



2 Cor. 5:18

Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

No. 140

MAY 2023

Are You Fit To Be Free

David Clayton



QUEST FOR FREEDOM

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

This statement is taken from the American declaration of independence and it expresses certain rights that are considered fundamental to all people. In particular it mentions the right to liberty, and history has demonstrated that the battle to obtain and maintain this right is the issue which has created the greatest upheavals in the history of the human race.

Even in the history of a country as small as Jamaica, we find tales of the Tacky slave rebellion, the Sam Sharpe revolt and the many wars that were fought by the Maroons in the quest to be free from the dominion of the British slave masters. This was reflected in places all around the Caribbean and in the United States of America. In more recent history we can recall the uprisings that

have taken place in countries such as South Africa, Namibia and other African countries as the native people fought for their liberation from oppressive alien powers.

I even remember in my own life when I started to feel the same kind of impulses very strongly! It happened to me sometime after I became a teenager and I found myself in conflict with the rules which my father had. For example I wanted to stay out late at night with my friends, but my father had rules about the time that he wanted us to get into the house and I often found myself in conflict with those rules! As a result there was sometimes friction between myself and my father and I found myself planning and hoping for the day when I would be 21, or at the very least when I would be working and able to move out and have a place of my own.

WHY THIS DESIRE?

If we think about it carefully we will recognize that the fundamental root of this desire for freedom is the need to please self. Of course this is natural, nobody wants to be controlled by the mind of another person or to be put in places contrary to his own personal desires. When a person takes away the freedom of another person or restricts his liberty, basically what he is doing is placing his wants above the desires of the other person and this is why the battle for freedom is so basic to human existence. Each of us is confident that we know what is best for ourselves, we know our wants, our desires, our likes

and our dislikes and we are confident that we know what is best for us.

CHRISTIANS GIVEN LIBERTY

The Bible tells us that one of the things which God has given to us Christians, is freedom or liberty. In his letter to the Galatian Christians the apostle Paul encourages them to embrace and to maintain this liberty that they have been given.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. (Gal 5:1)

But the question is, from what have we been liberated? In what sense have we all be made free? This is an interesting and an important question because we should note that at the time when the apostle Paul wrote this, there were many Christians who were living lives in which they had been enslaved by other men, and the apostle Paul encouraged these people to remain in that condition and to not rebel against their slave masters! So clearly, Paul did not mean that all Christians have been necessarily set free from bodily, physical slavery. A closer examination of his writings reveals in what sense we have been made

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Open Face
Manchester, Jamaica W.I.

May 2023

Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

Open Face is published bi-monthly, and is sent free of cost to all who desire to receive it.

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free. In 1 Corinthians 7:23, he says:

Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. (1Cor 7:23)

Well then, if Paul encouraged those who had become Christians while in a condition of slavery, to remain in that condition, what did he mean when he said, “be not ye the servants of men?” Obviously he does not mean in a physical sense. If this were so then he would have been contradicting himself very badly! So then, he must mean in a spiritual sense, but what does this mean?

To be a servant or a slave in a spiritual sense, means to be dominated and controlled by other people in the way we worship and in the things that we believe! It is easier to understand when we realize that the Christians of Paul’s day had been set free from the dominion of the Jewish system of worship. Their relationship to God, their spiritual experience was no longer dominated by the teachings and interpretations of the scribes and Pharisees. Furthermore they were no longer under obligation to obey the rules, the ceremonies, the rituals of the old covenant religious system, a system which was completely controlled by the Jewish hier-

archy.

The same principle holds true today, and forever. No Christian should allow himself to be dominated and controlled by the thinking, by the religious biases and misunderstandings of other men. Although Jesus set all Christians free thousands of years ago, the same blind enslavement to men and their organizations remains in the religious world! It seems to be a natural human trait for people to move around in herds, allowing themselves to be blindfolded and manipulated by those they consider to be better educated, more influential or more spiritually gifted and themselves. But the truth expressed by Paul remains God’s will for Christians in all ages! God has done the same for us today as He did with the Christians in the time of the apostolic church. We have been set free from every constricting religious system. We need to realize that there is one shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been bought with a price, we should not be the servants of men.

But we are not only free from subservience to men, we have also been set free from the bondage of legalism. Again the apostle Paul tells us,

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. (Rom 7:6)

This is another one of those verses which is generally badly misunderstood. Paul says we are delivered from the law, suggesting that the law was a constricting implement that held us in some kind of bondage from which we have now been set free. Paul himself tells us that the law is, “holy and the commandment holy, and just, and good (Romans 7:12),” so it is natural to conclude that when Paul says we are delivered from the law, he means that we have been delivered from the “condemna-

tion of the law.” Since the law is holy and just and good, why would there be any necessity for us to be delivered from it?

