

And if the bugler doesn't sound a clear call, how will the soldiers know they are being called to battle?

1st Corinthians 14:8 NLV

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First Love Ministries, Inc.

Prayer Study #221

IT'S LATER THAN YOU THINK

*He who testifieth these things saith, **Surely, I come quickly.** Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

Revelation 22:20

WHAT IS YOUR DECISION?

Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants, the prophets. Amos 3:7

Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. Joel 3:14

Now, therefore, fear the LORD, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the river and in Egypt, and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD. Joshua 24:14-15

JESUS IS CALLING YOU TO THE BANQUET

*Then said He unto him, **A certain man gave a great supper and bade many. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must need go and see it; I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and, therefore, I cannot come. So that servant came and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly in to the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my***

house may be filled. For I say unto you, That none of these men who were bidden shall taste of my supper. Luke 14:16-24

MANY ARE REJECTING HIM

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children, together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Luke 13:34-34

William Barclay: “Nothing hurts so much as to go to someone and offer love and have that offer spurned. It is life’s bitterest tragedy to give one’s heart to someone only to have it broken. That is what happened to Jesus in Jerusalem; and still He comes to us, and still we reject Him. But the fact remains that to reject God’s love is, in the end, to be in peril of His wrath.”

DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE HIM OR RECOMMIT YOUR LIFE TO CHRIST TONIGHT?

Jesus answered and said to him, Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:3

What really is salvation? We have wrongly been taught that salvation refers only to being *saved* from righteous wrath so that we can go to heaven. A word study in the original Greek tells us that salvation, initiated by the *born again* experience, is so much more. It includes deliverance, help, rescue from a dangerous circumstance or harmful state by a savior, rescue from earthly enemies, freedom from guilt and sin, and punishment, health, welfare. *For ALL the promises of God in Him are “yea” and in Him “Amen”, unto the glory of God by us.* 2nd Corinthians 1:20

EXCUSES (source unknown)

- **I AM TOO BAD OR TOO GREAT A SINNER:** 1st Timothy 1:15 says Jesus came to save the Chief of Sinners, and though their sins be as scarlett (Isaiah 1:18), Jesus is able to save to the “uttermost” (Hebrews 7:25) and will not “cast away” any who come to Him (John 6:37).
- **I AM AFRAID I CAN’T HOLD OUT:** God will not permit us to be tempted above what we are able to bear (1st Corinthians 10:13). We are not to keep ourselves but are kept by the power of God (1st Peter 1:5). Christ is able to keep us (Jude 24), and no man can pluck us out of His

hand (John 10:27-29). He who has begun a good work in us will continue it unto the end (Philippians 1:6).

- **I WILL BE PERSECUTED:** Yes, all who live Godly lives will suffer persecution (2nd Timothy 3:12). Jesus suffered persecution for us (1st Peter 2:20-21), and we must not let even those of our own household keep us from Christ (Matthew 10:34-39). The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be revealed to us (Romans 8:18) .
- **I AM SEEKING BUT CANNOT FIND HIM:** You must search for Him with “all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). As Christ is seeking you (Luke 19:10), if you are really seeking Him, it won’t take long for a seeking Savior and a seeking sinner to find each other.
- **I AM TRYING TO BE A CHRISTIAN:** It is not “trying” but “RECEIVING!” (John 1:12)
- **I CAN’T BELIEVE:** In most cases the reason is an unforgiving spirit (Matthew 5:22-24 & 6:15), some daring sin (Matthew 18:8), the love of the world (1st John 2:15), business or social entanglements (Mark 8:36, 2nd Corinthians 6:14-17), being ashamed (Luke 9:26). Isaiah 55:7 (*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the LORD, and He [JESUS] will have mercy upon him, and [return] to our God, for He will abundantly pardon*) will show you what you must do, and Galatians 6:7-8 (*Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to the flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life*) will show you the consequences if you don’t. Romans 10:17 (*So that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*) shows you how faith-the opposite of unbelief-comes.
- **IT IS TOO LATE:** The dying thief story tells us it is never too late until we are dead (Luke 23:39-43).
- **INCONSISTENCIES OF CHRISTIANS KEEP ME FROM CHRIST:** Jesus said, “...What is that to you? You follow Me” (John 21:22). The Bible tells us that it is not wise to compare ourselves to others, that we are not to judge one another, that we are not to judge another man’s servant, that everyone of us shall give a personal account to Christ (2nd Corinthians 10:12, Romans 14:4, Romans 14:10-12). Christians are trying to follow Christ and Satan is trying to prevent them, and sometimes Christians are inconsistent, but we do not follow men (Romans 7:18-25). We follow Jesus.

- **I DO BELIEVE, BUT I DON'T FEEL SAVED:** Feeling is the FRUIT, not the ROOT of salvation (Galatians 5:22, 1st Peter 1:8). The Bible nowhere says we are to trust in our “feelings” for salvation, but we are to trust in the PROMISES of God.

REACTIONS OF THOSE WHO SAW HIM

THE EMMAUS DISCIPLES

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us along the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?
Luke 24:32

THE ROMAN CENTURION

And when the centurion, who stood facing Him, saw that He so cried out and gave up the spirit, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God. Mark 15:39

MARY MAGDALENE

*But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked in to the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “**Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?**” She supposing Him to be the gardner, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, “**Mary!**” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher). John 20:11-16*

THOMAS

*And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said, “**Peace to you!**” Then He said to Thomas, “**Reach your finger here and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.**” And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!” John 20:22-29*