

August 12, 2018

Dear Members, Co-Workers and Friends:

What motivates us to do better in our lives? What drives us forward? What makes us want to get out of bed in the morning and start our day? Are we happy with what we have done (Psalm 4:1-8)? Are we happy with where we are in our lives? Or, are we so satisfied that we think we don't need to make any changes?

What we think about motivates and dictates our actions. The Scripture in Romans 12:2 speaks to a renewal of our minds: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Let us meditate about this for a moment. This means we are to be continually changing how we think— weeding out the useless things and as verse 1 points out, changing our lives to resemble that of a living sacrifice. If we concentrate totally on this Way of Life and change how and what we think about, then our outcome is inevitable. Our mind can be our most powerful tool or one of our deadliest enemies.

Notice in 2 Peter 3:14-18 how Peter exhorts everyone not to be led away and not to become haughty and puffed up with the pride of sin; but rather, to continue working towards becoming spotless, blameless, diligent and growing in understanding—not falling backwards as has happened and continues to happen to some brethren.

2 Peter 3:10-13 states: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

This Scripture is intended for those who find themselves living in the Laodicean era. But it is also a warning for those who have the spirit of Philadelphia to remain on guard. It applies to you and me. This Scripture alone should cause great pause for thought about our actions and the words that we choose to use. This is up to us individually. Each of us can be guilty of delaying the return of Christ when we refuse to repent (2 Peter 3:9). Acts 3:19-20 speaks of repentance, the removal of sin, refreshing and the Second Coming of Christ—all in this order. It is our decision to repent and work to become closer to God through prayer, Bible study and meditation, as well as helping the Work of God being preached (Matthew 24:14).

Let us read through what Peter is saying in 1 Peter 1:3-25. We have a calling that we are meant to fulfill. Not someone else! We are called individually and fashioned for this very purpose. Do we find ourselves filled with joy because of this knowledge? Or are we caught up in the worries of everyday living? Are we full of love with the knowledge of God's Plan and our part in it? Or are we selfishly seeking our own wants and desires to the detriment of God's Plan, His Church and the people that comprise it? Notice the stern statements in verses 13-16: "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'"

God does not intend for us to fail, to wallow in self-pity, self-martyrdom or mediocrity in any shape or form. He created us to grow, to succeed, to prosper and to find happiness. While we are not here to make this world a better place or to affect political outcomes, we are still to have an impact on the world. Acts 17:5-9 speaks about those who were called as being “those who turned the world upside down.” What was happening was not being done in a small corner. People were jealous and angry that the Truth was being preached and they didn’t like it. We continue today to preach the gospel to all the world (Mark 16:15), and while most don’t like it either, some few listen and respond. The message will continue to go out, as God sees fit. It must be our focus and our goal to help in spreading the good news of the Kingdom of God prior to Christ’s return.

We CAN and we MUST move forward, if we intend to reach our goal that we set at the time of our baptism. It is going to take everything that we know and every part of what we have learned to make it through the coming years. How active are we now in becoming ready for this time? We must be 100% sure that we are willing to continue to commit our lives to God’s Way of Life, regardless of the consequences. Notice in James 3:10-18 the admonition about the type of people we are to be. We have to be CONSISTENT; otherwise, we are fooling ourselves and wasting our time. Paul’s warning in Galatians 3:1-4 still rings true today: “Who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth...?”

People’s ideas and minds, with their own selfish wants and desires, are held captive by Satan, who uses his power to “bewitch” us, if you will. We should remember Eve’s encounter with the Serpent, and her subsequent failure. The Devil bewitched her, captivated her, appealed to her. Satan tried to do the same with Christ, but Christ’s answers were sure and succinct. We cannot afford to fall bewitched by what Satan has to offer. Things may seem appealing, but look at the fruits of them and see where they lead—to death, more than likely, in one way or another. We need to realize just what is at stake: Life and death!

We have a few short weeks before we keep the Fall or Autumnal Holy Days. We should use this time to draw close to God and to totally appreciate God’s Plan for our future. We need to realize that we will encounter trials and “things” or circumstances which may attempt to “bewitch” us in an effort to draw us off guard so that we do not fully focus on what is really important. Let us not allow this to happen. 2 Peter 1:5-8 enjoins us to make every effort in becoming more and more like Jesus Christ and God the Father. Ephesians 4:3-6 tells us that we must make an effort to keep the bond of peace. As we move forward, let us stay hungry for the Truth and for God’s Way, so that we are not swept away.

We wish you all a meaningful preparation for the Fall Holy Days season. May God grant us more wisdom and the ability to concentrate on His great Plan for us, and to strive to become a part of who we are called to be.

With brotherly love,



Kalon Mitchell