Spirit Food

May 2015

Once you are presented with what the Word of God has to say about an issue, you are responsible for receiving His love, grace, & favor; and the gift of His righteousness. Remember, you are greatly blessed, highly favored, and deeply loved by your Heavenly Father.

This month let’s focus on Jesus as our Good Shepherd:

John 10:7 -Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

When Jesus said that He is the “door of the sheep”. What did He mean? Well, a sheepfold (a location in the field where the shepherd provided an area for the gathering of the sheep enabling him to get some rest) during Jesus’ time had no door which could be opened and closed. The door of the sheepfold was just an opening. Many of the sheepfolds were merely constructed of large rocks or boulders, piled up just high enough to keep the wolves and other prey out. In this kind of sheepfold, after the sheep had entered it, the shepherd would sleep at the entrance. The shepherd became, effectively, the “door” of the sheepfold.

The sheep were trained and followed the voice of the shepherd. They understood that as long as they stayed with their shepherd, that they would be safe and protected; so the sheep followed his voice. Occasionally, when flocks met and mingled; at the end of the day, when their shepherd chose to depart, he simply called for his sheep to follow, and his sheep would separate themselves from the other herd; following the sound of his voice, his sheep would follow.

Throughout the Bible, Jesus is referred to as the good shepherd.

John 10:11 - I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Psalms 23:1 - The LORD [is] my shepherd; I shall not want (lack).

John 10:14 – I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

1 Peter 2:25 – For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop (overseer) of our souls.

When we look into this passage (1 Peter 2), we can come to better understand how Jesus referred to mankind as sheep, and the attempt of this scripture to get mankind to better understand that: as a shepherd of that time would lay down his life to protect and save his sheep from harm, so too did Jesus lay down his life to redeem mankind from all his sin (past, present and future). Jesus, who did no sin, accepted all of mankind’s sin, sickness, and poverty, by faith, enabling mankind (you and me) to simply accept what he did on the cross (by faith = right believing) for us, as believers, to be redeemed from sin, sickness, and poverty.

Hebrews 13:20-21 - Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

When we look at this passage in Hebrews 13, it refers to the everlasting covenant between Jesus and His Father (God). Understand that the old covenant written in stone (the Ten Commandments), was found to be lacking in the respect that it depended upon mankind to do his part in keeping these commandments. The law in and of itself was and remains perfect, however, the penalty for breaking the law was death. The law was intended to show mankind that they needed a savior; to put an end to the thinking that mankind could rule and live without God.

Mankind could not fulfill the law because our blood (as human beings) has been tainted by sin because Adam committed high treason in the garden of Eden by turning over his authority to satan (in the form of a talking snake) when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Therefore, it took a man, without tainted blood, to be born of a woman on this earth to fulfill the letter of the law given to Moses. Then become the Lamb of God to receive all of mankind’s sin,sickness and poverty onto Himself (by faith), and receive the punishment, the full wrath of God, for mankind’s sin. This man’s name was Jesus, our Christ (Redeemer)!

The new covenant is between Jesus and Almighty God. Because Jesus was sacrificial lamb for all of mankind, the thing mankind is responsible for is receiving His love, by accepting Jesus and what He did for mankind on the cross.

After Jesus arose from the dead (defeating death), he appeared to His disciples in the upper room and instructed them to wait until He returned to His Father and sent the Holy Spirit (Comforter), to dwell within them. Today, when a human being makes the decision to accept Jesus as LORD of their life, the same Holy Spirit comes to dwell inside the believer (the believers spirit is re-born). Remember, you are a spirit being, you have soul, and you live in a body (formed out of the dust of the ground). The Holy Spirit’s position/job is to lead, guide, and instruct the believer in all truth, and guide the footsteps of the believer into the right path in this life. Following the leading of the Holy Spirit will lead the believer to their healthy and wealthy place on this earth.

In 1 Peter 5:4, Jesus is referred to as the Chief Shepherd, because all of the ministers’ of the Gospel (good news) are under His jurisdiction here on this earth. Wow, that’s a powerful statement. First of all, the term or word Gospel is typically cataloged into a category in peoples’ mind such as a music category or something … and it is so much more than that.

Gospel is the account describing the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The most widely known examples are the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; but truly, it goes much deeper than that. Gospel means Good News, and refers to the fact that God sent his son Jesus to redeem mankind.

This redemption was/is far more than to just keep mankind from being condemned to hell for eternity. Remember, your spirit will live forever (as you’re a spirit being), it is your choice where you end up for all eternity.

The gospel is not just for the sinner. The gospel is for the believer also. The gospel is your health. The gospel is your wealth. The gospel is your safety. The gospel is your preservation. The gospel is your family’s protection. It’s the success of your marriage. The gospel is the power of God unto your salvation. And the word salvation entails: all covering, every area of, all encompassing, of your issues in life … and everybody has issues. It saves you from self, it saves you from sickness, it saves you from addiction, it saves you from poverty.

Faith – Right Believing: makes you conscience of God. Your conscience (when your focus isn’t on Jesus and following what the Holy Spirit is leading you to do), makes you aware of self and the sin that’s within you.

When God made Adam and Eve, they were innocent, they had no conscious knowledge of good and evil. But when they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, their consciousness came alive.

God’s desire was for them to have a Father/Son/Daughter relationship with Him. He didn’t desire them to depend on their own knowledge of good and evil. God desired their eyes to be opened by partaking of the tree of life!

A conscience without the Holy Spirit is not always a good thing, as it subject to the environment of life one finds themselves in. When a person is not focused on Jesus, what He did at the cross, and what being redeemed means, they are subject to making some bad decisions.