, talk and walk like they have been cut from the same the mold. Remember the ginger men, mom made at Christmas? They all looked and tasted the same. Thank God, he is a God of variety. Just look at his creation and you will see this in the birds, trees and even humanity. They may be classified as being the same in category, but there are countless kinds in each group. So it is in the church or the Lord's body and he does not expect everyone to dress, talk or walk in the same manner. So break the yoke that makes one feel like they come short if they do not as you do. Let them express Christ as they come to know him.

DEAL OUR BREAD TO THE HUNGRY

Next, we are told that this fast is to deal our bread to the hungry. We can have a food barrel to give out food to those lacking food and this wonderfully fills a need in the lives of so many. A Biblical principle says, *"If your enemy is hungry, give him some food to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him some water to drink. In this way you*

will make him feel guilty and ashamed, and the Lord will reward you.” (Pr. 25:21-22; Rom. 12:20-21). Jesus said, “*You have the poor with you always, and whenever you desire you may do them good.*” (Mk. 14:7). Yet, we need to recognize that after nearly two thousand years of feeding programs for the poor the hunger problem still exists in every nation.

There are also countless throngs of people who are starving for spiritual bread. You don’t even need to go out of your own town to find them. Every believer’s home should have a sign hanging at the door, mounted like an exit sign, that says, “*You are now entering your mission field.*” Some might even hang this on their bedroom door as a reminder that their own household is a mission field. There are many “*church goers*” who suffer malnutrition and need to receive bread. They are desirous of God and hungry, but they cannot find the food which feeds the hunger.

The Lord uses the famine of hearing the words of the Lord to create a hunger in his people. (Amos 8:11). Then he who sends the famine gives the hearing ear to whomever he chooses. (Pr. 20:12). Jesus said, “*My Father gives the true bread from heaven. God's bread is the person who comes from heaven and gives life to the world.*” In that day Jesus was God’s bread of life in the earth and all who came to him received life and ceased to be hungry. (Joh. 6:31-35, 48). Now, Jesus knew where he came from and who he was in the earth. He said, “*I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he shall live into the age.*” Now by bread he was not referring solely to what he taught, but to his whole state being. For he went on to say, “*The bread that I will give is MY FLESH, which I will give for the life of the world.*” (Joh. 6:51). When the religious leaders heard this they argued among themselves, questioning how this could be. So Jesus went on to say, “*Unless you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you do not have life in yourselves. My flesh is indeed food, and my blood is drink indeed. He who partakes of my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent me, and I live through the Father, so he who partakes of me, even he shall live through me.*” He then interpreted what he was saying so all who had an ear would hear. He said, “*It is the Spirit, or blood that makes alive, the flesh, or bread profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit even life.*” (Joh. 6:53-63). Many of Jesus’ disciples, or students, left him over this teaching because they were not able to hear him. That is, they were only able to hear the “*letter*” of

the word, but were incapable of hearing the spirit or life of the word. They considered this teaching to be harsh and offensive. (Joh. 6:66; 2Co. 3:6). The twelve he “*hand selected*” remained with him. When Jesus asked if they would also leave him, Simon Peter answered him and said, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? Your teachings tell of the life of the ages and we have come to believe and know that you are indeed the Christ the son of God.*” (Joh. 6:60-69).

Paul wrote further on this thought when he said, “*The cup of blessing of which we speak well, does it not represent a joint-participation in the blood or spirit of Christ? Moreover, the loaf of bread or flesh that we break, does it not mean a joint-participation in the body of Christ? Since there is one loaf, we who are many are one body and we all share in that one loaf or flesh.*” (1Co. 10:16-17). Think about it. For any of us to receive the life that is invested in the Christ body we must partake of the bread, flesh, that holds no true benefit, so we can get to the blood or spirit life that is invested within the body of Christ. Now, the hungry can hear the reality of what God is saying, which enables us to share our bread, flesh, with the hungry, knowing that they will receive the blood or life of Christ. We do need to be afraid of people partaking of what we be, because they will find Christ life hidden beneath the obvious flesh condition of our lives.

