

Preparing by Pruning!

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The branch must be *pruned* for the soul to be *saved*! Every branch of Christ must be pruned to develop spiritually. Pruning is allowing God to *search* our heart; It is asking Him for spiritual wisdom; It is then making the *changes* He reveals. God wants to change *our* attitude to be like His *Son's* attitude. We are to place this task into His hands for the work to begin ASAP.

This pruning and modifying is critical because Psalm 51:5 “*I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.*” We have to *grow* spiritually as God prunes away what is *not* spiritual. John 15:2 “*Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.*”

As we ask God to eliminate those things in our life that are not part of our *spiritual* life, He will prepare us to enter His kingdom. There is a huge difference between our old worldly way of thinking, and the new divine way of thinking—*radically* different!

Many *say* they trust God—and thinking that if they attend church and are generally honest, they will go to Heaven—but their life *must* include developing spiritually by *pruning* to be ready for the rapture.

Readiness for Heaven involves more than attending church and being honest—it includes allowing God to do the spiritual work of pruning for the changing of our attitude to be what it must be.

Some ministers preach their members into Heaven when they pass, but in many cases the deceased did not allow God to prune away the dross and bring about the needed conversion, so they would most likely *not* be in Heaven, because they did *not* allow God to develop them *spiritually* by meeting things *scripturally*. They did not *meet* things right, because they were not *taught* right.

The task of spiritual change is a huge one, but if anyone will allow God to begin the spiritual work, they will *see* change, and eventually *see* a revolution of thinking and acting and responding to situations faced each day. We become *opposite* to what we were before God began to work in us.

We must *know* the character and love of God so we can trust Him for all things. It is a long stretch from what we *were*—and it can take many *lessons*, but spiritual growth is the result. We should be willing to go through anything that God sees necessary, because we do not have much time to *learn* what we need to *know*—we are *reaching a critical time*!

The *conditions* for entering Heaven are the following: **1. Having a scriptural attitude about everything;** **2. Following the directions of the Bible.** Not many churches advise their members to get rid of their prescriptions, pills, and drugs—so they can trust God for healing. But if they cannot trust God for *healing*, they would not be able to trust Him for *salvation* either.

Eternal Life depends on our attitude toward healing. Abraham became *righteous* when he believed God in *faith*. Abraham's faith in God gave him spiritual righteousness. Galatians 3:6 “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.”

No one would receive Eternal Life if they did not have that true righteousness from God. Any-

one who does *not* trust God for such a small matter as physical *healing*, would not be able to trust Him for the big issue of entering *Heaven* either.

God's true righteousness, Jesus said, is being scriptural with finances. Luke 16:11 “*If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?*”—which is God's true righteousness by faith in Him.

No one would be *in Heaven* if they did not trust God *on earth*. Luke 16:10 “*He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.*” If we are not scriptural in our finances, we are not listening to God on an important life issue—we are not being *pruned* by Him.

If we have not obeyed the Scriptures in such a *minor* thing as money, we would not be given true spirituality. This may be surprising to some—and it can take a long time to learn—but we must learn it, because God has promised to *show* us if we will *listen* to Him!

We ask God to search our heart and *reveal* any wrong attitude He sees in us. We need to have a *repentant* heart and a *believing* mind. Psalm 139:23-24 “*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*”

God has promised to give all the blessings included in His sacrifice; and how to enjoy His presence. We can speed things up by a *listen-up* attitude—ready to *meet* things as His *Word* says. If we ask God to *search* and *change* our heart, we must be ready to *listen* and *learn*.

Hebrews 4:12 “*For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*”

God says there will be *few* under His control in the closing days, but there will be *many* under

Satan's control. The serious part is that Satan controls people through a hidden identity. People are just *not aware* that the devil is controlling their thoughts and attitudes. If they *did* know they might *do* something about it.

