

REWARDS OF A DEEPER COMMITMENT

Text: Matthew 13:5,6

Key Word: Commitment

Key Thought: God's Word Offers Us Some Wonderful Rewards the Deeper We Commit Our Lives to Him

*** A few years after we were married we went to Hawaii for our honeymoon. One of the things we did during that time was to go snorkeling. It was like entering a whole new world. On the surface of the water you could hear all the hustle and bustle of life. Tourists were scattered all over the beach area. The weather had an impact upon everything we did.

But when I donned the equipment for snorkeling and took my first dive, it was like I left the world behind. The colors of the variety of fish were simply overwhelming. The warmth and glow of the water was breathtaking.

The noises of life were blocked out with the serene sound of the water trickling past my face. The refreshing temperature of the ocean water caused me to forget about the waves that were overhead. The deeper I dove, the less I was affected by the constant change at the surface of the water. The same is true in our Christian life. ***

The deeper we go in our walk with the Lord, the less the world has as an impact upon us. We are able to block out its effects upon our lives. **The Psalmist among many other inspired writers of the Bible recognized the need to enter into a deeper relationship with God during times of oppression.** He desired to enter back into the presence of God in spite of what was happening around him. It is during times when we are cast **down, disturbed and distressed** that God can indeed lead us into a deeper commitment to Him.

I encourage everyone who have accepted the LORD as their Saviour to make a public statement by Water Baptism that they want to make a deeper commitment to Christ. Any act of obedience is a statement of surrender of our will to God's will. Water baptism is a powerful testimony of our desire to walk according to God's Word.

There Are at Least Three Main Rewards for Those Who Are Willing to Go Deeper with God.

I. Stability (Luke 6:46-49)

II. Growth (Matthew 13:5-6,20-21)

III. Refreshment (John 4:11,13-15,28,39-42)

I. Stability (Luke 6:46-49)

This portion of Scripture makes it very clear that those who hear and obey the Word of the Lord will have a life that stands against the winds and the waves that batter us from time to time. Just like the changes that take place in our weather, so do we experience situations that come upon us without much warning. Some of these can be quite destructive like the many recent flood all over the world. Many countries have also had to recover from many tornados, hurricanes and cyclones.

Those who live a life of obedience to God will survive the destructive powers of life that are continuing to sweep over our land.

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?

47. I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice.

48. He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and. laid the foundation on rock. When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.

49. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.”

Luke 6:46-49

Obedience is often a word that is mocked in our “anything goes” society. **Many believe that rules and regulations cause unnecessary hindrances to freedom.** Yet a society without these rules for life, always becomes a place filled with sorrow and needless suffering.

An obedient life leads to a stable life. It doesn’t change even though a storm may be surrounding you.

I. Stability (Luke 6:46-49) (Contd.)

3928 General's Wish was Command

*** During the war between the States, General Lee one day sent word to Stonewall Jackson that the next time he rode in the direction of headquarters the Commander in Chief would be glad to see him on a matter of no great importance. General Jackson received the message and immediately prepared to leave the next morning.

Rising very early, he rode the eight miles to Lee's headquarters against a storm of wind and snow, and arrived just as Lee was finishing his breakfast. Much surprised, Lee inquired why Jackson had come through such a storm.

General Jackson replied: "*But you said that you wished to see me. General Lee's slightest wish is a supreme command to me.*" ***

Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations
p. 910

II. Growth (Matthew 13:5-6,20-21)

Jesus taught the people another important truth about a Deeper Commitment as He got into a boat and taught the people from the seashore. **Here was contrast between the shallow living of some and the fruitful living of others.** This Parable of the Sower had a powerful truth imbedded into it. Those who live a deep life in God will find growth in their spiritual life.