But notice what happens now that we have been delivered from the law; the consequence is that we serve God in a different way. This is not a freedom from the guilt of transgression, this is a freedom from a certain kind of relationship. First we used to serve God in the oldness of the letter, but now that we have been delivered from the law we serve God in newness of spirit! In other words, before we were delivered, the law kept us in a relationship with God where we served God on the basis of the letter, our religion, was based on what was written on cold tablets of stone. It was defined by our response to a legal document called, “the law.” What Jesus did was that he delivered us from this kind of relationship, he delivered us from serving God on the basis of our response to the law. As long as we were carnal people, bound by the demands of our fleshly nature, we were slaves to sin, and because of this we were also in bondage to the law. How so? This is because the law was designed for carnal people and as long as we were carnal we were obligated to be under the control of the law. This is what Paul tells us:

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; (1Tim 1:9-10)

The ministry of the law is intended for people who by nature are unruly and have an inborn tendency to do what is wrong. Paul says that the law is not made for a righteous man, and the same Paul tells us that the righteousness of God is upon all of them that believe in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:22; 2 Corinthians 5:21). So those who are in Christ

are righteous people and as such, the law is not made for them! When they believed in Jesus they became new creatures, born again into Christ's own righteous life and so they were delivered from the law. Now they no longer serve because they are responding to a set of rules, they don't worship according to the "letter." Instead their worship of God is based on being given a new heart and a new spirit, that is, the spirit and the heart of Jesus Christ which causes them to serve God from a new heart instead of on the basis of rules and restrictions. This is what it means to have been delivered from the law.

So we see that those who are in Christ have been delivered first of all, from bondage to men, and secondly from the bondage of the law.

FREEDOM HAS HAZARDS

However, the record of history teaches us that in some cases liberty is not always the best thing for everyone under all circumstances. There have been times when people have been set free and the consequences of that freedom have placed those people in worse circumstances than when they were in bondage.

One of the great horrors of history was the enslavement of Africans by many European nations which forcefully abducted millions of people from their homelands and carried them to the other side of the world where they were compelled to work like beasts of burden without any compensation. For many decades conscientious people labored diligently to emancipate these people from slavery. They themselves rose up in rebellion from time to time and tried to break the shackles of this enslavement. The time finally came when human conscience was awakened and the slaves were finally emancipated.

For many of these former slaves however, this liberation was a two edged sword. Now that they were free they had no idea what to do with this liberty. They did not have money to establish themselves in business, they did not own land, they did not have the education to understand how to function as

free men and women. Most of them were only qualified for the most menial kinds of labor and naturally many of them ended up going back to their former slave masters to work as servants, to do the same kind of labor from which they had been emancipated. The only difference was that now they were given a pittance, very small wages in compensation for their work, but at the same time they now had to find places to live, they had to purchase their own food, they had to find their own clothing and it was basically the same kind of situation as before although now they bore the title of, "free men."



GREATEST LIBERATION STORY

The liberation of the Israelites is another example of a people who were delivered, but who were not ready for the responsibilities associated with freedom. The Exodus is one of the greatest liberation stories. The Hebrews had been first dominated and then enslaved by the Egyptians for several centuries. With each passing decade their situation had become more and more difficult, with the Egyptians constantly increasing their burdens until their days had become just a continual struggle for survival. It was in this context that God came to Moses in a burning bush at the foot of Mount Sinai and gave him the following message:

And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And

I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. (Exod 3:7-10)

God kept his promise. At first Pharaoh and the Egyptians firmly resisted God's demand that they release Israel from bondage, but God inflicted Egypt with plague after plague, terrible afflictions until the spirit of Pharaoh was broken and he agreed to let Israel go. On the morning after the final plague the nation of Israel marched out of Egypt, about 2 million people with their heads held high, smiles on their faces and songs in their hearts. They knew that they would never again see their taskmasters, would never again have to work with a whip hanging over their backs, would never again be simply tools to accomplish the desires of merciless overseers. It was a great deliverance, maybe the greatest liberation in the history of the world.

