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Dear Friend,

Have you ever thought about how utterly dependent we are or should be on the ministry of the Holy Spirit? I want us to look for a moment at the Lord's personal dependency on the Holy Spirit. As Jesus was about to leave this planet after three plus years of ministry let's recount what outward signs of success were visible to the natural eye concerning His ministry.

One of the ways a man's business success is measured is by the caliber of his supporting staff. Those he has surrounding him. The structural integrity of a business, corporation or team is usually determined by what is commonly called the depth chart. Meaning this, how many qualified people do you have in each skilled position to back up or reinforce the essence of the team or the entity they work for? Obviously the kingdom of God is not really a business but a family. Still as we discuss its success let's review the following.

Let's just see on the outside how well Jesus had schooled his most intimate followers in the three and half years He trained them. For the sake of time we will look past the crucifixion and resurrection and focus on the last month of Jesus' tenure with His twelve and make an "outside of God" per se kind of assessment of His success as the CEO of "God and Sons Corporation."

First you will recall His bookkeeper has just committed suicide after acting as an embezzler and traitor to the company. Judas' scandal makes modern day stock company scandals look like child's play.

Secondly, His Chief of Staff sort of speaking commonly known as the most outspoken of the twelve suddenly forgets he even knows Him at three consecutive press conferences.

As for the rest of the bunch they are scattered between skeptics that do not believe He is still alive and the rest returning to former employment without requesting a leave of absence or even giving so much as a written notice.

Talk about all the signs of a de-funked and dissolving business. With all due respect to Jesus as an up and coming entrepreneur His credit rating was pitiful at best. On the outside I am giving no chance of this possibly succeeding. You would never get me to invest in anything that looked that shabby.

To top off this negative business report the CEO and Founder has decided to leave His staff under these present conditions and go to what He refers to as a distant land. It would appear He will not even be around to maintain what He started. Nobody is certain of what their job title or position is. The question of who is the greatest or who is in charge is still unanswered in their minds. (*Matthew 18:1*) This situation to say the least looks totally disastrous and this corporation appears to have little chance of survival.

Now then, why would Jesus even think about leaving these in such a pitiful condition? For this simple reason, He had all the faith in the world in His successor. The Person that was coming to take His position was coming not to replace Him but rather to fulfill Him. He was turning the business over to

someone who would engender each one of these men to look and act exactly like their CEO-Jesus Himself.

When Jesus was making one of His final speeches to His so called board, He told them I am going away and will not “*physically*” be coming back until later. However, someone is coming in My place and when He arrives He will be just like Me. In verse 16 of the following scripture it says, “*another Comforter.*” The Greek actually says “*another one of the same kind.*”

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; [Even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.
(John 14:16-18)

Jesus was not afraid of a hostile take over by His newly entrusted officer in the company because He totally trusted that this new person would perfectly represent Him to His followers. In verse 18 Jesus says, ***I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.***

The interesting thing is what Jesus actually said in the original. He said, ***I will not leave you as (orphanos).*** This Greek word is the word for orphans, therefore Jesus was saying, “*I will not leave you as orphans, I will come to you even after I am gone.*” How would this be possible to achieve when He was leaving?

This would be accomplished because the person He left in charge to parent this corporation or (the family of God) was no less than the Comforter. The instructor in righteousness and the reminder and continuous educator of everything that Jesus could ever want this group to attain.

In fact Friend, Jesus said it was of the utmost importance that He left so this new person could be sent in His place. In ***John 16:7*** He reveals, ***Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*** In reality the situation was not going to improve for this bunch until he did come. He would be the one to set everything in order, he would be the one to give everyone their new job description and then he would empower them to complete their assignments.

How could Jesus have such complete trust in the ministry of the Holy Spirit? How could He leave these men in what appeared to be such a poor condition to maintain their own salvation, much less to orchestrate future generations to follow their example? How could Jesus leave with such a resolve that what He was leaving would not only survive but flourish? The simple reason is this; He himself had come to wholly rely and trust on the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit.

To understand more about the history of this relationship we must go to the very moment Jesus began His public ministry to discover how powerful this leadership was. Recently the Lord had me share a series of messages concerning the first temptations of Christ. The three part series is called, “*Stones into Bread,*” and can be found on our website for your convenience.

For the moment let us look at ***Matthew 4: 1-4*** ***Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*** This portion of scripture recounts

what is commonly understood as the first of three major temptations Jesus went through in the wilderness on our behalf.

We must understand Jesus not only became the substitution for sin at the cross, for indeed His substitution for man's sin was lived out in His entire life. Everything Jesus did in His life and death was for our substitution, meaning that He substituted Himself for you and I in all things so that we, as born again believers can walk this life out in the fullness of the finished work of Jesus Christ. Our part in all this is to find our personal identification in His substitution. In other words, I personally have to identify with what He did in order for His victories to work on my behalf.

The first thing that we must note is that while Jesus was here on earth He was standing in for every man that had ever lived or would live in the ages to come. For Him to do this successfully He had to be the final substitution for the very first man Adam. Adam of course is where man first fell to the nature of sin and so to set things in perfect order again God had to start with Adam and move forward. Every man's identification until Christ was in the first Adam. After the cross it was God's desire that every man find his identification in Jesus, *the second Adam*.

For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (I Corinthians 15:21-22)

For Christ to be completely successful in His mission it was imperative for Him to face every temptation the first Adam faced and this time defeat Satan on behalf of all mankind for the purpose of gaining victory over sin. In looking at the first temptation it is important to note that everything that Jesus faced in the wilderness was no less than a mirror image of what Adam went through in the temptation in the garden.

