

ALL THAT WE DESIRE

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When God created man in the Garden of Eden, He wanted everyone to be perfectly happy, and it was only through Him that any peace and happiness could be found. While man remained under God's guidance and control, he had everything that he desired. When he rebelled against God and tried to get things by his own efforts and plans, He lost all that God had planned for man. His condition became directly opposite to what God had planned for His people. Instead of enjoying peace and happiness, they had no peace and suffered great trouble and sorrow.

Ever since that day, man has been trying by his own efforts to get back that peace and happiness that he lost through Adam's rebellion. Since man is trying by his own efforts, he is getting farther and farther away from real peace and happiness. Sin, sorrow, sickness, disease, and trouble of every kind are the results of shutting God out and trying by his own efforts.

God has revealed a plan in His Word how our life can become peaceful, and we can get back that same happiness that man enjoyed when he was created. Out of His great love for us, God sent His Son to this earth, to bear on the Cross, all the trouble that man brought upon the human race when he departed from God. He has opened the way for us that we may find 'all that we desire' in this life and for Eternity. The Bible tells us how to get back into the center of God's will and enjoy all the benefits of His love, mercy, and power, and to receive all that we need and desire.

Man lost God's favor and blessing by turning his back on God and trying to find happiness by his own efforts and plans. This has proved to be worse than a failure. The most reasonable and sensible thing to do

would be to reverse the course of action that Adam took.

Jesus Christ has opened the way for us to do so, by returning to God, and submitting ourselves fully to Him, accepting His plans, depending upon His power alone, and that will place us in a position where God can give us the desires of our heart. Just to the extent that we accept the plans God laid down in His Word and depend on Him alone for all that we need and desire, will we become happy and prosperous.

We cannot of ourselves do this in our own strength. The Holy Spirit has been sent into this world to guide and direct us into all Truth, which is all the teaching of the New Testament and of the Old, as far as it relates to the New. The only possible way for the Holy Spirit to do this in our lives is to place ourselves into God's hands, or we could say to place ourselves in His workshop and training school, for Him to have His own way with us. This will place us in a position where we can have His power manifested in leading and guiding us into every Truth found in the Bible. As we come to know and accept God's will and plans and really depend on Him alone, we will get what we need and desire and also be prepared for Eternal Life.

We have many examples in the Bible that show us how ineffective and useless the plans and power of man really are, and how perfectly workable and successful God's plans are.

Joseph is one of the best examples. Many troubles came upon him while God was teaching and training him, and everything, for some time was just opposite to what he desired, but there was a reason for all this. God was working to expose and to help him get rid of every plan and effort of his own to get what he desired.

It began with his ten brothers who could not speak a peaceable word to him. Then they wanted to murder him, but finally compromised and sold him into slavery. Then he was placed as a servant in a home where he had to meet a severe temptation, but he met it in God's way and came out victorious. But through the lies of his master's wife, he was put in prison with no hope of ever getting out. All these things were directly opposite to what Joseph or

anyone else would desire, and they were surely perplexing and very trying to him.

It seemed as if God was not the least bit interested in him and not as loving as the Bible tells us. But the opposite was the case. It was the human plan and self-effort hidden away down in Joseph's heart that had to be exposed and gotten rid of before God's love, mercy, and power could give Joseph everything that he desired.

One night when Joseph was in prison, he noticed two of his fellow prisoners were deeply troubled about their dreams. One was the Pharaoh's chief baker, and the other was his chief butler. One of the men had attempted to poison the Pharaoh, but the plot was discovered.

Joseph inquired why they were so deeply troubled, and they explained everything to him. Joseph said unto them, do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me them, I pray you, and Joseph interpreted their dreams. The baker was to be hanged and the butler to be restored to his position.

Then the human plan down in Joseph's heart came to the surface. He asked the butler to speak to the Pharaoh on his behalf and get him out of prison. No doubt, the butler promised to do his utmost to help Joseph, but it is written that "Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph but forgot him".

From a human standpoint this seemed very ungrateful, but from a divine standpoint, this was the most valuable thing the butler could ever do for Joseph. If Joseph would have gotten out of prison through the butler's efforts, we probably would have never heard of Joseph, and it might have ended his efforts to serve and trust God. But through the butler forgetting him, Joseph was enabled to get rid of the last human hope of ever getting out of prison and being delivered from his other troubles.

