

Resting in God
"The wealth of owning nothing"

Study 13

Galatians 2:20 (Amplified Bible) I have been crucified with Christ [in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ (the Messiah) lives in me; and the life I now live in the body I live by faith in (by adherence to and reliance on and complete trust in) the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

The kingdom of the world teaches us to own things, so we can be controlled by what we feel belongs to us. In our ownership, we have a built in fear of loss and a need to control what is ours. We fight to hold on to what is ours and dread the thought of someone or something taking it from us, whether it be material possessions, our money, our security, or our physical lives. Anything that could take our property becomes the god we really pay attention to and fear.

Until we come to Christ, most of us have complete ownership of our lives in our hearts. We say that we are submitted to Christ, that He is our Lord, but few of us really know what that means. Because of the way we live our lives most of us very clearly have little understanding of how God perceives our interpretation of His Word.

Jesus lived His mortal life under the ownership of His Father. Being only a steward of that life, He did nothing of Himself, everything was submitted to His Father's will. Although He was the wealthiest man who ever walked on this earth, He was free from the entanglements that worldly ownership brings. In His submission, in His freedom from all earthly entanglements, God could use Him to implement His will.

Jesus died so that Father God could have complete ownership of our lives once again. As we submit to Christ's Lordship, we are acknowledging the fact that we are no longer our own, but that we are now owned by God. When He died, the spiritual life of freedom that He lived became available to each of us. We are free to own nothing and free to trust the Father for everything. We have moved from the limitations of our finite capabilities into the almighty power of God's capabilities. In our submission to poverty, we become as wealthy as Christ was, living in His Father's Kingdom with Him.

To be crucified with Christ means we become dead to any form of ownership; we are now God's property. Under His ownership, we become stewards of everything that pertains to our lives, even our life itself. Nothing belongs to us any more, everything really belongs to Him. We are simply keepers of whatever He chooses to trust us with. We have moved from ownership to the freedom of stewardship, untouchable by the dictates of the kingdom of this world.

Matthew 11:12 (New International Version) From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

Often, as you travel the final frontier of advancing the Kingdom of God in your heart, it may seem as if you were going backwards instead of coming closer to Jesus by reclaiming ownership in some way. Do not be concerned. It is very important that you do not give up at these intervals. They are milestones used by God.

As you see your sin more clearly, as you pass through surface sins and allow the Holy Spirit unlimited access to your heart, it may seem as though there is no hope, when the opposite is true. Your knowledge of your own helplessness is God's way of keeping you in need of Him.

Each of us have a tendency to need closure. We need to sometime arrive at an end to any quest we may attempt. The Kingdom of God is not like that. As a pioneer in God's final frontier, you are on a continuous quest until the coming of Christ. He will complete all things in you. The journey is what is important to Him. Your continuous submission, your focused awareness and repentance are vital to the elimination of every part of your old nature. While the very powerful work is being accomplished in you, the Lord needs to keep you aware that there is nothing in you that is capable accomplishing it in your own strength.

When we begin to take on some pride of accomplishment, the Lord, in His loving mercy, will show some new area that needs to be addressed, or some area that you thought had already been dealt with. Ownership is one of those vices He uses to humble us. This stronghold might even seem to have more of

a foothold than it ever did. Understand that each time it appears, a deeper work is being done in you. At the same time, you are being shown one more time that you have no power change yourself.

In times like these, you may even seem to have a deeper love for your sin, when you thought you had come so far. That is not the case. You are being humbled to eliminate your own pride. At those times, praise your Lord for His mercy, and dig in with Him against whatever He is after. By the power of the Lord, deny the pressure to become discouraged. Remember that He is a loving God who wants you to become like Jesus even more than you do. He will do the work in you. He will also hold you close while that work is being accomplished for His glory.

Hebrews 4:9-10 (New International Version) There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; 10) for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his.

At one time in my life I was a caretaker of an estate. One morning, in attempting to accomplish one of the many tasks that needed to be done, I had to walk from our home to the implement barn. On that particular morning, my daughter wanted to come with me.

As we walked to the barn, my daughter was slowly, casually, walking, taking time to literally smell the roses along the way. Because I was in a hurry to get to the barn for what I needed, her pace was very frustrating. She was enjoying the walk, I was so intent on getting to the barn, that I missed the joy of the journey completely.

Resting in God is enjoying the journey. God has given us the awesome wonder of going from death to life. He has established a pattern for us to live through Jesus. He has shown us a way to live that is far above any form of life available. What is so sad is that most people struggle to attain that kind of life that they miss the wonders on the path that they are traveling. They miss the joy of the journey in order to achieve the goal.

God desires that each of us truly enjoy the journey that He has given us, no matter what it may entail. He is wanting each of us to learn to breathe in only His fragrance as we walk through the pollution that may be part of our life. He is asking us to embrace the beauty of our life in Christ from His perspective rather than focusing only on the task at hand. If we do, He will show us how to be at complete rest in Him. He will show us a place of immovable serenity, unparalleled joy and contentment; a place only found as we savor His presence along the way instead of being occupied with the pitfalls on the road.

For thought or discussion:

Do you really see yourself as dead in Christ

Name those things that you really can't trust God for