

GOODNEWS LETTER

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FORSAKING AND SEEKING

**"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth...
But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,"**

Mt 6:19a & 20a.

Jesus is teaching a spiritual truth about progressing toward, and within, the will of God. This isn't just a "good idea," but this teaching is something that every believer must learn. We cannot lay up treasures in both places at the same time - a choice has to be made. Is our goal "heaven" or "earth?"

In His teachings it's the same import. Whether in His parables or letters to the Asian Churches of Revelation, Jesus says that much effort is required for a proper "laying-up-service." It's a full time job!

And, it isn't long before Jesus follows up with more words on service. This time, He teaches the "why" of Laying-up. That's because it is impossible to serve two masters, He says (Mt 6:24).

Those who try, in short time, will hate one master (love him less) or, love the one so much, that they begin to despise the other one. In the Greek language, "Despise" means "to look down upon." (You know, like worldly people look at church goers?)

In my own words of interpretation, I hear: "There's not enough time or energy for man to work both ends. The choice, when it comes to "Laying Up," is either *Heaven* or *Earth*. And, I think that means making the right choice at the right time.

For example, if one is free to choose one or the other - with no ramifications, then make your choice, freely. But, if the choice goes against a kingdom teaching, then there's no choice at all but to do what Jesus taught.

In other words, when one is compelled in heart, he chooses God. When he is free, he may make a different decision. Attending church on Sunday is not the same as visiting mom and dad; when it comes to choices. Just keep the two in spiritual perspective.

The teaching of Jesus never becomes easy. We are dealing with people, remember! To man's flesh, it's even harder once we become His disciples.

Jesus explains that "The disciple is not above his master; nor the servant above his Lord" (Mt 10:24). When we read these words, we attempt to align with His

teaching in order to have faith, but we quickly realize that we don't have choices, at all!

The choice is singular. Our only choice is Jesus. (By the way, Jesus is the only choice in any sense of being saved. Whether from condemnation or being saved unto the coming age-life of the kingdom. No one but Jesus, the Second Person in the Godhead, can save us from hell and save us to His honor and glory, in this world and in the world to come.)

So, the teaching here, is the **process of Christianity**. Jesus is saying, 'If we **forsake** something - anything, we have to put something in the place of that which was left behind.' I think He means that the battle between man's spirit and his flesh is so strong, that we must forsake all things that keep us from **seeking** Him; those things that hinder a wonderful relationship with Him.

Seeking is the key, spiritually speaking. But forsaking is the key, as well, when it comes to the flesh. But both require the work of Christ by faith. The reason is clear. If we don't replace a forsaken goal of life by walking a new and narrow way for God; we will go back to that which we know, eventually. Soon, we will take it up, again.

The words of Jesus are, of course, spiritual. They carry heavenly import. For man, a required understanding must be known; for Jesus said that a **change** is mandatory. While we have a change, taking us from death to life when we trusted in His finished work (an eternal change), there is also a spiritual change in life style; one that is ever ongoing.

On the **mandatory change**, our LORD spoke "pronouncements of blessings" in Matthew 5. But, those blessings aren't found only in Matthew. **Kingdom Truths** continue on; but in Chapters 5, 6 & 7 of Matthew, man is presented with the most complete, and only, teaching of spiritual truths that he will ever encounter this side of the resurrection.

Yes! **FORSAKING AND SEEKING IS ABOUT CHANGE**. But natural man doesn't fit very well in the message of "**poor in spirit**," "**meek**," "**pure in heart**" and "**peacemakers**." That's why a change is needed.

Comparing natural man to spiritual man should be much more to it that just a reaction of "**Duh!**" These are, after all, "**mountain top**" words of Jesus. They are truths that are for His disciples (See Mt 5:1). Should we add, 'For His disciples, only?'

AN OLD TESTAMENT GLANCE shows that God moved Israel away, too; putting them on the walk of faith. As we look back, historically, we can easily see God moving His people from (forsaking) to a location, yet ahead (seeking).

It was God's plan to take Israel through an awful lot of changes before He gave them the Promised Land. That's how the walk of faith works. It works that

way; whether we study the Old or look into the New. God always leads us from here to go there; from a worldly perspective to a heavenly one.

There is no better explanation than Book of Hebrew (Cpts 3 & 4), when we study God's travel plans. While the facts are about the travel of Israel, there are plenty of warnings for us **to listen up!** For the Jewish heart, a lack of faith was exercised during their movement. They desired to "go back to Egypt" on many occasion. The message is **of** the Jews and is **to** believers, today. If both Jew and Gentile, today, realize God's faithfulness, the trip will be a breeze.

In my mind, I have always thought of faith coming from God; that He is always good. I try to focus upon God's doings. In my heart, the Bible is true, cover to cover. And it imparts to me the spiritual laws that are written.

Without its guidance, the Holy Spirit, again in my mind, will not operate upon me, positively, to God's glory. Serving God has to be done in faith and it has to be by trusting God's way as the only way.

We must see that God moves us by instruction from His Word. Jesus exclaimed, "**The words that I speak unto you are spirit and they are life,**" John 6:63. Here's my thoughts on moving. The Holy Spirit energizes the written word and moves us onward and upward. With each step, we trust and obey because there's no other way.

In God's moving, we aren't taken away from one location to another, necessarily. God moves us spiritually within the New Covenant; just like He moved Israel physically, in the Old.

But, what a transformation that has taken place! Our move is from the **Old** to the **New**; from **Law** to **grace**; from **flesh** to **Spirit**; as the Holy Spirit works on man's spirit, moving him to forsake and seek.

Therefore, we need to notice that; although, Israel did not always believe, nonetheless God and His plan (and, those under 20) made it from Egypt to Canaan. Those over 20 had leeks and melons dancing in their heads. Yet, there, in the new land, a nation was set up that served God for many generations.

I suspect that the younger ones - those under 20, represents the New Covenant servers; where, rebellion is not known - not always, anyway.

We know that Christ's work is eternal, and all that is needed is to seek out what His work is; what He did and what He calls us to do. It all begins by faith. It continues when we **forsake** the old man by faith and when we **seek** the new man, Jesus, within our life. It is then that we find ourselves, dear brethren!