ISRAEL'S LIMITATIONS

It is natural to believe that after such an amazing experience of deliverance, Israel moved on to a future filled with peace and joy and a responsible, productive, fulfilled life; a life in which they lived in harmony with God who delivered them, but sadly this is not what the record shows. For 40 years after they had been set free from slavery, the history of Israel is one of constant dissatisfaction, disorderly behavior, rebelliousness against God's authority and a display of crass ingratitude! The truth is, they had been physically set free from slavery but their minds were still in bondage. They were still enslaved by their own passions, their own cravings, their own carnal desires, their

indiscipline. They were given their freedom, but they were not fit to be free!

So the first opportunity they got, they set about building a calf out of gold and started worshiping it while they danced about and had a party! They were free from Egypt's bondage, but not from Egypt's mindset. We see this very clearly later on in their experience when they expressed a loathing for the food which God had provided them: they literally wept tears when they remembered the food that they had partaken of down in Egypt:

And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic: (Num 11:4-5)

THE REAL PROBLEM

One of the realities which comes with freedom is the fact that those who formerly held you captive are now, no longer responsible for providing for you. You are free but your life has become more uncertain, now you have to depend on your own resources, or in the case of the Israelites, on the one who had set them free. Unfortunately they did not know their liberator and were not prepared for the program that God had for them. They wanted liberty to do anything that they pleased without restraint! God knew that this was not what they needed, they needed to develop faith and discipline, trust in God above everything else and so he put them through a program designed to develop these attributes.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. (Deut 8:3)

This is what made their experience of liberation so terribly difficult for the Israelites. Their desires were at cross

purposes with the plans that God had for them. God was seeking what was ultimately the best for them, but they were mainly concerned with what brought them comfort and pleasure in the present moment. The problem was that they wanted good, but they did not want change. They wanted benefits without character.

EVIDENCE OF BONDAGE

Recently I heard a story which made me think of the experience of these "liberated" Israelites. Most of us have probably heard of the worldwide Church of God founded by Herbert W Armstrong. This was a church which believed in keeping the seventh day Sabbath and in abstaining from meats which the Bible declares to be unclean. Sometime after the death of Herbert Armstrong there was doctrinal division



among those who had been given the responsibility of shepherding the church after his death. There was a split in the church with one branch rejecting the idea that it was still necessary to observe the seventh day Sabbath and also rejecting the idea that there was any food that was unclean.

Somebody told me of a man who was a member of this particular group. For most of his Christian experience he had been a Sabbath keeper and had abstained from eating the foods which God forbade in the book of Leviticus. But after his church came to this new understanding, he went to a meeting one day and heard the minister preach a sermon explaining that it was no lon-

ger necessary to observe these dietary laws. Immediately afterwards this man went down the road, entered a restaurant, ordered and ate a dinner of shrimp! It was like he had been held on a leash for all these years and suddenly released, immediately indulged his appetite in satisfying a craving which he had long repressed!

The fact is, whether or not Christians are under the law, it is still true that there are certain kinds of food which are not very healthy. Even though the dietary laws were given in the form of strict rules, there were good helpful principles underlying these rules and this is the reason why God gave them. People who simply obeyed because of the rules, yet did not understand the underlying reasons were really, not fit to be free! Giving such people liberty may very well result in them doing harm to themselves!

About 18 years ago the Lord led me to an understanding of what it truly means that Christ is my righteousness. I had always believed this truth but my understanding of it had been based on traditional teachings, which I now realize are mostly, very superficial. My new understanding placed great emphasis on the grace of God, on the completeness of what he has given in Christ and diminishes the significance of the law in the process of salvation. This new, biblical understanding transformed my mind and my experience. It became and has remained the central focus of my ministry. However, as I went from place to place sharing this message I noticed something unexpected; some of those who joyfully accepted the message reacted in a similar way to the man who went straight to the restaurant and ordered a shrimp dinner. To my surprise the following behaviors started to appear among some of those who seemed very happy for this new understanding.