It is necessary that we first become equipped so we are a wholesome food with plenty of substance, not just “*junk food.*” Some believers are like “*junk food,*” with no nutritional value. This is because they have not earnestly sought to present themselves approved to God, as a servant who, because he prepared himself with the word of truth he has no reason to feel any shame. (2Ti. 2:15). Every Scripture is inspired or breathed by God and is useful for teaching, for convincing, for correction of error, and for instruction in right doing; so that the man of God may himself be complete and may be perfectly equipped for every good work. (2Ti 3:16-17). Being knowledgeable of what the Scripture says prepares us to become a healthy feeding for others. Those who are fully equipped are able to become all things to all people. That is, they become the sincere “*milk of the word*” for the babe and “*strong meat*” for the mature. (Heb. 5:12-14; 1Pe. 2:2-3). What many think is spiritual nutrition will choke an infant. And yet what is often called “*revelation,*” has no substance for the young believer. The young are asking “*What is the meaning of life?*” And all they hear in response to their question is “*You are God!*” “*You are Christ,*” “*You are*

God's son." They ask again, "What does this mean?" This is because there is nothing to give the stability and direction, which is necessary at their young age of inexperience.

One day a person not yet mature in Christ told me, "I am God." I asked, "Why is God drunk?" This person said, "Because God needs to experience drunkenness." I said, "What foolishness. If God ever needed to experience drunkenness he had his opportunity in a righteous and perfect man named Noah. He didn't need to wait until now." (Gen. 6:9, 9:20-21).

Others often tell me, "I am God." I answer, "If you are 'gods,' as many, it is impossible to be 'the God,' singular." In the same way to those who say, "I am THE Christ." I've said, "No, you are not THE Christ, because I am a member of the Christ body. I know you are not THE Christ, because there are two of us in this room we are both constituent parts of a whole called Christ." (1Co. 12:27). Truth is we are "christed," or anointed ones in the earth. We need to learn how to set everyone free. However, nobody is set free by hearing a bunch of far out, scripturally unsound revelation. What needs to be done is to get down to the nitty gritty and teach them what a practical righteous life and a holy life is. Then we can give them a little revelation along with a little meat. Don't give them everything all at once, because it is going make them sick. It is okay to have a Twinkie and a soda pop once in awhile, but we should not base a diet on "revelation junk food," because teeth will fall out of their head and they will not be able to eat anything of substance. Remember. Revelation, without manifestation, is merely information.

BRING THE POOR INTO YOUR HOUSE

Isaiah goes on to say, "Bring the poor that are cast out to your house." (Isa. 58:7). Again, we can do this with practicality by providing shelter for those who are homeless. This is a good to practice, but does not always accomplish the deep need of the spirit. To fulfill this as a spiritual fast we seek out the poor, the destitute, and those who have been among us. Those who are in this hour discouraged, cast down, disappointed and hurt for whatever reason. Some of them have hurt themselves by having wrong vision and by not being in a place of adjustment, they have separated themselves from the fellowship. Others have been cast out because they did not go along with the requirement of the "local house." They have no idea how to make amends and come back into fellowship. The loss of their pride is too much to swallow, so they are not able to come back. They have said, "They do not want me around. There was nothing

there for me." We can see they are hurting and need fellowship, but how are we going to bring them back into fellowship?

First, we need a place to bring them. It needs to be stable and have wholesome leadership. Then, we need to open our house to them. What house? The house of our fellowship. Individually, in the body of Christ, we need to begin to open our houses. Begin to invite them to dinner, to visit and participate with us as our family and friends. As they begin to find out we are more than a church or religious function they will open up to our fellowship. We are a body, a family, we are friends. We can bring them into our homes, bring them into fellowship and then bring them into agreement.

