

jan 28

let's start right out. "if anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." mark 9:35
Jesus lays it all out for us in this scripture.

exactly what does it mean to be first? james and john (prompted by their mother) asked Jesus, "grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." mark 10:37 even though their desire may have been genuine, the request was from the flesh and not the spirit. i freely admit also that all my desire is to stand a little closer to Jesus when i get there.

i think when we see Him in His glory, like zacchaeus who climbed a tree for viewing in luke 19:4, we will all be wanting to see more and be closer. our Lord's response to zacchaeus' efforts was to stay at his house. have you made that effort and is He now staying in your house? He wants to but He seeks your expression of exuberance (or simple invitation) to invite Him.

in matthew 20, Jesus gives us the parable of the laborers hired to work in the field. the ones who toiled only one hour received the same wages as the ones working all day. i think all of us, operating in our flesh, can relate to the dismay of the ones working longer. surely there is inequity in that.

i don't know if this helps us relate more to that parable or not. suppose a lady has two children. when they come home from school, one goes straight to the

couch and hollers, "what's for supper"? the other one comes in and immediately embraces her, tells her he loves her and asks how her day was.

yes, they are both her children and both equally loved. either one, she would give her all to protect them. so we agree she loves them both, but which do you think she was happiest to see? just maybe the one who was loving and concerned for her instead of the one who wanted to know what else she could do for them.

could it be that the last laborers came in with such gratefulness that they toiled even harder while the previous ones had slowed down and were "pacing themselves"?

are we like those early laborers who have slowed down. have we grown into acceptance and even expectance of His mercy. do we now take too much for granted? maybe this was like when Jesus spoke to the church in ephesus. "nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love." rev 2:4

He wants that exuberance and excitement from us. i freely admit that my beginning days with Jesus were full with longing and desire. i couldn't get enough of consuming His word and couldn't wait for the next time the church doors were open. to my regret, i too soon fell into acceptance also. i too spent time with Him - when other things were accomplished. there definitely comes that time when we may rest assured we can depend on Him - but our thankfulness and love must not be moved to the back burner.

i am thankful to say that is no longer. my love has bloomed anew and the fire that once burned within me has been rekindled. now i must keep feeding that fire if it is to continue burning. fire is like that. it must be fed to continue or to grow. so it is with our relationships. they must be tended to or they will grow apart. thoughts will wane and hopes will be extinguished.

the scripture that terrifies me most in the bible is: "I never knew you". matt 7:23 this was spoken to those who had prophesied, cast out demons and done wonders in His name. but their heart was not in alignment with their actions. this should humble all those who think it is them who perform those wonders. Jesus will grant the desire of the receiver over the heart of the giver. it is His working, never ours. it is His glory, never ours.

i hope something i have shared today will help someone. we all need to remain diligent and attentive. attentive to our relationship with Him. i know He is coming is soon. the Holy Spirit will be poured out in a new and powerful way to those who are hungry for it. may you not be one of those following the wave. may you be in the wave.

linda