Satan works by putting *thoughts* and *ideas* and *advice* of every kind in our mind—without our *knowing* they *are* his thoughts, ideas, and advice. We think the devil is not within a hundred miles of us—*That's just reasonable, right!* We think. Proverbs 16:25 “*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*”

It is so easy to *accept* the devil's suggestions—leading to much trouble if there is no correcting of that mistake. It is a serious thing to have a wicked devil and evil dictator controlling our thoughts—and *without* our knowing it. The devil is very subtle with suggesting.

The gift of the Spirit from a loving God in Heaven, enables us to see the situation as it really is. We cannot be *one second* without God—His presence is needed continually, as He is the only One who can *prune* us and *teach* us His Truth. His Spirit can have us be totally submissive to God and conformed to the attitude of His Son.

Satan cannot attack us until he gets our consent—which he often does by suggesting things that seem like our own. If we are not alert and aware, we can be deceived to *accept* his thoughts—that *gives* him consent. If we feel a chill, Satan suggests we are getting a cold—if we *believe* that, it gives him our consent to be oppressed. We have sent him an invitation.

We *must* resist him by faith, and really *mean* it when we *reject* his thoughts. We say: *In the Name of Jesus Christ, through His broken body, shed Blood, and resurrection to life, I refuse to be oppressed—God has promised it, and I accept my deliverance by faith in His divine power alone!*

The devil *has* to flee—he no longer has our *permission* to remain!

When we sincerely repent; When we have given our life to God for necessary pruning; When we choose to trust Him for everything and never turn back—*Then* He can begin to teach us to *see* and to *know* of Satan's deceitful ways to get our consent.

We do not see this until God *opens* our spiritual eyes to see it. Jeremiah 17:9 “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*” No one can know it, but God can reveal it—by pruning us spiritually. 10 “*I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins*”—pruning and teaching us to get victory over the devil.

The devil had Abraham love his son Isaac, *more* than he loved God. The devil is always trying to get us to love someone, or something, or anything *more* than God—he wants us to *trust* in something *other* than God. Abraham had to take his son and sacrifice him—God alone knew that it was the *only* way the last speck of Satan's influence would be gone from Abraham's heart—*pruning; learning; perfecting* faith in God.

If Abraham would *obey* God, he would enjoy every blessing *of* God—blessings in *this life* and *Eternal Life* as the ultimate blessing. As we all do, Abraham had to *choose*, and he could *refuse* to sacrifice his son. The devil would make a million excuses for Abraham—*Isaac was the son of promise; God would not want you to do that; If you sacrifice Isaac, the world would not be blessed.*”

If there was any of Satan's influence left in Abraham's heart, this command to sacrifice his son would have revealed it. God deals with everyone like that—that is the pruning process!

Difficult *things* and discourteous *people* will be met to expose a wrong attitude in us—or to prove that there is *no* wrong attitude there. It is all part of the pruning process and the developing

of our Christian character in being prepared for the rapture.

Therefore, Abraham got ready to sacrifice his *son of promise*. It was one of the major things that took place in the Bible. It is an *example* of how God taught him and trained him so well, that Abraham could fully intend to *sacrifice* the son he cherished with all his heart—but a son that he loved *more* than he loved God—Abraham *knew* he had to *eliminate* the idol in his heart.

The devil would have used every trick in the book to persuade Abraham to *not* do that, but Abraham had surrendered his life to God for the pruning process to proceed, so he would carry through with what God told him to do. That made Abraham an example for every human being who wants to *live by faith in God*. Abraham blazed the pathway here on *earth* that leads to our eternal home in *Heaven*.

God is no respecter of persons, so if He would *teach* and *train* and *prune* Abraham spiritually until the last speck of Satan's influence was gone from his heart, then God would do the same for anyone else—if they *want* Him to *do* that!

If we are controlled by the Holy Spirit, we will always go directly to God in faith concerning the issue at hand. We will go immediately to God for anything we need in life.

Galatians 3:6 “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” Abraham is already in Heaven because he allowed God to do the work of *Preparing by Pruning!*



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