The part that caught my attention was when Jesus spoke about the rocky places where some of the seed had fallen. This was not speaking of ground that was covered with stones. Instead, **Jesus was referring to the soil that looked good from the surface yet within a few inches you could find a layer of limestone.** Palestine was famous for this kind of soil. As the seed was sown, it would quickly germinate due to the warmth within the soil. When the sun came out, it quickly evaporated any moisture left in the soil. The roots would be abandoned in their search for nourishment. **The immature plant would quickly wither with the heat of the sun.**

God wants us to live a life of Deeper Commitment so that we can survive when the heat gets turned up. Quick growth often doesn't create the root structure necessary for long term growth. There is no doubt in the Bible that God wants us to live a consistent Christian life. If we have a quality soil in a very shallow area, we will stunt the growth of any plant or shrub.

II. Growth (Matthew 13:5-6,20-21) (Contd.)

4639 Tree's Strengthened Roots

*** Leslie Stokes, an English Baptist minister, once told the following **parable**:

Once upon a time there was a tree. It was a lovely looking tree, shapely, strong and stately. But appearances are not always to be trusted, and they were not in this case. For the tree knew inwardly that its massive strength was beginning to wane.

When the wind was strong, it had felt itself shaking ominously, and heard suspicious creaks. So, wisely, it took itself in hand. With much effort it grew another branch or two, and then looked stronger and safer than ever. But when the next gale blew, there was a terrific snapping of roots and, but for the support of a friendly neighbor tree, it would have been flat on the ground.

When the tree had recovered from the initial shock, it looked at its neighbor curiously. "Tell me," it asked, "how is it that you have not only stood your ground, but are even able to help me, too?"

"Oh." replied the neighbor. "That's easy. When you were growing new branches, I was strengthening my roots."

Prairie Overcomer
"Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations"
p. 1063

III. Refreshment (John 4:11,13-15,28,39-42)

The final reward of a Deeper Commitment with God is illustrated through the well at Sychar. Here Jesus met a woman who had lived a very shallow life. She had entered into six relationships but found that her life was still void of meaning and direction. The sun was at its peak beating down upon Jesus and this woman who had come to the well.

Jesus entered into a conversation with the woman in order to reveal to her that she had a great need to enter into a deep commitment with God and His Word. She had continually drunk from the **well of human resources** and Jesus pointed out that she could drink from a **well of spiritual life** that would satisfy her needs forever. She asked a question that many people have wondered over the years.

III. Refreshment (John 4:11,13-15,28,39-42) (Contd.)

“ . . . you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?”

John 4:11

Jesus didn't want to get into an argument about how great He was in reference with the Patriarchs of the past. He simply wanted to keep to the facts. By doing so He could key into the inner need of this woman.

*“Jesus answered, ‘Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,
14. But whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*

John 4:13,14

Her response from this point on shows that Jesus was able to get to her heart although she didn't quite understand the process to gaining spiritual life. There was no doubt that He had something that brought refreshment to her.

“Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.”

John 4:15

Jesus was able to drive the truth home that she needed to obey the Word of God in order to find the Refreshment that heaven brings. She truly came to the realization that she had to go deeper in her commitments in order to find the rewards that God gives. The Bible says that she left her water jar at the well (John 4:28) and went into the city and declared to the Samaritans her testimony in such a way that many believed in Jesus (John 4:39-42).

I admire each and everyone who have committed their lives to God in spite of the problems surrounding them. I encourage you to be Baptized in Water. There are forms on the back table that I would ask you to fill out and give to me. I will schedule a Water Baptism as soon as it fits for most of you. If you are listening on Live Stream and have never been Baptized please call me. We have a back yard pool just waiting for you hopefully on a Saturday afternoon.

I encourage you to be not just a reader of God's Word but be a doer so you will experience many blessing including the three I've preached on today.

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II. Growth (Matthew 13:5-6,20-21)
III. Refreshment (John 4:11,13-15,28,39-42) Å

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Date: July 11/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song - We Are Hungry (Lord I Want more of You) - D

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John 4:15