- Lowered standards of dress
- Non contribution to the cause
- Indulgence in watching movies
- Disregarding the Sabbath

- Chronic late coming
- Putting work and study before worship (eg. Prayer meeting)
- Neglect of personal devotion

These and similar practices began to appear which had not been so evident when people had felt constrained to obey the law, and the rules of the church. In fact I remember one of the charges brought against me and the message I preach was that my message leads people to become careless about the way they behave. I admit that this has caused me some concern but when I examine the Bible carefully I realize that the problem is not because the message, it is the fact that people embrace freedom when they are not fit to be free.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. (2Pet 2:19)

THE FREEDOM OF MY CHAINS

The apostle Paul said,

For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. (1Cor 7:22)

This highlights a striking truth concerning what it means to be free in Christ. The liberty which Christ gives is not a liberty from restraint, it is not the liberty to indulge myself in all that I please, it is really the liberty to choose a different master. Jesus told a story which is well worth considering:

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. (Matt 12:43-45)

This story illustrates the problem: man was not designed to be without a master. Whether we accept it or not it is always necessary to have someone controlling our lives, otherwise the result will be chaos and anarchy. At one point with the previous understanding of the gospel, we were all constrained to submit to the rules of the law and of the church. We felt that our salvation depended upon it and the law became our master determining how we behaved. This kind of government never made anybody perfect, but at least it produced an outward form of good behavior, something that people could see and approve. Our clothing was modest, we were early for church, we watched our diet carefully, we paid our tithe faithfully and we made sure to study our lesson quarterly. This was the system of government that controlled our lives before we accepted the direct government of Christ and it was the way God designed it to be. At that time, in that condition, we could only be described as carnal people, and God has designed that system of government specifically for carnal people.

Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for



the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; (1Tim 1:9-10)

But now that people have encountered the true gospel and discovered that they are no longer obligated to obey the law

in order to be approved or saved, many embrace this liberty without receiving Christ! For them, it is more an escape from bondage, not the receiving of a new master! It is like the house from which the evil spirit has been cast, but it is left empty, there is no alternative but the fact that it will be inhabited by even more evil spirits at the end.

Many years ago when I was a boy there was a song which was quite popular entitled, "Loving Arms." It was sung by a group named "Dixie Chicks". One line of it sticks in my mind which goes like this:

*"Looking back and longing for the freedom of my chains,
And lying in your loving arms again."*

Yes, it's a love song, but it illustrates the truth which is so important to understand. When a relationship is based on love, there is a bond, a strong chain which keeps two people together, a desire to be with one another. However, with that relationship there are always obligations, certain behaviors and responsibilities which go with being together. These obligations would be burdensome and irksome in a relationship which is not based on love, but where love and desire for a person is the driving motivation, those obligations become pleasurable things. The "bondage" of the relationship becomes really a means of freedom. The chains that keep both persons together are really the key which bring joy, peace and happiness into the lives of both of them. These "chains" of love, are the things which bind, but they are also the things which give the freedom of joy, happiness and peace.

This is what Jesus was emphasizing when he said,

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Matt 11:29)

His yoke binds us to himself, it puts us under bondage, but it's the bondage of love, the union with the loving arms which is the only place where we can

find rest unto our souls.

EVIDENCE OF FREEDOM

The question we all should consider is, are we fit to be free? It is necessary for us to examine ourselves in this regard. The apostle Paul says,

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? (2Cor 13:5)

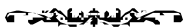
Yes, those who are set free by Christ will no longer be dependent on men or their systems, will no longer be subservient to men, will no longer submit their consciences to be directed according to the minds of other people. They will also be delivered from the legalism of ceremonial, rules dominated religion. They will focus more on a relationship with God, rather than a relationship with a system of government.

However, let us never forget that those who are in Christ will always be more disciplined, more faithful, better representatives of God's kingdom than those who are bound by the law! There is no such thing as a man who becomes a Christian, who has been set free by Christ and then begins to behave in such a way that he gives Christ and his truth a bad name!

Let us heed the counsel given by Peter and Paul as we demonstrate to the world and to the devil that we truly have been set free and that we are fit for this privilege.

For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. (1Pet 2:15-16)

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. (Gal 5:13)



Asleep in Jesus



On the 4th of May, 2023, Marie Herminia Clayton went to her long rest. O what a sad day it was for those of us who loved her, her flesh and blood family as well as her spiritual family consisting mostly of those who are a part of Open Face Fellowship.

She was diagnosed with Pancreatic cancer just about six weeks prior to her death. She went to see the doctor when she became suddenly weak and had one or two fainting spells. A CT scan revealed the dreadful reality that there were masses growing on her pancreas. Against her will, her immediate family had her hospitalized with the hope that she would be able to experience some sort of recovery and be able to return home, but it never happened.

In the hospital she grew steadily weaker, needing to be given several blood transfusions every few days in order to enable her to be conscious and responsive. Sadly, she rapidly declined, far faster than we imagined it could happen. I don't think any of us really expected her to go so quickly. When we heard that she was gone it took some time for the reality of it to hit home. It didn't seem real, like a dream from which we would soon awake and there was the thought in the back of the mind that we would soon see her again, sitting in the congregation singing on a Sabbath. Now it has finally sunken in, but it still

seems impossible that we will never hear her singing again in this life.

