

The Servant



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The purpose of this newsletter is to pass along information and ideas to help the Lord's servants as they minister to others. Feel free to use any of it in your ministry

Family Style

Joseph sat alone. The Egyptians thought it an abomination for Egyptians to eat with Hebrews. Joseph sat by himself, neither with the Egyptians nor with the Hebrews.¹ His was a glorious table. Our Lord's table is more glorious. Although the sons of Jacob were unworthy and had been the chiefest of sinners (and deserved the wrath of God), they were about to partake of Amazing Grace. "Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good." Although many years had passed, Joseph's brethren were about to watch the tables turn. They would be thunder-struck with the words of the curiously familiar figure before them, "I am Joseph." They thought he was dead. He was very much alive. His chains of iron had turned to gold.

Oh, Christian, the tables have turned. The tomb is empty. Jesus is LORD. Yet today, unlike Joseph, Jesus would not eat alone. He welcomes us. He bids us come. Today we sit at his table. He is the bread of life.²

Joseph fed the forgiven "according to their families."³ Families eat together. That is how it should be. Jesus wants every man to become part of the family of God. To the astonishment of the Pharisees, Jesus ate with publicans and sinners. Biblical separation is never the separation of the Pharisee, which is founded more on fear of contamination than on compassion for sinners. Jesus taught us that it might be necessary to touch a sinner to save a soul. Real holiness, both "departs from evil and does good"⁴.

Not only would Jesus sit with sinners, he sat with one once dead. "But Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him" and he was "whom he raised from the dead."⁵ We too, like Lazarus are invited to sit at the Lord's Table each Lord's Day, and we also were "once dead" in trespasses and in sins. We can only wonder how surprised

and amazed Lazarus was to be sitting there. We cannot imagine his "sending regrets" in response to God's invitation. How can we?

Not only are we those "who were dead," and are now alive sitting at the table of Communion with Jesus, this once crucified One, is present as he promised. "There am I in the midst," said he.⁶

¹Gen.43:32; ²Gen. 47:15; ³Gen. 47:12; ⁴Ps. 34:14; ⁵John. 12:2,1; ⁶Mat. 18:20

The Lottery

(when they cast lots)

They cast lots for his possessions as he hung upon the cross
They gambled with their very souls and knew not they were lost
They fought to gain possessions of the dying Jewish King
Knowing not that to save their soul was the most important thing

Who was the foolish lucky one that lottery to win?
Knowing not that he was lost and condemned to death by sin
And also then was pardoned with a word from Grace above
Spoken by this Suffering One, "Forgive" said He in love

Who took that robe so lovely, that the Son of God had worn?
Could it protect and hide some sinner, from the coming storm?
And who would have audacity to wear His stolen shoes?
And which way would he go, would he Hell or Heaven choose?

'Twas not a robe his legacy, nor sandals for man's feet
but his blood and sacrifice that saves from judgment's heat
He hung there stripped of everything, except His Love and Grace
To buy for us forgiveness and give us Heaven's place.

Breeze Please

Until it something moves
The wind is never seen
So by acts of love faith proves
What by "Born-Again" we mean

Fault Finders

“and they found fault” (Mt. 7:2).

Every bit the scientist, and fascinated with experiments of both lightning and life, Benjamin Franklin drew up a score card of moral faults to enable him to monitor his moral life. Realizing that without self-discipline, both food and the ladies could be his ruin. He made a list of his faults (temper, gluttony, laziness, vanity, etc). He put these on a weekly chart. When he would recognize a fault in his life one day, he would mark it on his chart and determine to avoid it on the following day. He kept this up for years until his chart was free of black marks. Then he recognized how proud he was of himself, had to mark the box for the fault of pride, and then threw away his chart in disgust; never to take it up again.

California has a famous fault line running through the state. Scientists monitor the tremors and anticipate a coming great earthquake which Californians call the “Big One.”

There are many fault lines that run through our human nature as well. The fault lines of sin crack the earth of our best intentions. We need something more than our human nature or our will power to keep our life intact. *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, for he trusteth in thee.”* (Isa. 26:3).

Who does not have faults? Who has not, like Franklin, found cracks in the foundation of our conduct, if not our character? Paul said, *“all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* There are fault lines running through every life, every life except the life of the Lord Jesus. The Pharisees were experts in finding fault. They found

faults everywhere. It is not surprising that they found faults with the disciples (Mk. 7:2). That is not hard to do. We all have so many. The Lord Jesus had none. Pilate would have gotten his conscience “off the hook” (so to speak if he could find one) but he had to admit, *“I find no fault with this man.”* (Lk. 23:4,14).

The Law, according to Rom. 7:7 and Heb. 8:7, is also a good fault finder. No one can read the law and not feel convicted unless he is determined to deceive himself. In Gen. 41:9 the Chief butler said *“Now, I do remember my faults this day.”* David in Ps. 19:12 asked God to cleanse him of *“secret faults.”* Who does not have these? Paul speaks to the Galatians about someone being *“overtaken”* in a fault (Gal.6:1). Like cracks on a city sidewalk, faults are everywhere.

Finding faults is important. Doctors do it, engineers on the space shuttle do it when they find cracks in the fuel line just in time to prevent a catastrophe. The problem is not in the finding, the problem is in the fixing.

Like the Chief butler we would do better to remember our faults while there is still time to fix them, than to remember them in eternity when it is too late. Like David, we would do well to ask God to search our hearts for the hairline cracks in our spiritual fuel system now rather than to have them rupture under pressure.

The only hope for fault-filled sinners is a faultless Savior. Pilate said, “I find no fault”, and neither do I. Every other religious leader has their faults. Jesus was the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. He came to save us from our sins, our faults. Build your life on your own merit and you build right on top of a dangerous fault line. Sooner or later everything will come crashing

down on you like the Philippian Jail. No life can survive coming earthquake of judgment day.

The legalist is someone who pretends to be without faults. As such they have only two options: play the hypocrite, or eventually give up and collapse under the weight of their pretension. There is another way.

1. **Forget about Self reformation.** Ben Franklin saw it did not work. All your resolutions will not work either. You must be born again. You must build your life by faith upon the solid rock, on the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. **Confess you faults.** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1Jn. 1:9).

3. **Forsake.** We need to forsake them as well. Prov. 28:13. Don’t build on a rail road track, and don’t build on a fault line.

4. **Be honest.** “Confess your faults one to another.” (Ja. 5:16). If you find someone overtaken in a fault, try to help restore that brother (Gal.6:1)

5. **Be encouraged.** Jude 24 One day we will be presented to God “faultless” because we have placed our trust in the faultless one, the Lord Jesus. 🍷

For those who could use some cheer here are

Three Cheers

1. Mt. 9:2 “Your sins are forgiven”
2. Jn. 16:33 “I have overcome the world”
3. Acts 27:25 “For I believe God.”



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