

Home

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- I remember when I was younger how we would go to grandma and grandpa's house in Logan, WV once a month or so
 - We lived 3 hours away, so we couldn't get in as much as I know my parents wanted to, and how much we wanted to as kids
 - To this day, the thoughts of that house gives me a sense of belonging
 - As if my life were on a grid with x, y, z axes, that house would be point (0, 0, 0)
 - But the ironic thing is it's not necessarily that house that provides the sense of belonging – it's the memories, it's the people that were there
 - That house is just a physical space, there's nothing special about it
 - But the people there – my grandparents and my cousins would come over and we'd all be there together so often and we had so much fun
 - That was home for me – to this day, if you ask me where my earthly home is or where my 'happy place' is, that's where I go
 - And I'm sure most everyone can tell a similar story based on events in their life
- There are certain physical settings that can give us that sense of a home – that sense of 'this is where I belong'
- 1 Peter 2:11 equates us as aliens and strangers in the world
- 2 Corinthians 4:18 – *"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."*
- Matthew 6:21 – *"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*
- I've only been back to Logan a handful of times since both my grandparents passed
 - It just doesn't have the same feel, because again – my sense of home was not necessarily with the physical location which was their house which is where all of us gathered and created some of the best memories that I will ever have
 - My sense of home was with the people that made that house feel like it's where I belonged
- But as good as those times were, that is nothing compared to what is unseen – the rest that the faithful Christian has been promised and so eagerly awaits
 - That is where my treasure is
- As Christians, we need to turn our eyes to what is unseen, because whatever the best is that this world has to offer you – heaven is going to be so much greater
- 2 Kings 4:8-11
 - The role that women play in this lifetime is irreplaceable
 - A wise man put it to me this way: women see life through a different lens
 - And men need that perspective sometimes – vice versa, women need the men's perspective also – God created us both for a reason – each of us have our strengths and weaknesses that the other complements
 - And to say that one can do without the other – God would disagree (Genesis 2:18)

- Proverbs 31:10 – “A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.”
- She is kind, she is compassionate, she does not cause drama, she is hospitable, she works for the family (Proverbs 31)
- And this Shunammite woman seemed to fit that description – at least what we know of her from this story
- This woman **urged** Elisha to stay for a meal – in other words, I get the sense that she was not going to take no for an answer
 - Compare that to us today
 - We say “we’re private people, the culture is just different”
 - I’m not going to argue that the culture is not different, but hospitality is still a quality of a good faithful Christian
 - It’s a qualification to be an elder of the church (Titus 1:8)
 - And God isn’t going to accept it if we are anything different
 - We can say all we want that our culture is different and we are private, but God doesn’t care about man’s culture (Matthew 15:8-9)
 - He calls us to be different than man’s culture (1 Peter 4:4)
 - And this Shunammite woman was obviously different
 - I’ve done random things from time to time for my elderly widowed neighbor and every time, she offers me something to eat and her tone is “you will not turn this down” – and of course, I never do
 - So I know Elisha’s position here – as many of you likely do as well
- But she doesn’t stop there
- She says to her husband “this is a man of God, let’s not stop at just providing him a meal, let’s give him a room to stay in when he is in this area”
- And so she does
 - Elisha’s reputation preceded him
 - And as a result, this woman shows great hospitality to him
 - You wonder how often maybe he stayed there as he was passing through the area, how close of a relation he may have had with this man and wife, as well as the son that she would later have
 - Ephesians 5:22-23 – “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.”
 - Yes, wives are to be submissive to their husbands – but the husband is to be the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church
 - The Bible describes what Christ did for the church – and the husband is to do the same for the wife
 - If your wife isn’t being submissive, then perhaps you aren’t being a man of God as Elisha was
 - Now if you are being a man of God, and your wife is still not submissive, that’s a different story – perhaps this woman does not have the traits that Proverbs 31 describes

- Women – if your husband is being the man of God as described by the Bible, if he is the head of you and your family as Christ is the head of the church, and you still refuse to submit – then God would not approve of you
 - This is the way he intended things to go – despite again, what the culture of the rest of the world seems to be right now
 - Yes, the urge to rule over the man vs the way God intended it will be there (Genesis 3:16) – but the faithful Christian woman must suppress these urges
 - So again, both parties have their roles to play – and if done correctly, it is a great illustration of Christ and the church
- Elisha was a man of God, and this woman rewarded him with a home, albeit only temporarily, but a home nonetheless
- **Joshua 1:10-15**
 - Joshua and the Israelites had not crossed over the Jordan into Canaan just yet
 - They were about to, but just not yet
 - These 2.5 tribes: Reubenites, Gadites, and half of Manasseh had already received their promised rest from God
 - They settled in the land east of the Jordan – that was their home
 - But until the fighting men of these tribes could truly rest – they had to help their brethren get their rest
 - So they cross the Jordan with their Israelites and the bulk of the book of Joshua is about the Israelite conquest of Canaan and details of how they divided the land
- **Joshua 22:1-5**
 - Finally, these guys get to go home
 - Joshua says they have done their duty – they have been obedient
 - As a result, they get to go back home – but with some advice from Joshua
 - *“But be very careful to keep the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you: to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to obey his commands, to hold fast to him and to serve him with all your heart and all your soul.”*
 - Keep the law, love the Lord, walk in his ways, obey his command, and serve with all you have
 - Because it was God that gave you and your brethren this rest
 - What a sense of relief these guys must have felt – they’ve served faithfully and now they get to return home to enjoy the rest that God provided
- **Hebrews 4:1-11**
 - The theme of the book of Hebrews is that Christ is better
 - He is superior to the angels, He is the great High Priest, and He is greater than Moses – therefore, He is greater than the Mosaic law
 - The audience of this book are Christians who are trying to revert back to Judaism and the Hebrew writer is telling them not to do that, obviously
 - And CH 4 starts by telling us that just like the Israelites were given rest in Joshua, Christians have the promise of eternal rest – but we cannot fall short of that
 - They in vs 2 refers to the Israelites (going back to CH 3), and this group that the Hebrew writes is referring to heard the gospel but did nothing with it
 - Have you ever experienced this?