O how we will miss her singing! God blessed her with a beautiful voice and she could sing to his glory with the deepest expression. It is a terrible gap that has been left in our fellowship with her passing.

We all prayed for her, we prayed, we hoped, we expected, but it was time for her to rest. One of the realities of her life was that it was hard. She was divorced many years ago after having three children in a difficult and contentious marriage. Her life, as I said was difficult but she never stopped loving and praising God. Even in her illness her faith remained strong and she insisted that she would not submit to doing chemotherapy or radiation and that she would prefer to die trusting in the Lord.

It was time for her to rest. Only God knows what lies ahead of us but it is notable that many of his people are being laid to rest in this time. The world has become a madhouse with all kinds of lunacy springing up everywhere and the signs are that the final great time of trouble is just at hand. Some of us will be put to sleep in the mercy of God, rather than that we should have to bear that traumatic experience and undoubtedly there will be more of us going to our long sleep in the near future. It is one of the things that we should be aware of and we should all be expecting, and be prepared for it.

Goodbye Marie, "Hermie," or "Herm," for those who were closest to her. We miss you greatly and there is a gap in our hearts and lives that will remain until we see you again. It is hard to know that in this life we will never again hear your golden voice singing to the glory of God, but we believe, we truly know that you needed to rest and our Father knew what was best for you. Sleep on dear sister, we will see you in the morning.

Campmeeting 2023

Daniel Clayton



The Jamaica camp meeting this year was held, as has become customary in Spice Grove, located in central Jamaica. For those who may not know, Spice Grove is a beautiful, scenic site located in lush green hills, far from the noise and bustle of civilization. However the site contains male and female dormitories, as well as a fairly large chapel.

It was in this setting that we gathered together under the theme, 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ.' All told, about forty five brethren stayed on site for the duration, (April 6 – 10) while approximately sixty of us in total were gathered for Sabbath worship. A few of the more adventurous ones pitched tents intermittently around the spacious compound, while most persons preferred to use the dorms.

This year, we were blessed to have eight brethren visiting with us from overseas. There were Sisters Kathy, Pat and Diann from the US, brothers Gregory and Donovan from the US, and brother Wayne, his wife Nicky and Son Levi from the UK. These brethren undoubtedly helped to make camp a far more enriching and blessed experience by their mere presence alone, and we praise God that they were able to make it.

The event was blessed with warm, Christian fellowship, inspiring, uplifting music, and Spirit filled, thought provoking presentations. The main speakers were Brothers David Clayton,

Howard Williams, Daniel Clayton and Gregory Maxwell. Brother Wayne Sutherland also shared with us, while the children were specially graced with story time sessions by Sister Nicky (Sutherland), and on one occasion, Sister Tiffany McCrae online.

There were a total of four meetings scheduled for each day,

beginning with morning worship (6 am) and ending with the evening session (7 pm). Saturday night, as usual was designated as 'singspiration' night, while Sunday night was set apart for testimonies and exhortations. It is fair to say that everyone was blessed and uplifted by all the scheduled meetings and activities, as was evidenced by the enthusiasm and participation.

One of the challenges we faced was that it rained heavily basically every day of the camp. This proved to be a bit uncomfortable, as some folks got washed out in their tents, some areas became excessively muddy, and the mosquitoes seemed to revel in the moist atmosphere. It was also challenging to get meetings started promptly on time, as brethren were a bit tardy in getting assembled for meetings quickly and consistently. This is certainly an area of weakness which we can all aim to improve upon drastically for future camp meetings.

The highlight of the entire event was no doubt the addition of seven bright

and precious souls to our Heavenly army. On Sunday, April 7, a baptismal service was held on site, and these brethren made their public commitment to accept our Lord as their Saviour. There were Brothers Aaron Wilson, Levi Sutherland, Donovan Mercer, Ayon Baxter (re-baptising) and Sisters Josette Clayton (re-baptising) Rose Logan And Joan Sappleton. It was a thrilling, heartwarming experience to witness this occasion, and the angels in heaven undoubtedly rejoiced with us all.

Immediately following the service, all seven of these brethren had hands laid on them by Brother David and Brother Howard, and a petition was made to the Lord before the congregation that they might receive the Holy Spirit in their bodies. We know this request was granted (Luke 11:13) and we pray for God's continued grace and peace to be upon them all continually.