It says to bring the homeless, to bring the poor, those that are cast out into your home. Do you know anybody cast out in this hour? Some of them cast out by their own thinking and some of them cast out because some preacher somewhere did not like their "stand." If you want to participate in this fast, reach out to those God has given you and minister to them. One of the responsibilities of the household of the saints is that we be given to hospitalities. (Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2). Do you know what the word hospitality means that is used in Romans? Not the entertainment of your friend and neighbor, but it is the entertainment of strangers. We need to look for some strange folk and entertain them.

COVER THE NAKED

Isaiah goes on to say, "when you see the naked, cover him; and hide not yourself from your own flesh." Making clothing available to those who are less fortunate than yourself is a valid ministry. Some groups call this ministry a clothes closet. However, there is also a deeper understanding for covering the naked. Do you remember the effect sin had on the first Adam? His eyes were opened to his own nakedness and he became ashamed. Adam did not need anyone to tell him that he was naked or that he had blown it. His first response was to hide himself and create clothing from fig leaves. Notice that God never left them or condemned them, moreover, he covered them. They were lowered into judgment and encouraged to return. That is, the judgment was to correct what was wrong. (Gen. 3:7-24; Ps. 90:1-4).

Jesus understood this principle and said, "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world," because the world was already condemned. (Joh. 3:17-18). This suggests that when we see a fault, we are never to broadcast, or tell others about it. We are to cover it and love the person in spite of the fault. You may have

to deal with the fault but do not open it up to the world.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

Ham, the middle son of Noah, immediately told his brothers of their father's nakedness. This resulted in his condemnation passing on to Canaan, Ham's seed.. However, the other two sons of Noah dealt quite differently with their father's drunken nakedness. (Ge. 9:20-29). They actually foreshadowed the government of the son. (Isa. 9:6-7). By placing a covering on their shoulders and backing in to cover their father's nakedness, they did not impute Noah's transgression against him. (2Co. 5:19). For there is no condemnation to one who is in Christ. (Gen. 6:8-9; Rom. 8:1). Yes, they covered it up. They brought that which would cover, or that which would convert but they did it by backing in and not looking upon the situation so they would not have a story to tell. This is how we need to cover faults.

James teaches from the book of Proverbs, *"Brothers, if anyone among you err from the truth, and if anyone turns him back, know that he who turns back the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."* (Pr. 10:12; James 5:19-20). There is a word that covers sin. It is a word given in love. This does not mean that the word is not corrective, but it does mean it is *not* condemning. Proverbs tells us that it is absent of all hate, hostility or animosity toward the person. It is also the absence of dislike or distaste for the individual. It is a loving word that converts the heart of the wayward. Remember. *"Love is patient and kind. Love knows neither envy nor jealousy. Love is not forward and self-assertive, nor boastful and conceited. It does not behave unbecomingly, nor seek its own thing, nor blaze out in passionate anger, nor brood over wrongs. Love finds no pleasure in injustice done to others, but joyfully sides with the truth. It knows how to be silent. Love is full of trust, full of hope, full of patient endurance. It never fails or comes to an end."* (1Co. 13:4-8).

Yet we are told to hide our self from our own nakedness. Everyone God uses is a person who first recognizes they come short of the goal. (Phil. 3:13-15). Many may never see it in their own lives, because they know how to manage things and keep them under the cover of God. However, God knows all. (Heb. 4:13). The problem is that folks harden their consciousness toward their own flesh. They no longer find the need to recognize their fleshliness, their carnality and their weakness. They often justify their wrong doings. What this does is taint the very ministry and life of God so it cannot flow. We

must recognize where we are weak, where we are undone, where we fall short, but not become condemned over the matter. Rather, let us face it straight on and say, *"My God, here it is, you have to change this in me. I want you to change this in me."* It does not do any good to sweep it under the carpet. We should never say. *"God says, I am perfect so it does not matter."* We need to desire God to continually deal with us *and then* let God have his way (Ps. 40:4-8; Heb. 10:1-13).

