

MONDAY, May 25, 2009: *“God’s Word isn’t to be debated or dissected; it is to be done.”* _Billy Graham, *The Journey*, p. 151

☐ Genesis 33:20 **And he erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel**

If you know anything of the life of Jacob you know that he was a scoundrel; the classic prodigal son that brought grief to his parents and trouble everywhere he went.

However – finally (!) – we see Jacob following in the footprints of his father and grandfather. He has built an altar and is calling upon the name of God.

“El-elohe-Israel” = God, the God of Israel. It is a good thing to see Jacob calling upon the name of God; but it is also highly significant that he is “renaming” himself. He refers to himself as “Israel” (prince of God) vs. “Jacob” (deceiver).

The lesson is that the way we see ourselves determines the level of our success. In other words, only until Jacob starting seeing himself as “Israel” did he begin to make progress.

I have seen many examples of people who short-circuit God’s destiny for their lives simply because they cannot see themselves winning. They see themselves forever as “less than.” If you are one of those people that struggle with this “less than” mindset, today let me encourage you – God says that that is not true! You can be more because God designed you for success. Today, I encourage you, instead of seeing your failures and tragedies as scars, see them as badges of honor that qualify you to be in the winner’s circle and then act accordingly.

SCRIPTURE: John 8:36

TUESDAY, May 26, 2009:
“Becoming a Christian is the work of a moment: being a Christian is the work of a lifetime.”

☐ Ezekiel 6:9 **I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me.**

We don’t usually think in terms of “breaking God’s heart,” but God does. When God thinks of us He doesn’t think of us in terms of a pet or a project or a pawn on a chessboard, He thinks in terms of a spouse. He thinks in terms of being married to us (an amazing thought!).

Outside of my relationship with Jesus Christ, the greatest joy I have in life is my relationship with my wife. Yet there have been times when our relationship did not bring joy; it was more like a burden. In every case it was because we drifted apart. We allowed other things to distract us from each other. It was only when we awakened ourselves to this fact and made intentional decisions to put each other back in the right place in our lives that the joy was restored.

The same can be true with God. Perhaps today you don’t feel that close to God. You may not even be aware of it, but you’re crushing His heart. He loves you and wants to be in relationship with you.

Before leaving the house, why not take the time to renew that precious relationship?

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 35:10

WEDNESDAY, May 27, 2009:
“Remember, God sees both the global and the eternal consequences of every decision you make. That’s a staggering thought, isn’t it? We see only the immediate consequences, which is why we sometimes don’t understand why God allows certain things to happen.” _H. Dale Burke, *Less is More Leadership*, p. 63

☐ Ezekiel 7:27 **I will do to them according to their way, and according to what they deserve I will judge them; then they shall know that I am the LORD!**

If ever there was a verse that summed up life before Christ, this is it. This is what happens when we live under the law of God instead of the grace of God.

Today I want to remind you of just how precious our salvation is. I am so thankful that we do not get what we deserve! Instead, through belief in Jesus as our Savior, we rest in the mercy of God. For that we can be eternally grateful.

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:3

THURSDAY: May 28, 2009:
“Something can be true but not the truth.” _Glenn Walters, message on Truth\May 13, 2009

☐ Colossians 2:18 **Let no one cheat you of your reward...**

Yesterday we spoke of life under the Law and how Jesus liberated us from it’s demands. Today’s verse is a reminder that people will come into your life and try to convince you that you need Jesus “and” something else. Don’t you believe it!

I want to remind you that this great salvation that we have is paid for. Sometimes we say it is free; but that is not really the case – it is not free, it is paid – paid for with the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, don’t let anyone (including yourself) put other demands on you. You are free today!

That doesn’t mean that your life will not change; but it will change because of the love you have for Christ, not because of duty or fear.

Don’t be one of those miserable Christians that go around with a frown on their face; be free! Enjoy the wonderful paid-for gift of salvation.

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 2:11-23