

MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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A New Vantage Point

Dear Friend,

Recently, I was listening to a fellow minister who used an analogy comparing the perspective of a chicken with that of an eagle. A chicken spends the majority of its life with its head bent over, pecking at the ground in an effort to unearth food. Its focus of attention is on the immediate surroundings with a very limited perspective of the world in which it lives. In contrast, the eagle soars high above the earth and with keen vision searches for its food benefitting from a much greater perspective. The eagle has the superior vantage point soaring above the earth than the chicken on the ground.

Consequently, the eagle's existence is much different than that of the chicken. (Isaiah 40:31)

“But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.”

Without going into a long teaching about the “waiting” mentioned in this verse, suffice it to say that it should **not** paint a picture of sitting on our hands and waiting for God to decide whether or not He is going to uphold His word in our life. That was settled once and for all with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. **Our “waiting” now is our decision to shift the focus of our attention off the immediate surroundings of our daily life and onto Him and His overall plan and where we fit into His plan.**

We are to have one eye on our daily responsibilities and the other attentive to our Lord's desires. We are to be like a waiter who waits on his customers, his attention on their needs, as we go about our daily lives ever conscious of our service to God and ready to respond at any moment to His requests.

The statement; “mounting up with wings as eagles” has always thrown me a bit. I've heard ministers attempt to explain this verse in a variety of different ways,

which I have no problem with. But, why not consider this as a possible explanation. As we are walking through our daily lives, often allowing ourselves to become narrowly focused on our immediate surroundings, just like chickens, God is declaring that by looking beyond ourselves and onto Him and His bigger plan we break free of the confines of earth and enjoy a much greater perspective.

In doing this, we will “run and not be weary” and “walk and not faint”. I see a lot of “weariness” in the body of Christ today. How is it that we are told that we will not be weary or faint and yet it seems weariness and fainting are rampant? It’s because for many, their immediate surroundings are filled with difficulties and struggles, family problems, lack, health issues and the list can go on and on. Consequently, by focusing on the problems that are dominating their lives instead of enjoying the vantage point of the eagle and looking beyond themselves, it isn’t long before they faint from weariness. Jesus died and rose again to give us a new vantage point from which to live and not be overwhelmed with life’s challenges. (Ephesians 2:6)

“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

According to this verse, we have been raised up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, which takes place the moment we are born again. Although, it is up to us to believe these words and see ourselves in Christ Jesus, seated at the right hand of God. The truth of who we are and where we are seated only becomes real to us when we take the time to meditate on these words and allow the Holy Ghost to reveal this truth to us through our reborn human spirit. In so doing, we will begin to see from our new vantage point in Christ Jesus, seated at the right hand of God.

Our heavenly Father does not want us spending our life focused only on our own lives and oblivious to the bigger picture of God’s plan and our place in His plan. This will require us to do something that is foreign to those who have a chicken’s perspective, and that is to care about others, even love them, who might be outside our immediate surroundings. We are to do as Paul wrote in Galatians... “love thy neighbor as thy self.” (Galatians 5:14)

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; though shalt love thy neighbor as thy self.”

Paul wrote in the preceding verse. (Galatians 5:13)

“For brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

Notice how the Holy Ghost through Paul is linking our love for others with our serving others. We only need to read these few words by Paul and realize our lack of desire to serve others is directly linked to our lack of love for them. Believe me, this includes me just as much as it does you. According to these verses the instruction to “serve one another” is directly connecting to “love”, so if my serving others is non-existent then the conclusion I must come to is that my love for them is also non-existent. Ouch!

For those of you still reading, I commend you because the temptation is to turn away from things we don't want to face about ourselves. In an effort to make the rest of this message easier for you to read I'll critique myself in this area of loving my neighbor as myself, and my lack thereof. Or, more importantly, the reason why I am deficient in loving others. The sad truth is that I, or anyone experiencing a deficit in this area of loving others, love myself more.

It's here where most preachers tell their congregations they need to love people more, with little direction on how this is to be accomplished. Yes, loving others more is the key, but telling people to love more without instructing them how to first cultivate love **is an exercise in futility**. It is like telling a child who is having trouble in school that they need to do better without giving them a plan for developing their mental aptitude. Rather than just telling the child to “do better”, how about giving the child a proven plan to help develop his reasoning ability. Likewise, instead of telling a Christian struggling in their love for others **to love more**, how about instructing them on ways of nurturing love in them. Worshipping God is a sure method of cultivating love in us, which will in turn effectively develop our love for others.

When we have not taken the time to develop the God kind of love in us the default setting of Self-love is automatic. Self-love is at the very root of why we, or should I say I, have a chicken's perspective instead of an eagle's perspective. Self-love causes me to remain focused on myself, my life, my well-being, my, my, my...and not care about the eternal destiny of those around me. If I am ever going to see beyond my immediate surroundings and take on the perspective of an eagle in God's kingdom I must get my eyes off myself and onto loving others, which begins with me cultivating the God kind of love in my life.