THE REWARD OF GOD'S CHOSEN FAST

What happens if we follow this chosen fast? We are told that our light will break forth as the morning. (Isa. 58:8, Mat. 5:14; Phil. 2:12-16). This is when the Day Star arises in our heart. Peter says, *"We have a more sure word of prophecy, to which you do well to take heed, as to a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the Daystar arises in your hearts."* (2Pe 1:19). Jesus said, I am the bright and morning star or Daystar. (Rev. 22:16). We are praying that this light would come and rise up and be seen in us. How? By **BEING** and **DOING** these very actions of a son of God. Let us become a servant to all creation in these ways. By serving creation and one another, as it shows us in Isaiah chapter fifty eight, our light will break forth as the morning upon a darkened creation. (Isa. 60:1-3). Your health will spring forth speedily. (Isa. 58:8). Have you been looking for a manifestation of divine health? Here is the key. It is not in believing, confessing, blabbing and grabbing, write a check, what the heck! Your key is in **BECOMING A SERVANT** to creation. Moreover, your righteousness or fairness will go ahead of you and the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard or rear reward. If you take away the yoke and the putting forth of the finger from your midst, you will call and the Lord shall answer. You will cry out and he will say, *"Here I am."* That is, also put away empty speaking and draw out your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul then will your light rise in obscurity and your darkness be as the noon day. The Lord will guide thee continually and satisfy your soul in drought and make fat your bones. You will be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not and they will build the old waste places and you will rise up the foundations of many generations and you will be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of the paths. (Isa. 58:9-14). We should continually meditate upon this whole chapter of Isaiah 58. (Phil. 4:8). By doing this we will take it into the depth of our spirit, and our soul will become trained and equipped to perform these things. This is what God has called us to. This is what God desires of

us. We can sit in the same place for the next twenty years and dwindle to a handful. All the while convincing ourselves that God only has a remnant, a little tiny portion and we are it. But I tell you that God will just move on to do something somewhere else.

Some will see it and go traipsing over to participate in the “*new happening*.” Yet, it will become the same thing that we already have, because of what we take from the place that we are presently seated. That is, a heart that wants to experience all the new, participating in all the gaiety and excitement, but let somebody else do the work.

It is time we forget our own pleasure and it time to *let this mind be* in us which was also in Christ Jesus who knew that it was not robbery to be equal with God but made himself of no reputation. He emptied himself. That is, he left his glory aside. He did not take something to flaunt on earth. He just came as a man in the form of humanity and he became a servant, a bond slave. Not many think it is fun being a servant, they are correct, it is not always fun because guess who gets the least recognition. Folks do not like to say ‘thank you’ to a servant.

This is a good example. You know how the stewardess on airlines used to come around serving snacks and drinks? Every time they served to me, I would say, “*Please*” and “*Thank you*.” It amazed me how often I have heard the hostesses say to me, “*You know, you are the only one who has ever said thank you to me.*” You see, the servant is usually not recognized. They are often taken for granted and not given credit for their service. Another example is at the restaurant. How many times have I heard a waitress say, “*You are a minister? I would not have wanted your table because I have waited on Christians and most do not tip.*” We make it a point to leave a word of encouragement AND a bountiful financial gratuity. After all a laborer is worthy of their hire. (Lk. 10:7). It is the servant that makes things function. Without the cabin crew, we would not get anywhere and without the waiter or waitress we could not truly enjoy our meal out.

IN CLOSING

Servants are necessary and if you want to see the kingdom of God advance, we must become servants.

Get ready to become a servant. Servants are despised, sometimes hated and often taken advantage of, but great is their reward in the heavenly realm. I can hear some saying, “*God did not mean for Christians to be taken advantage of did he? Jesus never let himself be taken advantage of, did He?*” Let me ask, how can anyone take away from you what you have already given? By becoming a servant you are going to have less. This is because what you have is going to be given out and poured out until you divest yourself of having anything. You will no longer live for what you can get, but for others, so they can have. And, out of that, God will bring His glory. He will bring His light. He will bring His recognition and God will bring us to life, so that, we can walk into the kingdom having not tasted of the grave.