During this same event, a short initiation service was also held for Brother Daniel Clayton to be set apart, and inducted fully into the work of God, and minister as a servant in Open Face Fellowship alongside Brother David and Brother Howard. Hands were laid on him by these two brethren, and a petition made before the congregation that the Lord will touch his life, and use him in a mighty way for His kingdom and His glory.

Unfortunately, on this earth the time always comes when we have to part, and it was with heavy hearts that we broke camp and said our goodbyes on Monday, April 10. Brethren departed for home, some near and some far, but with spirits and hearts refreshed and renewed, and resolve and determination strengthened to make HIM our life and our all. The revelation of Jesus Christ was indeed seen and felt in our very souls, and our desire remains to know more of Him each day.

Campmeeting Kaleidoscope



Sister Tiffany taught online



Children with Sister Nikki



Levi being baptized



Brother Daniel ordained



Attentive Sabbath congregation



The Youth Choir



Those who were baptized



Laying hands on the new members



Last day stragglers



Donovan, DiAnn & Greg



Pat & Kathy



DiAnn, Nikki & Wayne



Sister Rose (Annie)

Divorce and Remarriage

It is clear to me that God desires that marriages should be permanent, and not something to be taken lightly. The damage done by broken marriages is deep and painful. However, we do many things before we come to the place where we finally understand the Lord and have a personal relationship with him and I am absolutely convinced that the mistakes of the past are not put in our way by God, to be stumbling blocks to us. Just like every other sin or mistake, when we commit our lives fully to God, then everything becomes new and we have a fresh start. It is true that the damage which may have been done by the past actions cannot be repaired, but does this mean that God puts us under a prison sentence for the rest of our lives? This is not the way I understand God to be.

I know that people will stick strictly to the words of Jesus and say, you have no right to be remarried again. But in my understanding, the words of Jesus were spoken in a limited context and did not even apply to all the technicalities which might be involved in di-

vorce. For example, what if one person were intent on harming, and even killing the other person, or maybe beating the partner? According to the literal application of Jesus' words, even under those circumstances divorce is not permissible!! This is legalism, it is focusing on the literal words rather than seeking to understand the intent and the purpose of what is said.

So what did Jesus mean? In the context of Judaism, a man could simply give his wife a paper and send her away for almost any reason whatsoever, as long as he was not pleased with her. In this system, there was great abuse and there was no security for women, and men had the liberty to treat marriage very lightly. It was in this context that Jesus made his statement; what he was actually saying was that as long as there was not something involved which made the marriage basically impossible to continue (in this case, fornication), then people should not feel free to simply break up their marriages. But fornication was used because it is an example of something which would, in

most cases, do great harm to the possibility of the man and woman living together in trust and harmony. But it is clear that there can be other issues. The point is, however, that God wants marriages to be regarded as permanent, to be broken only in cases where there is damage so bad that they are truly unworkable.

But as I said, in the case of somebody who divorced at a time when the commitment to God was not as it should be, does this mean that the person is now sentenced to be imprisoned and deprived from a companion for the rest of his life? No, not with the God I know. God is seeking happiness in the context of godly unions, but what is past, is past. You are a new creation, you can't fix the past, but it does not have to define your future. I know my position may not be one which everybody agrees with, but it is what I believe, even though I have never been divorced and have been married for 43 years.



Comments on Ephesians 5:25-27

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (Eph 5:25)

Paul now balances the equation by focusing on the husband's priority in the relationship. Asking the wife to be submissive is not an issue when the husband loves the wife *as Christ loved the church*. Submitting to Jesus is not an issue because we believe in his love for us and are persuaded that whatever he does, he is doing for our good. It should be the same in marriage. The persuasion that the husband is doing all things for the good of his wife because he loves her, is her motivation to be submissive to him.

It is true that in the case of Christ, there is also the additional reality of his infinite wisdom. The husband is not necessarily always wiser than his wife, but all things considered, God established this order because the issue of who is wiser does not promote harmony and should not be the decisive factor in headship. Wisdom is debatable like many things, so God settles the issue by laying down a rule which simplifies the whole issue for those who are willing to submit to him.

So the husband gives himself for his wife. His life, his devotion, his energy and strength. This is what Christ did for the church and in this sacrificial

dedication we find the divine pattern ordained by God.