I know this is a sobering message and most people would rather be cheered on and told how wonderful they are progressing, which is why I believe the body of Christ isn't walking in more of what God's word declares is ours. We gravitate

towards the messages we want to hear and away from the ones we don't. The truth of the matter is that I do you no favors telling you only what you want to hear. My mandate from God is to say what He wants said and make no apologies for it. God wants us to love Him with all our hearts, as well as, those around us. In doing so, we will change our perspective from that of a chicken to that of an eagle.

This message hits close to home for me because recently God shined a light on my own self-love in a way that revealed my deficit in the area of loving others. I only relate this to you in hopes that it will help you because it is certainly not something I am proud to admit. As Kenneth Hagin said, "I mean this as constructive criticism not destructive, I'm telling them about myself not you".

Three weeks ago I experienced one of the most difficult days I have had in a long time. My dog "Cash" had been sick. Although exams and x-rays showed nothing wrong, he grew increasingly worse until finally on November the first I took him in for an exploratory surgery. In my mind, I would be picking him up and taking him home that evening and whatever was wrong would have been corrected. Well, it didn't turn out that way.

To make a long story short, Cash's stomach was full of tumors and there was nothing the doctor could do. Needless to say, he did not come home and my heart was broken. That dog loved me and I loved him for 9 ½ years. He picked me out as his owner when he was 6 weeks old and we had been best friends ever since. I walked Cash twice a day every day rain or shine. In the evenings I would sit on the floor and he would sit in my lap. That all changed when Cash didn't come home.

After days of trying unsuccessfully to cope with the loss of my dog, God strongly impressed on me something that forced me to see the error of my ways. God showed me that my perspective was that of a chicken and not an eagle. He said, "I wish you loved my children as much as you loved your dog." Now don't try to tell me that I imagined that.

God was right, as always, my focus was only on my immediate surroundings and I had little, if any, desire for that to change. This is a case of self-love and it will always keep us pecking around at the few feet around us missing the bigger picture.

After about a week of the mulligrubs God let me know that it was "Enough". The instant I heard that inside of me something broke off of me and everything seemed to change. Sure I miss "Cash", but what is really important in this life is

people and loving them into the kingdom. It is so much harder to love others when all we have on our minds is ourselves.

In his second letter to the church at Corinth, Paul describes the life of a person with an eagle's perspective instead of a chicken. Look closely at these words and decide for yourself if Paul suffered with self-love or did he truly love his neighbor as himself. (II Corinthians 4:8-12)

“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; (9) Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; (10) Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. (11) For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. (12) So then death worketh in us but life in you.”

As long as I had the perspective of a chicken I could never see what Paul was saying in this verse. It takes an eagle's perspective to understand Paul's words, which I am only beginning to comprehend. Paul is saying that all of the suffering was for one reason so that others could experience the same life of God that he experienced. In other words, the beatings and stonings and all the painful experiences Paul endured were for the sake of others hearing the message of the gospel of Christ Jesus. You see, in order to run as Paul ran **and not grow weary** it is essential to look beyond the immediate surroundings of our own lives. If Paul focused on the beatings and the imprisonment he would have quickly grown weary. The key is to see beyond ourselves toward what God finds important, the eternal destiny of others.

The last two verses of chapter four describe a person with an eagle's perspective. (II Corinthians 4:17-18)

“Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

When Paul is telling us not to look at the “things which are seen” he isn't saying that we totally ignore our responsibilities in this world. What he is saying is that we refuse to allow those things to be the sole focus of our attention. He is saying we must take the vantage point of one seated in heavenly places and look beyond the immediate surroundings of our lives. See into the world of the eternal; God's plan for mankind and where we fit into His plan. Begin to set our

eyes on the things of greater value, cultivating a love for others (as we love ourselves) in order to influence them for the kingdom of God. This is how we mount up with wings as eagles and run and are not weary and walk and not faint.

I want to leave you with this thought: we should all strive to have a new vantage point in our everyday lives. This begins with a decision to cultivate the God kind of love. We do this by taking time in our daily life to simply worship God. Worshipping our heavenly Father will cause us to take our attention off ourselves and put it on Him and His greatness. Having done this in the past, I can tell you from experience **the end result is that you will discover how much God really loves you.** Knowing how much God loves you, **personally**, will be the catalyst HE will use to motivate you to share His love with others. I believe my recent experience has revealed I am still deficient in this area and consequently I need to increase my worship.

I encourage you to thank God for all that He has done and continues to do in your life. Be thankful for your salvation and look for opportunities to share God's goodness with others. Repent, if necessary, for self-love and ask God to reveal the areas in your life where self-love rules you. Be prepared because He will show you those areas of self-love with the expectation that you are going to do something with what He is showing you.

I hope this message has blessed you and not hurt you. It is never my intention to hurt but to help as I have an obligation to share with you what God shares with me.

Have a blessed Thanksgiving.

~ Jesus Loves You!

Mark Jenkins