

BEING THE BODY - Terri

Ephesians 4: 1-6

For He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will--to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Isaiah 12: 4

In that day you will say: "Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.

He wanted to make Himself known to all people.

He has offered us an opportunity to be co-laborers with Him. He created us with purpose. We were made in His image and His likeness.

What does this look like in our everyday life.

This I have learned:

Being the Body means to listen. The Body is directed by the Spirit. I can't learn what I need to learn if I can't hear the Holy Spirit directing the Orchestra. And if I cannot learn then I cannot do. I then become a hindrance instead of a steward. Unfortunately, I know the position of being a hindrance well.

I have also learned that I should always look for the lesson. What is God saying to me, to them, to us right now? What does God want to accomplish in our lives right now? So I listen closely to them and the Holy Spirit. What supernatural thing is happening? Let Your Kingdom Come on Earth as it is in Heaven! What thing is happening in Heaven that needs to happen here on earth. God, I want to know what you are saying! I want to know what you are doing. Jesus said:

*"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. **John 5:19***

It is evident if the Body is living the Christ Life or if it is still consumed with self. So people may call out "hypocrite", because outside the Christ Life you are consumed with self and it can be seen.

In the past it seemed to be a matter of reputation as well. You know, some time ago people would say "he/she is a Christian." And that really held a lot of weight. Now, people have seen us so undone that it carries little weight to just say it. However, when people see the Christlike Character, they respond accordingly.

I've learned that Christ was not used by people, he gave himself to people and then ultimately for all of mankind.

He would feel mercy and desire that they be made whole.

Mark 5:14-20

Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man--and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region. As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Do we as the church feel mercy and desire that people be made whole? Or do we feel used and become judgmental. Dying to ourselves is the only way to The Christ Life. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal the direction in this Christ Life.

Soon the person who is in need of being made whole will recognize that they can neither manipulate or be found in judgment by The Body. It is a new thing. Jesus said "I make all things new" **Revelation 21:5**. They will begin to see that they are drinking "water from which they will never thirst again" as Jesus said to the Samaritan Woman. **John 4: 6-14**

They will find that it is their faith that turns on the healing power. Jesus said:
"Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction." **Mark 5:34**

It was not because they knew how to finagle or because they got close to Jesus. Sadly enough in his own home town (around people who knew him) he said he could not do many miracles there **because of their unbelief**.

Matthew 13:54-58 *And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?" So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house." Now He did not do many mighty works there **because of their unbelief**.*

Do we tell people **by our example** that it is their faith in Jesus that brings their healing and deliverance? I know we say it, but it seems we don't often walk this out.

A lady, in writing a thank you said:

Having been raised by public school leaders, I was a staunch public school advocate. My 4 children were products of public school and my attitude toward Christian schools was always that covenant children were to be 'salt and light' in a world of darkness. I never considered that they were not prepared to be that. God showed me grace and mercy by keeping my children from falling prey to the world. Further, he showed his power by plucking me from the public schools and putting me in a Christian environment...I would NEVER have chosen this life for myself.

We must revisit what we believe to make sure it lines up with scripture. Traditions, rituals, culture, class and more all shape our theology. This is one of the reasons those who are teachers among us are held more accountable.

Matthew 23

Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by

men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged to perform it.' Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it. He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, and say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.' Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

We have become out of touch to what was important to Jesus when he walked the earth. We have put up walls, divisions and conditions. Not so with Jesus. He was continuously with the people. He was no respecter of persons. He touched everyone.

An attitude of humility and reverence for God like King David had when he could have killed Saul seems appropriate. He said he would not touch the Lord's anointed. And he killed a man who said he killed Saul.

2 Samuel 1:13-16

Then David said to the young man who told him, "Where are you from?" And he answered, "I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite." So David said to him, "How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Lord's anointed?" Then David called one of the young men and said, "Go near, and execute him!" And he struck him so that he died. So David said to him, "Your blood is on your own head, for your own mouth has testified against you, saying, 'I have killed the Lord's anointed.' "

It was because he revered God. God said David was a man after his own heart. So many times we forget that God is Holy and whatever He sets aside is Holy.

Our motives for sharing revelation and wisdom are to make sure we all walk in complete reverence to our Holy God. Not only can we not approach God in any kind of manner but we also must respect those who are the temples of the Holy Spirit. In love and reverent fear we should come one to another especially in sensitive matters of reconciliation.

To each one there have been things afforded to them. What things have been afforded to you? What side of life have you seen and experienced that God has given you to offer to your other brothers and sisters in Christ. We all see through the glass dimly. We all know in part. But as we come together it becomes a more clearer picture. Who has a right to devalue what God has given; not even the person themselves. There is something to be learned from every spectrum of life. No matter what country, ethnic culture or class, everyone has learned things that others have no knowledge of unless it is shared. Even every generation has its own awareness. Unless we come together we will not see the whole human part of the picture. In the past I looked at impoverished conditions and hardships as a hindrance in life. That somehow being impoverished or enduring trials consumed you. But it seems that anything can consume a person. It is **what you do with the state you are in** that matters. God has given us all portions as we are born into this earth. We just need to gather what it is He is calling us to; for who is responsible for what family they were born into that they cannot put that aside to see the greatness of what they were called unto.

Coming to unity of the faith then as one to another each equipped with part of the revelation of Christ, if we make room for each other – listening and matching it up with scripture we can bring each other around. So all the members of The Body have something that no other member has. Once all parts see their personal value and all parts see the value of one another, then perhaps we will have ... a BODY.

Something else:

Our lack of recognition of our sins can and do offend and more so when not taken care of by either asking for forgiveness or giving forgiveness. **Forgiveness is also a characteristic of Christlikeness.**

What God has so graciously helped us to either avoid or overcome in sin can serve as opportunities to bless our brother or sister who may not have an awareness or who may not have overcome that obstacle.

Ephesians 1:3-6 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.