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, (Eph 5:26)

Here is something interesting: The church cleansed by "water," through the word. The church is not an individual, it is a collection of diverse individuals. This cleansing therefore, is necessarily different from the cleansing of an individual. Individuals are cleansed by the indwelling of the holy spirit, not the words. However, the body of believers is made clean by responding to the word and maintaining faithfulness

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Fasting and its Benefits

Lenworth Frankson



Fasting can be described as the willing abstinence or reduction from some or all food, drink, or both, for a period of time. Although sometimes viewed as unhealthy, depriving, or reserved for religious reasons, short-term fasting can offer excellent health benefits. As research grows in this area of health, fasting is becoming more widely accepted as an approved means of managing weight and preventing disease. At the same time, it is important that fasting is done in proper and healthy ways.

For many people fasting is primarily about losing weight. However, it is more than just weight loss. Skipping meals for a fixed period of time does not necessarily mean neglecting food or liquids entirely which may be harmful to your health. One popular way of fasting is Intermittent fasting which benefits you the most when you select eating schedules that work for your body clock and consistently stick to them for days, months, years or whatever time frame suits you best. Intermittent fasting does not restrict what you can eat, only when you can eat. This article aims to look at fasting in general as opposed to one particular method. In general, fasting brings more good than harm with amazing results and benefits when done properly.

WHY FAST?

A large body of evidence now supports the benefits of fasting, though the most noticeable data has been recorded in studies with animals. Nevertheless, these findings are promising for humans. Essentially, fasting cleanses our body of toxins and forces our cells into processes that are not usually stimulated when a steady stream of fuel from food is always present.

When we fast, the body does not have its usual access to glucose, forcing the cells to resort to other means and materials to produce energy. As a result, the body begins a natural process of producing its own sugar. The liver helps by converting non-carbohydrate materials like lactate, amino acids, and fats into glucose energy. Because our bodies conserve energy during fasting, our basal metabolic rate (the amount of energy our bodies burn while resting) becomes more efficient. As a result, our heart rate and blood pressure are lowered. Ketosis, which is another process that occurs later into the fast cycle, happens when the body burns stored fat as its primary power source instead of glucose. This is the ideal mode for weight loss and balancing blood sugar levels. Fasting puts the body under mild stress, which makes our cells adapt by enhancing their ability to cope. In other words, they become strong. This process is similar to what happens when we stress our muscles and cardiovascular system during exercise. As with exercise, our body can only grow stronger during these processes when there is adequate time to rest and recover. This is why short-term fasting is recommended.

ASSIST WEIGHT LOSS

Some studies support fasting as a good way for weight loss. One 2015 study found that alternate day fasting trimmed body weight by up to 7 percent, while

whole day fasting reduced body weight by up to 9 percent. Another study from the University of Southern California, discovered that when 71 adults were placed on a five-day fast (eating between 750 and 1,100 calories a day) once every three months, they lost an average of six pounds, reduced inflammation levels and their waistlines, and lost total body fat without sacrificing muscle mass. Intermittent fasting is said to be able to help you lose weight by about seven to eleven pounds over a period of about ten weeks. Around 27 studies backed up the claim that this fasting type is helpful for obese individuals in managing their weight. Research also suggest that intermittent fasting can help people lose weight by 13 percent

FIGHTS INFLAMMATION

Acute inflammation is a normal immune process used to help fight off infections, but chronic inflammation can have serious consequences for your health. Research clearly shows that inflammation may be involved in the development of chronic conditions, such as heart disease, cancer, and rheumatoid arthritis. Some studies have found that fasting can help decrease levels of inflammation and promote better health. One review of 18 participants found that intermittent fasting could significantly reduce levels of C-reactive protein, which is a marker of inflammation. Another small study discovered that practicing intermittent fasting for 1 year was more effective at decreasing levels of inflammation and reducing certain risk factors for heart disease compared to a control group. In addition, an animal study found that following a very low calorie diet to mimic the effects of fasting reduced levels of inflammation and was beneficial in the treatment of multiple sclerosis, a chronic inflammatory condition.

GROWTH HORMONE SECRETION,

Human growth hormone (HGH) is a type of protein hormone that is central to many aspects of our health. In fact, research shows that this key hormone is involved in metabolism, weight loss, and muscle growth. Several studies have found that fasting could naturally increase human growth hormone levels. One study in 11 healthy adults showed that fasting for 24 hours significantly increased levels of the growth hormone.



