

“Am I a Living Sacrifice - Expectant on God?”

I have used this quote from the book - “Through the Looking Glass” on a couple of occasions. It goes like this:

Alice is traveling along and seeing the Cheshire Cat perched on a branch she asks,

“Would you please tell me which way I ought to go from here?”

The Cat replies, *“That depends on where you want to get.”*

Alice says, *“I don’t care much where.”*

The Cat responds ... “Then it doesn’t matter which way you go!”

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING?

There are far too many people whose lives get stalled because for one reason or another ... they are keen but not committed enough to be described as focussed, passionate and devoted.

We all want to do something of significance, be successful; but many things ...all of which are real and relevant at the time ... get in the way. These things seem to take a priority well above their actual standing.

The Bible gives us a standard for our commitment and faith that establishes our motivation and commitment for everything:

ROMANS 12:1

“I beseech (urge) you therefore, brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable (rational) service.”

This whole *“present myself as a living sacrifice”* thing has always had me feeling like *“I don’t measure up”* and I need to ‘perform’ or ‘sacrifice’ myself more and more... but then I read ...

1 SAMUEL 15:22

“... Behold to obey is better than sacrifice ...”

So I guess the natural question is ... “What do I need to be obedient in?”

Over the last few weeks I have been doing a series of messages based on the subject of ‘CHANGE’.

For us to get to a place of being able to say to Jesus ... *“May it be to me as you said”* ... there is every likelihood that some changes will need to take place.

Perhaps in our thinking (this is called repentance ... to change our mind), in habits, in speech ... maybe even in certain relationships.

Whilst I am no fan of Charles Darwin, he made a very valid statement that I would like to quote ...

It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change. Charles Darwin

How powerful do you think obedience to God can be?

ROMANS 5:19

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”

As we reflect over the last year; may I ask ...

“Are there times when you think obedience to God was the correct option and yet you didn’t take it?”

I wonder if the story would have been different if Mary or Joseph had said “NO”?

Yet - because of one young woman’s obedience and presenting herself as a living sacrifice ... many were given the opportunity to become sons and daughters of Righteousness.

Q. As I am speaking this ... do you feel like maybe there has been a dream or an opportunity that was robbed from you through not saying “YES”?

Q. Was there a time where you felt God ask something of you and your negative response has haunted you since that day?

Dreams are renewable. No matter what our age or condition, there are still untapped possibilities within us and new beauty waiting to be born. Dale Turner Minister & Theology Professor (1917-2006)

Q. So what needs to happen? What needs to change for us now?

I want to spend a bit of time speaking about our ‘Expectancies’.

Tom Hatch

27 December2009

Q. WHAT IS THE WORD OF GOD OVER YOU, OVER YOUR LIFE?

The Word over Mary was that “She would bear the Son of God” and she made herself available.

The Holy Spirit ‘hovered’ over the beginning of creation while it was still without form ... just WAITING FOR THE WORD FROM GOD ... “LET THERE BE!”

PAUSE & THINK ... “LET THERE BE....?”

What is it you expect from God? Do you expect punishment, rebuke, nothing?

I believe it is OK to expect from God – not demand – but most definitely expect.

Our environment, the world in which we live and work, is a mirror of our attitudes and expectations. Earl Nightingale motivational speaker and author

EXPECTATION REQUIRES:

1. **A LIVING INNER REVELATION**

I recently spoke about revelations being ‘positional and progressive’.

We must position ourselves to receive that revelation from God ... and then we must walk in them ... as living sacrifices obedient to God’s Word.

His Word contains creation power!

Our future is conditioned by the revelations we activate. We end up living out ‘what we see!’ Paul de Jong Senior Leader - LIFE AKLD - NZ

2. **AN INVESTMENT OF SEED**

2 CORINTHIANS 9: 6–11 Intentional sowing purposed in our hearts

1 CORINTHIANS 3: 6–8 Planting or watering ... ‘work/labour’

Don't let the fear of the time it will take to accomplish something stand in the way of your doing it. The time will pass anyway; we might just as well put that passing time to the best possible use. Earl Nightingale motivational speaker and author

3. **AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SEASONS**

Tom Hatch

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JEREMIAH 1:10

To root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.

Do we need to take a page from the local Council and their gardeners? Do we need to weed out some ‘old-growth’? Is it time to plant something new? Is there a requirement to add some dimension to what we are already doing?

Now that I have taught you these things I must give you a warning ...

EXPECTATION HAS AN ENEMY!

That enemy is:

1. A Devil who will seek to dominate you!

ISAIAH 59:19

“... When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him”

Q. ...In that verse where do you put your ‘comma’?

2. A ‘loss-centred’ experience.

What do I mean by that? Let me answer with a little saying I learnt as a young trainee:

“If at first you don’t succeed – hide all the evidence that you even tried!”

Victory is not often seen in the first or the second rounds! We will go through things – do not let them rob you of your expectations!

Expecting the world not to attack you because you are a good person ... is like expecting a bull not to charge you because you are a vegetarian!

3. An attitude of ‘simply enough’.

If our attitude is established in a ‘this is my lot’ mindset ... if we allow the dictates of others to set our level we will never attain to all God has for us.

It is not the critic that counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in

the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement. And at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat. President Theodore Roosevelt - Paris 1910

God is the One who thought of you, designed you, made you, gave you a purpose, established the work for you to do and is now asking you to walk in that purpose ...

"What we believe about God determines how we will serve Him"

"We are not here randomly, we all have an assignment from God"

"Genuine faith always advances on the Word of God"

Will 'YOU/I' be that living sacrifice, expectant on God to fulfil His Word
spoken over you?