It took Joseph two full years to get all hope of human help out of his heart and come to the conclusion that if he ever got out of prison, God would have to do it. This, no doubt, seemed very hopeless and discouraging to Joseph, judging from his past experience. However, the opposite was the case. He found out by experience, like most of us have found out, that when

we come to the end of our resources, plans, and efforts, God will work in manifesting His great love, mercy, and power in our behalf.

When all hope and expectation from human help was out of the way, God could work for Joseph, and it was only a matter of hours before he was out of prison and made governor over all the land of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. He was also given an ideal wife, and when his first son was born, he gave this testimony, "God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house." When his second son was born, he said, "God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." In other words, "He has brought me to the place of perfect happiness, where I have everything I desire."

That was not all, God still had greater blessings for Joseph. God's Spirit at once began to deal with his brothers who had sinned against him and brought them to a real repentance. Then all of Joseph's loved ones came down to Egypt to be near him. No wonder it is written in Genesis 49:22, "*Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall.*"

We also have another example in the book of Ruth that proves that we can lose everything we desire by shutting God out of our life and how we can enjoy His fullness of blessing by trusting and following His will and plans.

In the time of the Judges, there was a family of four living in the land of Bethlehem-Judah. The husband's name was Elimelech, and the wife's name was Naomi. They had two sons, named Mahlon and Chilion. There came a famine in the land and there is nothing more trying than a famine. Nothing will hit us quite as hard as a good financial trial. But from a spiritual standpoint, they are more valuable than any tongue or pen could ever tell if they are met in God's way. We are to grow and develop in the Christian life through trial and temptation, and to be prepared for Heaven through being tested on all points and meeting them right.

James 1:12 from the 20th Century Translation, "*Happy is the man who stands firm under temptation, for when he has stood the test, he will receive his crown the gift of life, which the Lord has promised to*

those who love Him." No trial at the time is joyous but grievous, and financial trials seem more grievous than any. But if they are met right, they will prove valuable indeed in perfecting our Christian character and preparing us for Eternal Life.

Jesus taught in the 16th chapter of Luke that our hope of Eternal Life depended as much upon becoming scriptural in our handling of money as any other thing. This makes financial trials and meeting them right, of the utmost importance to every Christian.

God's plan for Elimelech and his family was to remain in the land and trust Him to supply their financial needs. They had proof of God's willingness and ability to do this because they knew of the great work He did for Israel in the wilderness and how He kept them for forty years. Surely God was able to provide for a small family of four during a few years of famine, which was not nearly as severe as forty years in a wilderness.

This family made a most terrible mistake by leaving God's people and going over to Moab to try by their own efforts to find support during the famine. God's Word had strictly forbidden them to live among or have fellowship with the Moabites or any other heathen nation. Deuteronomy 23:3, "*An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD forever.*" (Verse 6) "*Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity all thy days forever.*"

God knew if they mingled with them, they would come under the influence of their idol worship and Satan would use that to turn them from God and His Truth, and that is exactly what Satan did with this family.

After being in the land of Moab for a while, the husband took sick and died. This calamity was not an arbitrary judgement of God for his disobedience, but simply the fruit of this man's own doings. It didn't take them long to lose what little faith they had in God while under the influence of the Moabites. This is why it is so important to resist having fellowship with those

outside the full Truth. Satan makes it so easy to be influenced and eventually will turn anyone from God and His full Truth.

Even after Naomi lost her husband, her eyes were not opened, and they added sin to sin by remaining in the land, and the two boys married Moabite girls, Orpah and Ruth. This was another direct disobedience to God's Word which forbids His people to intermarry with any heathen nation.

In course of time, the two sons died. Another direct result of disobeying God's Word and going their own way. At last, Naomi's eyes were opened, and she saw the cause of all her trouble and decided to go back to God's land and put her trust in Him again. Ruth decided to give up her land and people and trust under the wings of the God of Israel and live among His people.

The results of this decision were directly opposite to what they had been. God's blessings began to pour in upon them from that moment. Ruth married a kinsman of her husband in the town of Bethlehem, whose name was Boaz and instead of having death in the home, a son was born, and she, the Moabite widow became one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Instead of losing what they desired by seeking it through their own efforts, they found perfect happiness and protection by accepting God's plan and trusting in Him alone.

These two examples are no exceptions. God loves every one of us as He loves His only Son, and it is always His will that we should be perfectly happy. When we are determined to depend on human ways and plans, we will utterly fail and never have what we desire. When we lay all this aside and through the leading, guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit, accept all God's plans for our life, and depend upon Him alone for all we desire, we will have found our way back into the Garden of Eden and prepared for Eternal Life.



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