One day I was reading the account of Jesus' first temptation and the Holy Spirit asked me a question. He asked, "What would have been wrong in Jesus responding to Satan's request to turn stones into bread?" My immediate response was something like, "I guess because Satan was the one doing the requesting," much less putting it in a pretense of questioning His very sonship "if thou be the son of God." The Lord responded by letting me know there was really a much deeper issue at hand. So I began to investigate.

Was it because Jesus would have been breaking his fast prematurely? ***Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. (Luke 4:2-3)*** Looking at these scriptures it appears that Satan came after Christ had accomplished His forty days of fasting. We understand that Jesus had already completed what the Father was requiring in number of days in fasting. Then was it wrong to change the molecular structure of one object into another, as in changing the substance of a rock into the substance of bread? I quickly remembered what God had done in Pharaoh's court when He turned Moses staff into a slivering serpent. So what could be the reason why it would have been so wrong for Jesus to submit to Satan's request?

The answer was in Jesus' reply to Satan. ***And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (Luke 4:4)***

The Father's plan in Jesus breaking His fast was in later verses revealed; the angels came and ministered unto Him, just as angels ministered to Elijah after his fast, they also came and ministered to Jesus. This was God's plan for Jesus to be fed as well. The problem with doing it any way other than

the Father's desire would have put Jesus on the seat of authority becoming His own sufficiency and meeting His own needs by His own decision making process. But Jesus, as the obedient son had not come to do His own will but that of His Father. ***Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. (Hebrews 10:7)*** What Jesus was saying was this, I do not see the Father doing it this way and I don't hear him saying this is the way you will be fed.

The truth was Jesus had just spent forty days of intimate fellowship with His Father and His ear was so in tune with what the Father's desires were that He refused to do it any other way. Could He have turned the stones into bread, absolutely? Would there have been any immediate repercussions in doing it that way, probably not.

The only thing is that He would have set up some kind of precedence in the Spirit for the rest of His earthly ministry. ***“Who is on the seat of authority?”*** Will human sufficiency reign with the decision making processes of the soul or will we be like Jesus who in essence was saying, I am in ear shot of my Father or in listening distance and I don't hear Him saying it is to be done this way?

How many times Friend do we try to turn stones into bread? The power is available to perform the miracle, the problem being that it was not the way He wanted it done. Just because we pray over something does not sanctify it. Just because there is a scripture reference that addresses the issue does not automatically sanctify what we are asking God to do for us. However, intimacy with the Father will always give us a hearing ear, one that knows what and how He wants things done.

This is our challenge on a daily basis. We must choose who will sit on the seat of authority in our lives. Will we reign with Him through a continued intimate fellowship or will we trust in previously learned knowledge without consulting Him?

How many times have we turned stones into bread and gave testimony that God came through for us at the eleven o'clock hour?

Just think for a moment, what if Jesus would have said to Himself, yes, I am the Son of God and my fast is over. I have completed my course and I will do this. The first temptation was in a certain sense a more subtle temptation than the last two. In temptation #2 everyone knows it's wrong to do bodily harm to yourself as in jumping off tall buildings. In temptation #3 even our preschoolers know it's wrong to worship the devil. But, what about meeting your own needs when you can, what is wrong with that? The problem here is who is taking the seat or position of sufficiency?

This was what Adam fell to in the garden. When Eve did not fall over immediately when she ate of the forbidden fruit, Adam reasoned in his mind and his reasoning process concluded that what he saw with his eyes was stronger than the word that had proceeded from the mouth of God.

Thus, Adam's fall was the beginning of humanism as we know it. Man's rule over the decision making process. For those of us who serve God out of our spirit this temptation is more subtle than falling to blatant sin. It is as close as *“good intentions.”*

If Jesus would have began His earthly ministry in this manner; would the story of the feeding of the five thousand been rewritten to look something like this? Then Jesus bade His disciples to receive an offering from the multitude and commissioned them to buy, barter and ask donations from vendors to sponsor the present crusade. Believe me I can see miracles even in these types of situations. They are not wrong in and of themselves. I can see the disciples descending on this mass of people just before

dark and hearing Jesus say let's hurry; I have a good distribution plan mapped out. By midnight the last child is fed and a sigh of relief resounds from Jesus and His disciples. Around the fire each disciple has a story of how God gave Him favor in whatever town he was in. The offering was a testimony in itself, so much among so many poor and it all got done before midnight. That's about the time when Jesus would say something to the effect that "we serve a God that always comes through, it may be at the eleven o'clock hour but He always comes through." The disciples would have been teary eyed and worn out and would have said, "Yes and Amen!"

Is this God's favorite mode of operation or does He have a better way? Does He like to meet the needs at the eleven thirty mark or would He like to meet it at 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5 or how about before you even ask? ***Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (Ephesians 3:20)***

How often do we turn stones into bread without hearing from the Father first and God does all He can to add Himself to it?

Jesus learned a valuable lesson in the wilderness. Reversing the fall of Adam was in what Jesus said when He replied, ***I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. (John 5:30)*** Did this not make His and the disciples job so much easier eliminating the power of human effort?

The voice of the Father today is no less than the precious Holy Spirit, the one whom Jesus came to trust and rely on for His earthly ministry. No wonder He had such peace when He was leaving "God and Sons, Inc," to such a trusted friend.

Friend, in closing I would encourage you to follow the example of our Master in committing part of your day to the pursuit of intimacy with the Father. This precious time with Him expressing adoration for His love and commitment to you will yield great dividends and prepare you for His plan in your life.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Bronc

P.S. - The word says that we are to exhort one another daily while it is called today and that if two shall agree as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of our Father which is in heaven. If you have a prayer request or a praise report to share please let us hear from you. You can contact us through the web site at www.broncflint.org or email us at fpc@broncflint.org and/or feel free to write us at:

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