

The Realm of Certainty

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When you pray, do you believe that what you are asking for is something that might happen, or do you believe that it is certain? Having spent a number of years in evangelism, pastoring, and personal counseling, I have found that most of us spend more time in the dimension of possibility than in the dimension of certainty. Occasionally, we make forays into certainty; by and large we pretty much try to have enough faith so that something might possibly happen.

Most of us are introduced to faith by simply responding to a feeling within that a good thing may come to pass. We ask the Lord for it, and it happens. But we also have many misses. That is a beginning, but faith should not stop at that level. It should mature to the point where we know in our spirit what God is going to do. Then, in spite of attacking doubts, we lay hold of the certain, knowing that it will come to pass. Real faith is always born in the midst of attacks of doubt, tempting us to ignore what we know deep within to be certain. But if a thing is certain, what need is there for faith?

Faith permits us to participate in that which God has already brought to pass in Himself. Every time we believe, we open up a passage between the dimensions of time and eternity so that what already exists in the eternal dimension rushes into manifestation in our world of time-space. Faith is a stepping-down of spirit into experience. It opens the way for the realm of certainty to invade the realm of uncertainty.

Eternal Life is Now

I hope to jar you away from the notion that eternity is the infinite extension of time. When we understand eternity that way, we are in effect measuring God by the standard of time. That is impossible. We must understand time in the light of eternity. Eternity is the spirit

dimension in which all things are exactly as they appear, without contradiction.

When God created time and space, Satan could invade that, for God always intended that time be that realm wherein man is tested as to whether or not he will trust what is rather than what appears. Satan brought into time the element of deception, severely tempting man to believe in what appears - what appeals to the physical senses- rather than seeing through to the eternal, unchanging God in whom the whole human race lives, moves and has its being. (Acts 17:28).

A great many believers are waiting until they die to enjoy eternity, but eternity is now. It waits to invade our life in time and space. Instead of focusing on a prophetic day in the future when eternity shall "begin," God wants to open up for us a place in the veil between eternity and time so that He can swallow up the limitations of time in our present lives.

Many of us have been struggling to become something for God. Our real need is not to become something, it is to realize who we already are. The Scripture says, "*As He is, so are we in this world.*" (1 Jn. 4:17). Our need is to see what He already is in us.

One day, God split the veil between eternity and time and "*sent forth His Son born of a woman.*" (Gal. 4:4). That which is eternal truth broke into our time-space dimension, and in that one human life the world saw what was true. Everywhere He was heard, His words of Spirit and life extended the reality of Himself into the human dimension. Everyone He encountered was touched by the truth of eternity. His words brought forgiveness, healing, deliverance and hope to all who would receive them. He brought these glorious truths out of eternity in His own person, invading our time-space world to displace the deception of appearances by the reality of spirit.

Paul tell us that in the one solitary life of Jesus of Nazareth dwelt all the fullness of deity. But he said something more: "*...and in Him you have been made complete.*" (Col. 2:9-10). Not will be, but have been. If you have been born again, you have come into union with Him, and He is the fullness, completeness and wholeness of deity in you at this very minute.

Some years ago, I experienced a spiritual crisis that brought me to the very edge of mental and emotional disintegration. I had barely recovered when a further emotional blow left me reeling. My days and nights became a continual experience of pain and unfulfilled desire. I felt myself being attacked by hell itself and could hardly catch a breath.

Seeing Beyond Experience

One evening, I was taking a walk down a road near our home, baring my anguish before God. I asked Him to do a particular thing for me that I felt would cause the pain to end. As I talked with Him, an answer came strong and clear. It had that awesome ring of certainty, yet it was mingled with a gentleness that made me know that He understood. It was in the form of a scripture: "*Behold, I make all things new.*"

I saw clearly that I was a new creation in Christ. All old things had passed away. (II Cor. 5:17). I looked just the same in this time-space world, and I had no ability to change the traumatic circumstances I was in, but I took God at His word. I believed I had been made wholly new in the realm of eternity - the dimension of spirit - and as I believed, I found my feet on the solid rock of all that is certain in God.

The years since have proved Him true. He was already true, and I was already new in Him. I merely needed to see what He had done and what He now is in me.

We desperately try to discover reality by improving our experiences. We think that if we can have a new experience, all will be well, but we are chasing illusions. Reality is experiencing Christ as our life in the midst of all of life's situations. It is born of an experience of union with Christ and does not consist of external experiences.

Before you were born again, you tried to find reality by improving your life and your experiences. But as long as you held to that philosophy, your experience led you anywhere but to the reality which is Christ. It wasn't until you heard the glorious Good News of Christ that the blindness was stripped away, and you came to the end of seeking experiences, that you found what you were looking for. You saw Him as the truth.

It is no different now that you are born again. Living the Christian life isn't accumulating new experiences or escaping our present situations. It is seeing Him as our reality.

When Adam and Eve sinned, plunging the whole race into spiritual death, all that they knew was separation from God. From their perspective, love had become wrath; in their experience, all they knew was alienation. They felt alone in the universe, cut off from God. That is the effect of blindness - we feel alone in the darkness.

But in Acts 17:27-28, Paul says that even the heathen are not far off from God, but have their being in Him. So God never ceased to hold men in His heart. From His perspective, they never went away. No sooner had they sinned than He sacrificed the life of an animal to cover their nakedness. They were prodigal, but they were still His offspring. The skins were testimony to His undying love for them.

