

For the Right Reasons

For nearly eight years, we have shared the weekly essays, well most of them, as they usually seem to be timely in their content. I have on occasion, failed to share them if the content was one that appeared to focus more on the attributes of a man than that of God. I am not big on the structure of an organized church as I have seen what happens when people get titles and growth goes to their heads. It is sad that human pride always gets in the way. This is the last Sabbath before we depart for the Feast of Tabernacles and the also the one before the Day of Atonement. I find it timely the essay was again focused on our relationship with God.

John 6:26-27- “Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly I say to you, you do not seek Me because you saw the miracles, but because you ate the bread and were satisfied. Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give to you; for Him has God the Father sealed.”

Even back then, the people were not there for God. They were there for themselves. Look at the churches today. Granted there are some who truly love God and Jesus Christ wholeheartedly (albeit they worship Them in their own way)

but they do love Them. That “but” gets them into the Second Resurrection. Even sadder are the pastors who knowingly continue in wrong doctrine for the sake of filling the pews on Sunday morning. They were there for the wrong reasons.

Galatians 1:8-9- “But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!”

I am always amazed at how can anyone miss these two scriptures?!

Anyway, it is not about fingerpointing at anyone as God has had a perfect bad example in me for decades. My transition from the “Sunday Church” to Sabbath keeping began when Andrea convinced me to attend Bible Study at our former location. That was back in 2011. I would drive separately so I could purposely be late and miss as much as I could. If you think *we* have lengthy studies, you have not experienced a drawn-out sermon until you have read several hundred scriptures, that is right, I said hundred.

I would occasionally underline or highlight a particular or interesting verse in my Bible that really jumped out at me. Then I began to underline and highlight just

about everything and anything we read. At first, it was to stay awake more or less. Then it became activity to occupy my brain to get through the monotony of twenty pages lesson, praying for it to end. My Bible looked like a coloring book. But knowing God all my life, and Him knowing me before I was born, He knew what He was doing. As stubborn as I was, and patient as He is, I was bound to learn something.

Philippians 3:7-10- “Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ And may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law, but that *righteousness* which *is* by *the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith; That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;”

It did not take too long before things started to make sense. What I was reading I was learning. I was unlearning all I had learned before in Sunday churches. The traditions were being erased and replaced with what God’s Word actually said.

Like everyone else, I never read it for myself. I was learning the truth, God's truth and for the right reasons.

Now, instead of underlining and highlights, I write God's Word in my heart. The closer I get to Him, the more He lets me know and remember His Word. His scriptures come to life when I need them.

Luke 12:11-12- "But when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how or what you should reply in defense, or what you should say; For the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that same hour what needs to be said."

In looking at the modern of definition of *atonement*, it means to make amends or reparations for a wrong or damages. This was in both Merriam-Webster and Cambridge Dictionaries. The definition of being in 'unity with' or "at one with" is obsolete. Imagine that. It seems the world has forgotten God at every opportunity anyway.

Psalms 10:4- "Through the pride of his countenance the wicked will not seek God; in all his thoughts there is no place for God." This is no surprise. They do not even seek Him in churches!

We remember God by humbling ourselves and acknowledging our total dependence upon His sovereignty by fasting. By denying ourselves food, we recognize we cannot physically survive without His Divine blessing of nourishment. Our own foolish pride and spiritual blindness can cause us to starve and stunt our spiritual growth as well. This can be more devastating to us eternally.

Philippians 3:15-19- “So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Brethren, be imitators together of me, and bear in mind those who walk in this way, as you have us *for* an example. (For many walk *contrary*; I have often told you *of* them, and I tell *you* now *with* weeping, *they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ; Whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame; *for* they mind earthly things.)”

We can feel the hunger pangs a few hours before the end of the Day of Atonement and it has only been one day. Fasting seems to get easier every year. Jesus fasted for forty days and forty nights. We can all agree on that.

Amos 3:3- “Can two walk together unless they be agreed?”

We can agree on many things, but like the essay mentioned, it goes beyond an intellectual agreement. Much like when we agree on scripture. We can agree on a “great Berean” or “sermon” but it goes beyond that to a spiritual level.

Philippians 2:2- “Fulfill my joy, that you be of the *same mind*, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing.”

1 Peter 3:8- “Now the goal *is that* all of you be of *one mind*, sympathizing, loving the brethren, compassionate and friendly;”

We must walk together and be of one mind. It must go beyond the doors of our sanctuary and the front doors of our homes. We are Christ’s Ambassador’s here on Earth. Do people outside this group know that? Our we bearing the fruits of the Spirit?

We can never fall into a place of complacency believing we are righteous without being humble and seeking God.

Psalms 69:32- “The humble shall see and be glad; and your heart shall live, you who seek God,”

Psalm 14:2- “The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek *after* God.”

Habakkuk 2:4- “Behold, his soul is puffed up, *and* is not upright; but the just shall live by his faith.”

Being puffed up and self-righteous did not work out too well for Job. It will not work out well for anyone else either.

Job 38:1-4- “Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, “Who *is* this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Now gird up your loins like a man; for I will demand of you, and you shall answer Me. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare it, if you have understanding!”

I would not want to be on the receiving end of those questions.

One future aspect that occurs on the Day of Atonement is that Satan gets locked up for 1000 years during Christ’s Millennial Reign. No longer will he be able to tempt mankind, at least for a while.

Revelation 20:1-3- “Then I saw an angel descending from heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand. And he took hold of the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him *for* a thousand years. Then he cast him into the abyss, and locked him *up*, and sealed *the* *abyss* over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were fulfilled; and after that it is ordained that he be loosed *for* a short time.”

We have this to look forward to at the First Resurrection. It will be the best episode of Cops yet!

On the Day of Atonement, we rejoice in being at ***one*** with God. According to scripture, this is a place we are already residing through Christ Jesus.

John 10:30- “I and the Father are one.”

John 10:38- “But if I do, even if you do not believe Me, believe the works; so that you may perceive and may believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”

To this end, we are all one in Him. We are heirs according to His promise. We are members of the family of God.

Galatians 3:28-29- “There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.”

John 17:20-23- “I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word; That they all may be one, even as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me. And I have given them the glory that You gave to Me, in order that they may be one, in the same way that We are one: I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.”

This one special Holy Day set aside we intentionally deny ourselves sustenance and acknowledge our total dependence on God and His sovereignty.

Mark 12:30- “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment.”

One mind, one heart, one body, one family. We are not here to get something but to give God all our love He deserves. What better way to demonstrate the greatest commandment all for the right reasons. Amen.

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