

Lesson #5

God's Plan After Salvation



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Grace Evangelistic Ministries, Inc.
Nashville, Tennessee, U.S.A.

Preparation for study

The only thing that prevents the Holy Spirit from teaching us is our personal sin(s). King David of the Old Testament clearly put it this way:

If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear; (Psalms 66:18).

Therefore, if the Lord cannot hear a believer's prayer due to unconfessed sin in his soul, it follows doctrinally that the Holy Spirit will not teach the individual.

Here is the solution:

If we confess [acknowledge] our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [sins, known or forgotten] (1 John 1:9).

At this point, you may want to pause and acknowledge directly to God any sin that may hinder you from being fully blessed through the Word of God.

The Importance of The Word of God - Continued from Lesson #4

The plan of God the Father for His unique Son was that He would function like a true human being and experience hunger and fatigue (Mark 4:37-41), pain (Matthew 27:46) and grief (Luke 19:41). Jesus was fully God and was also fully human. As a human, He needed Bible doctrine in His soul (just as we do) to be able to glorify God and fulfill God's will for His life -- which He did.

The apostle Paul, after being called by the Lord to serve Him, declared his innermost desire:

That I [Paul] may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings ... (Philippians 3:10).

Undoubtedly, Paul's ultimate objective was to know God. Why? The answer is very simple. Knowledge and application must precede production.

As discussed previously, this concept is true in every area of life. For example, would a new medical student be allowed to operate on someone's brain? Of course not! Likewise, God would not use a baby believer who knows very little about God's righteousness, grace, love and plan for his life after salvation for an advanced assignment.

This does not mean that newborn babies (i.e., new converts) are exempted from telling other believers simply how they have been born into the family of God through "faith alone in Christ alone."

Therefore, for believers to serve, enjoy, and have rapport with God, they must first KNOW WHO HE IS. They must know how He operates and what His principles are. The Psalmist writes:

I shall give thanks to You with uprightness of heart, When I learn Your righteous judgments (Psalm 119:7).

The thinking that believers need to do "great things for God" is humanistic; in fact, new believers do not really know Him. At this point, the following seven principles have emerged:

Principle 1: Learning Bible doctrine, God's Word, is equivalent to learning about God.

Principle 2: God can never be separated from His Word. The Bible declares:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1).

Principle 3: When a believer habitually refuses to attend a church where accurate Bible doctrine is communicated (or to expose himself to sound teaching of the Word of God through literature, mp3's, or DVD's, etc.) then the believer is actually rejecting God.

In other words, a believer who is indifferent to God's Word is temporarily separated from God. This believer is not separated in the sense that he will go to the Lake of Fire, but he has distanced himself from having a relationship with God.

Principle 4: A believer must have a reservoir of Bible doctrine in his soul to have the following. It will be a good quiz to ask yourself if you have these.

true love for God

relaxed mental attitude (rest)

tranquility of soul (peace)

contentment

good rapport with your Heavenly Father

Principle 5: *There is no communication from God apart from His Word* (Hebrews 1:1; Revelation 22:18-20).

Therefore, the only interaction a believer has with God is through God's Word in his soul. Since the completion of the written Bible around AD 96, God has **not spoken audibly** to any man.

To give evidence to the finished work of the Bible, the apostle John warned that there would be serious consequences for those who try to add to it (Revelation 22:18). This warning is directed to believers who after the completion of the Bible continue to say, "Thus says the Lord."

Principle 6: The more Bible truth a believer learns and stores in his soul, the more he comes to know God and His plan for his life after salvation.

Principle 7: There are many benefits for the believer who has learned and is continuing to learn sound Bible principles, as reflected in the Word of God:

- The more a believer understands the amazing grace of God toward him -- an undeserving sinner -- the more personal love he has toward God (1 Peter 1:8).
- As an ambassador of Christ, the believer is able to serve on earth as a true representative of the kingdom of Heaven (2 Corinthians 5:20, 1 Peter 2:9).
- The Word of God helps the believer to know how to pray and what to pray for. Therefore, he can pray in accordance with the will of God (James 4:1-3).

The apostle John wrote:

This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him (1 John 5:14-15).

- The believer is able to have peace about the future. He realizes through Bible doctrine that his future lies in God's care.
- The level of fellowship a believer has with other people depends on his fellowship with God. When his deepest needs are being met in God, he is able to have healthy relationships with other people.
- The believer has a basis for a standard of right and wrong.
- The believer has a resource (a reservoir of Bible knowledge in his soul) for withstanding spiritual pressure and passing various spiritual tests to the glory of God.
- The believer keeps on experiencing peace and joy. He finds life meaningful and enjoyable when his soul is under the control of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

Jeremiah joyfully wrote:

Your words [Bible doctrine] were found and I ate [believed] them, and Your words became for me a joy and the delight of my heart (Jeremiah 15:16a).

Ironically, many believers are not happy today. Their unhappiness can only be explained by the fact that they have little or no Bible doctrine in their souls. Every believer should know that true happiness is not found in success, sex, drugs, abundance of wealth, friendship, marriage, or children, and cannot and will not be found in romance.

- Above all, the believer becomes the object of God's blessings. Luke puts it this way:

“Blessed are those who hear [learn] the word of God and observe [apply] it” (Luke 11:28).

Therefore, before I close this section of this exposition of the Word of God, it is very important to consider the consequences of a failure to pursue sound Bible teaching after salvation.

Spiritual Baby -- Malnutrition

After salvation, God's plan and purpose for the believer are centered in the spiritual growth of the believer. For this reason the apostle Peter wrote:

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18a).

The Scripture provides instruction, and warnings for the new believer:

- God's provision for the initial stage of the newborn's spiritual adjustment to His plan is milk [basic doctrine] (1 Peter 2:2).
- Failure to consistently drink this milk [basic Bible doctrine] and eventually progress [mature] to solid food results in malnutrition -- literally to become a carnal believer (1 Corinthians 3:1-3).
- Prolonged spiritual malnutrition results in the believer divorcing himself from the plan of God and from spiritual reality altogether (1 Samuel 15; 18:1-11; 23; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5).
- A baby believer who is not drinking pure milk [sound doctrine] has a better chance of being exposed to demonic doctrine (1 Timothy 4:1).
- A believer who is not responding to God's call for spiritual growth has the tendency to become the enemy of the Cross of Christ (Philippians 3:18). This is a sobering fact to consider.

In our next lesson, #6, we shall begin “Spiritual Detachment from the World.” Until then may the Lord bless you and keep you.

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