- You've been trying to teach someone and you are presenting the truth and they just want nothing to do with what you have to say
- Jesus acknowledged that this would happen
- It is one of the soil types that the seed fell on in the parable of the sower (Matthew 13)
- Matthew 13:22: *"The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful."*
- These folks heard the word and they didn't necessarily directly neglect it – rather, they got caught up in the worries of this life
- They allowed the pleasures of this world distract them
- Thus they did nothing with the gospel
- How sad
- Or perhaps you are the person who is disregarding the message
- Perhaps you know of a weakness in your life and you are just too stubborn to do anything about it – can't fix it, that requires work
- I don't mind going to work 40 hours a week to get my paycheck and to buy me some worldly pleasures
- But no – can't work on my Christian life, no point in it
- That's not what I can see right now – but I can see this world
- We must guard against this behavior and be patient with those who we are trying to teach – plant the seed, allow it to grow, water it, and God will give the increase if you've sowed the word on fertile soil
- These Israelites did nothing with the gospel – but you don't have to let that be you
- These Israelites missed the promised land due to disobedience (vs 6) – they did not combine the gospel with faith, and therefore they were disobedient
- So faith = obedience
- But wait..go back to 3:18 – these Israelites missed this rest because of unbelief
- Which is true?
 - Of course, they are both true – faith = obedience = the true definition of belief because apparently according to Hebrews, lack of faith = disobedience = unbelief
 - There's your proof that belief is more than just mere mental assent – combine that with James 2 and a member of the denominational world would have no choice but to deny the written word of God if they still want to preach that belief alone is required for salvation
- And then the Hebrew writer addresses what we talked about in Joshua just a few minutes ago – Joshua 22
- Vs 8-11
 - The rest that Joshua gave the eastern tribes must have truly been amazing
 - They fought to obtain the land that God promised them so that their brethren could obtain rest
 - But that was all over now – now they get to go home to their families, to their homes

- Remember the theme of Hebrews – Christ is better, that means He is better than the old law, so don't revert back to it
 - The Israelites under Joshua received a rest, they went home
 - But that rest was absolutely nothing compared to the Sabbath rest that God has promised His people today
 - Joshua's rest pales in comparison to the true rest that God has in store for the faithful Christian – a heavenly home
 - A rest that you do not want to miss out on – make every effort to enter it (vs 11)
- That is our true home
- Nothing on earth can compare to that
- Though we may have some sense of a feeling of home somewhere on this earth, it is just temporary
- It isn't going to last – people move on, our parents and grandparents pass away, people get relocated for work, your children leave
- That sense of home on earth doesn't last forever
- Isaiah 40:8 – *“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.”*
 - But the word of the Lord does
 - So why would you put any more faith than you have to in this world
 - Yes – you must work, you must get paid to survive on this earth and spread the gospel – but that's all
 - Don't get caught up in the temporal things of this world and if you have – you need to reprioritize
- Yes, I sincerely miss my grandparents who brought everyone together and gave us a sense of belonging and miss my fellow brethren who have gone on before me – I'm human and part of me will always miss that
- But I know that is selfish thinking – because for the faithful Christian *“to live is Christ and to die is gain.”*
- The faithful Christian gets to reap the reward of an eternal home with God – our true home, the home which you really don't want to miss out on
- God has graciously given us His grace
- To accept His grace, He has put forth some things that you need to be obedient to
- The plan of salvation is simple and will never change
 - **Step 1: Hearing the gospel** – *Romans 10:13-17*
 - Gospel = Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, arose, and appeared to many – *1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16*
 - **Step 2: Believing the gospel** – *Mark 16:16, John 3:16*
 - **Step 3: Confession that Jesus is Lord** – *Romans 10:8-10, 1 John 1:9*
 - **Step 4: Repentance of sins** – *Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38*
 - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action.
 - **Step 5: Baptism into Christ** – *Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Peter 3:21-22*
 - Baptism: immerse or submerge
 - **Step 6: Live faithfully** – *Revelation 2:10*