Those who practice this fast and serve creation by loosening the bands of wickedness, undoing the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed ones go free by breaking every yoke, will be rewarded. Moreover, as we share our bread with the hungry, and bring home those who are wandering and poor, cover the naked and no longer hide ourselves from our own flesh. We will experience our light breaking out as the dawn. Our healing and health will spring out quickly; and our righteousness will go before us. The glory of the Lord will gather us and then we will call and the Lord will answer. This is the reward of the servant who removes the yoke, the pointing of the finger and speaking vanity or useless empty religion. Those who draw out their soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul will find that their light rises in darkness and their darkness will be as the noonday. The Lord guides the servant and satisfies their soul in dry places. He makes their bones fat until they become like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not. These will build the old ruins and raise up the foundations of many generations. They will be called, “*The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.*” The mouth of the Lord has spoken. (Isa. 58:6-14). The partaking of this fast plays an important part in our belief system and how we follow that one in whom we believe.

More to come . . .

March 2005

As Stacy and I go through this stage of our lives, I sometimes find myself with questions. What do we do now? Should I go back to work? How do I work when my husband needs my help at home? How can we continue to support ourselves when we don't travel and minister? What will we do if Stacy is no longer able to get out the tape of the month or The Planter? Some would say, "*Pamla, where's your faith.*" I know that my faith is in God. I know that he is in charge of my life and considers my welfare important. He has never let me down, nor will he let me down. He supplies all my needs. Yet, just how much effort am I suppose to put forth concerning the affairs of



Pamla's Pause

my life? I see that the prophet Paul continued to work *while* preaching the gospel.

I think that somewhere along the line we all come to a place where things just don't go the way we think they should. Occasionally, at these times, we might find ourselves saying, "what did I do wrong? Is God punishing me? I'm a good Christian, I don't feel like I

deserve to be treated like this. I've tried hard to do things the way you want me to Lord. Why has this happened to me?" Then we wait for God to answer, all the while hoping we will receive a healing, relief from financial problems, given direction and guidance. I, personally, do not wait quietly, I stay just as busy as ever and expect to hear perfectly what He wants to say to me. Now, this is not a lecture on patience, nor sitting still but, instead, I hope it is a word of encouragement

I have found that it is at these times in our lives we are brought to a place of total reliance on his love for us. Once we realize that we can not threaten, bribe, nor make promises to God, we realize we have only one avenue, FAITH. He alone knows the innermost places of our hearts and minds. It is because he knows all about us and what makes us 'tick,' we can trust him to lead us to the clean, clear water and the place of perfect rest. True, we might not get what we think we want, when we think we want, but *it is only when we come to a place of total trust and reliance on him* we are able to comprehend his great love for us.

The next hardest thing to do is to trust him to love others enough to do what's best for them. By this I am speaking of our children, our friends and even our enemies. I always want to step in and do my part by praying, (you know, the kind of prayer that says, "*God do this or do that*"), I also want to aid and abet. Yet, lately my Father spoke into my life saying, "*Daughter, would you not have my child learn the lesson which they need to learn?*" I know at this point that I *must* pray, "*Your will be done.*" True, I don't like to see the one's I love hurt, confused, or without what I consider the "*necessities of life,*" but in all these things, God is righteous in all his ways. It is *because* he loves his children that he desires them to mature and become like he is in the earth. (1Jo. 3:32).

Even when we question and doubt it is important that we not think poorly of ourselves. I have found that our growth in the Spirit mirrors our chronological aging. At each stage of development, I thought I was mature, you know, fully grown, but the next thing I knew, there was more to learn and more to experience. I thank God, we continue to learn and mature all through our lives.

And so it is at this 'stage' of my life, I am learning to trust that which God has put in me. Romans 15:13 says it so well. "*Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.*" This tells me that I have the right to believe that I might *abound* in hope which was given to me by the Holy Spirit! I can actually give myself permission to be filled with joy and peace even in the most difficult of times. Even when the battle rages in my thinking, I know that I am more than an over comer through Christ, who loves me. (Rom 8:37) All of this is a part of the maturing process and I find that am not being processed, I am making progress.

In Christ's Love,

Pamla