We don't have to try to get to God; He has reached out to us. He doesn't ask us to improve our lives so that we can get to Him. No, He gives Himself to us in Christ. He plunges Himself into our experiences to bear them all - to drink the last dregs of them until His truth swallows up our delusions and we know that He is one with us in all of life's situations.

When Christ died, the veil of the temple was rent in two, and the way into the Holy of holies was opened. A veil signifies spiritual blindness. We cannot see reality until it is torn away. But in Christ the veil has been torn and man can see into the eternal dimension. He can see reality because the One who is reality indwells him. Eternal life is a Person, and because we are joined as one with Him, eternity is now our reality.

Is your broken marriage reality? Is the cesspool of corruption that you work in every day reality? Are your jangled nerves reality? Is your overwhelming feeling of despair and hopelessness reality? No! Life's circumstances are only the way things appear. Reality isn't what we see in the physical dimension. Christ is reality. He works "*all things after the counsel of His own will.*" (Eph. 1:11). Every circumstance of life is something He means for our good, once we see that we are living in the realm of eternity because we are united as one with Him.

Truth About Man's Will.

I used to think that there were things God desired to do in the believer's life but that He could only do them if we permitted Him to. I felt that God would settle for less than what He would really like to do in most of our lives because we had limited Him in some way. I thought of man's will as something that hinders the will of God most of the time, rather than bringing it to pass.

Through Scripture and life's lessons I began to see that because we are in union with God, He works in us "*both to will and to do of His good pleasure.*" (Phil. 2:13). Because we are one, our will is His will. Christ is not in us merely helping us to live the Christian life. He is our life. Though it is we who are living, He is living as us. Thus "*as He is, so are we....*" (I Jn. 4:17). It is two functioning as one. He is not me, and I am not He; but He lives as me, and I live as He.

This gives us incredible certainty in our lives. We may not always feel certain - feelings have to do with the soul, not the spirit; it is our spirit that is joined to Christ as one. (I Cor. 6:17). We have to discern between soul and spirit - between the fleeting thoughts of reason, which are soulish, and the deep intents of the heart. The old stony heart has been removed, and we have a new, tender heart in which God's Spirit resides. So, our true inner desire - our real will - is actually the desire and will of God.

Where does our obedience come in? The new covenant obedience is "the obedience of faith." We do not have to try to do certain things. Rather, we participate in what is already created in the heart of God and made real to us through the indwelling Christ. As we believe, so we do. We become active participants in the actions of God.

We read in James that we must be "*doers of the word.*" (James 1:22). A doer of the Word is like the rider of a horse. He doesn't carry the horse; the horse must carry him. The strength is the horse's strength; the energy expended is the horse's energy. The rider believes in the horse and commits himself to it. The two function as one - duality in union. James' injunction does not call on us to create acts of obedience, but to flow with the action of the eternal Word. He

is the doer through us. We were justified by trusting in His finished work, and we live righteously by trusting in His life within us.

Heaven on Earth

At the core of most believers' experience is the assurance that Jesus is their personal Savior and that they are going to heaven instead of to hell. Though they may be taught that there is certainly more to the Christian life than that, nevertheless, they constantly return to that reassuring reference point. And when they pursue someone for the kingdom of God, they ask: "Are you sure you are going to heaven when you die?"

All of this is fine, but the fact is that we labor under the assumption that God is primarily interested in saving us from one cosmic location and getting us to another. True, we say that the most important thing about heaven is that we will be with the Lord; and the terrible thing about hell is that we will be separated from Him. But our Lord taught us to pray, "*Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" (Matt. 6:10). Jesus evidently had a different perspective on the kingdom than many do.

The Father's kingdom is a heavenly kingdom, and in that kingdom God's will is carried out perfectly. We are to pray that this perfection of the kingdom be manifested on earth. Jesus' focus was not on escaping to another location, but on living out the Father's will right here, and that is to be our focus.

The history of the human race since the Fall is simply a lie lived out. It is the play acted out by fools who think that they are living in reality. They are quite ignorant of true reality, assuming that the appearances of this material dimension can be depended on. In their eyes, heaven is the place where a disinterested, self-centered deity lives; it has nothing to do with our realm.

But Jesus revealed that the kingdom of God has everything to do with our world. God's real concern isn't with getting us to heaven, but with bringing the transcendent realities of the heavenly realm down to earth. The reality is that "*the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,*" (Ps. 24:1), as the psalmist declared. Indeed, the name of God is already "*excellent in all the earth.*" (Ps. 8:1).

Heaven is not so much a place to go to as it is a dimension to see and experience. That is why Jesus said we must be born again in order to "see" the kingdom of God. (Jn. 3: 3). When we penetrate heaven by spiritual sight, through faith, the kingdom of heaven is manifest on earth.

We Are the Will of God

If we are Christs, we are the will of God in action as we function from the reality of the spiritual dimension. Life is no longer possibilities; it is certainty. We are here to know the will of God and to call it into being.

What Christ speaks within, in the new heart, we speak out. Not from the level of soulish thoughts, but from the intents of our heart. The urges of the Spirit in union with our spirit are the commandments of Christ. They are our marching orders. By faith, we see them as already accomplished, and declare them as "done."

No wonder Elijah could hold back the rain and call fire down upon the sacrifice. He knew union with God, and he lived in the reality of that union. He didn't speak his own thoughts, but the mind of God within. And because God had said it - because it was already a fact in the spiritual dimension - his words brought the desires of his heart into being.

Abundant life is living now in the eternal dimension. It is looking beyond appearances to the eternal realities of the kingdom of God. It is calling the things that are not as though they already were, knowing that spirit is the reality. Begin enjoying eternal life today!

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