Another small, older study in nine males found that fasting for just 2 days led to a fivefold increase in the Human growth hormone production rate. In addition, fasting may help maintain steady blood sugar and insulin levels throughout the day, which may further improve levels of Human growth hormone, as some research has found that insulin can influence the secretion of this growth hormone. These studies indicate that fasting can increase levels of human growth hormone which plays a role in growth, metabolism, weight loss, and muscle strength.

IMPROVE HEART HEALTH

Heart disease is considered the leading cause of death around the world, accounting for an estimated 31.5% of deaths globally. One of the most effective ways to reduce your risk of heart disease is switching up your diet and lifestyle. Some research shows that incorporating fasting into your routine may be especially beneficial when it comes to heart health.

One review revealed that alternate-day fasting could reduce levels of total cholesterol and several risk factors for heart disease in people who are over-

weight compared to a control group. Another review showed that alternate-day fasting was able to significantly decrease blood pressure, as well as levels of blood triglycerides, total cholesterol, and LDL (bad) cholesterol.

In addition, another older study in 4,629 people associated fasting with a lower risk of coronary artery disease, as well as a significantly lower risk of diabetes, which is a major risk factor for heart

disease.

Fasting has been associated with a wide array of potential health benefits, including weight loss, improved blood sugar control, heart health, brain function, cancer prevention, increasing growth hormone secretion and muscle strength. From water fasting to intermittent fasting and calorie restriction, there are many different types of fasting that will fit nearly every lifestyle. When coupled with a nutritious diet and healthy lifestyle, fasting wisely can be a big benefit to one's health. However, despite the long list of possible health benefits associated with fasting, it may not be right for everyone. For example, if you have diabetes, fasting can lead to spikes and crashes in your blood sugar levels, which could be dangerous. It is always best to talk to a doctor first if you have any underlying health conditions or are planning to fast for more than 24 hours. In addition, fasting is not generally recommended without medical supervision for older adults, adolescents, or people who are underweight.

SPIRITUAL BENEFITS

The spiritual benefits of fasting are

found throughout the Bible. We have the accounts of powerful breakthroughs happening during or after times of fasting. Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the commandments Deuteronomy 9; David fasted mourning his child's illness 2 Samuel 12:1-23; Elijah fasted while escaping Jezebel 1 Kings 19:4-8; Daniel fasted for an answer to prayer Daniel 10:1-3. Paul fasted after his conversion Acts 9:1-9 and Jesus fasted before the temptations by Satan in the wilderness. Matthew 4:1-2. These are just some of the occasions where people in the bible felt the need to connect to God on a deeper and stronger spiritual level while depriving their bodies of physical food and water. Spiritual fasting has benefits that can improve and advance our spiritual lives. Here are a few:

- Spiritual Fasting Helps us to Rely fully on God
- Spiritual Fasting Opens our Heart to Hearing God's Voice
- Spiritual Fasting Renews our Appreciation for God and His Blessings
- Spiritual Fasting Gives Power to our Prayers
- Spiritual Fasting Creates an Environment for Miracles
- Spiritual Fasting helps us to Ingest and Heed God's Word

Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God? (Joel 2:12-14)

If you decide to try fasting, be sure to stay well-hydrated and if you intend fasting for longer periods, try to minimize intense physical activity and get plenty of rest.



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to the word. The cleaning of the church has to do with developing harmony, a corporate representing of Christ, the weeding out of bad apples. Faithful conformity to the principles of the word is what accomplishes this.

So Christ gave himself for the church, set her apart unto himself and works through the word to cleanse her and make her into his ideal.

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Eph 5:27)

His goal is to see the church finally, ready for him, glorious, without spot or wrinkle, flawless. In his sacrifice and his labor, his intent is the well-being of his bride.



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The Curse Arrives

She looked into his frightened eyes
and saw the shadow there,

Watched in growing horror the first
teardrop fall,

Saw the wrinkled face as pain ex-
pressed itself,

The rising question in her mind,

"Eve, what have you done?"

He heard the deathly silence as aware-
ness invaded creation,

Frightened creatures felt sudden in-
explicable fear;

Earth sat with bated breath awaiting
the horror, In his heart he knew;

"Adam, what have you done?"

The first horrifying marks appeared,
a falling leaf,

a frightened rabbit scurrying away,
fear where fear had never been known,

Eve's remorseful face as she avoided
his eyes.

A strange stillness in the garden as
the sense of change and the new sen-
sation of fear and distrust intruded
into the minds of the creatures.

Shadows, suddenly were frightening
places, darkness was no longer friend-
ly,

Adam, what have you done!?

