

“The Foundation of Love”

By Mrs. Sojourner



Many people see that they fall short in so many areas that they feel like the task of honoring God with their lives is an impossible, for someone as imperfect as they. A question they cannot seem to answer is, which area (or areas) to endeavor to improve first. Some even give up on achieving all they know God has given them to achieve because they consider themselves inadequate.

Jesus gave us an instructional gift when answering a question about the greatest commandment:

²⁹“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.’³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’^[a] The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

³²“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him.”³³To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offer-

ings and sacrifices.” Mark 12:29-32 (NIV)

Notes:

[a] Deut. 6:4-5

Scripture also tells us:
¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.¹
John 4:16 (NIV) (emphasis added)

God is love, so love is the foundation of everything. Loving God above all else gives us a scriptural and winning perspective of things. Loving others as ourselves keeps us humble and keeps our perception of others closer to our Heavenly Father’s perception. Following these commandments brings us to a place that we can better deal with other challenges in life.

Next time you puzzle over a decision, remember that love is the foundation of Godly ways and make your decision accordingly.

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...with The Sojourner

“The Temple Walls” (Teaching Sketch)

Nehemiah 2:11-20



There are times in the lives of each of us when we must inspect both the physical house in which our spirit and the Holy Spirit resides and the spiritual house as well.

“What do you mean?” you say. Well, the body in which we temporarily reside in this sojourn called life is the temple of the Holy Spirit sent to us from God.^[1] The Holy Spirit now resides in Believers in Jesus Christ not in buildings made with hands but in our bodies, the physical temples made by God’s hands. Jesus spoke of his own body as a temple when he said it would be raised again in three days.^[2]

The Physical Body

The physical body is now the temple in which God’s Holy Spirit dwells giving the Believer comfort, companionship, and capability.

Jesus told his disciples he

would need to leave so the Comforter would come.^[3] There was a purpose for this not understood at the time it was said. This is just as true now because it is not necessary to know, immediately, what God means when he speaks, it is only necessary that we respond with trust until we do understand.

There is great comfort in knowing the Holy Spirit is not only with the Believer, but in the Believer. This then is the companionship aspect of the relationship between God and the Believer.

Capability comes as the Holy Spirit, within the Believer, flows through them invading the surrounding natural world with the power of God to effect a change such as healing, faith, etc.. The demonstration of capability in releasing the power of God, at will, to fulfill God’s will was a great atten-

Notes:

[1]
1 Corinthians 6:19

[2]
John 2:21

[3]
John 16:7

[4]
mind

Scripture:

Nehemiah 2:11-20 (NIV)

Nehemiah Inspects Jerusalem's Walls

¹¹I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days ¹²I set out during the night with a few men. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on. ¹³By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal ^[a] Well and the Dung Gate, examining the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire. ¹⁴Then I moved on toward the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was not enough room for my mount to get through; ¹⁵so I went up the valley by night, examining the wall. Finally, I turned back and reentered through the Valley Gate. ¹⁶The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, because as yet I had said nothing to the Jews or the priests or

Notes:
[a]
Or *Serpent* or
Fig

nobles or officials or any others who would be doing the work.

¹⁷Then I said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. **Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.**" ¹⁸I also told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me. They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began this good work.

¹⁹But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. "What is this you are doing?" they asked. "Are you rebelling against the king?" ²⁰I answered them by saying, "The God of heaven will give us success. We his servants will start rebuilding, but as for you, you have no share in Jerusalem or any claim or historic right to it."

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tion step often employed by Jesus and the Apostles.

The Spirit In Us

The soul^[4] must be tended to, just as the physical walls must be tended to, in order to maintain relationship, relevance, and reality in serving our Lord.

Daily time in prayer and scripture is necessary to continuing a fresh and dynamic relationship with God. What would any relationship be like if we did not relate on a regular basis. The fact is, we relate most closely to those who are closest to us, by continual contact. Time and time again in the Gospels we read of Jesus separating himself from the throng to spend both quality and quantity time with the Heavenly Father. Believers must do the same.

Let Us Rebuild!

If your relationship has been damaged by attacks or neglect of God then just as in Nehemiah's time "Let us rebuild our fortress and not be in disgrace but in power!

Just so you'll know:

Our service is informal. We look to the Holy Spirit of God to guide us corporately and individually.

Our service usually follows this general pattern:

- **Informal sharing** of what we have seen the Lord do in, through, and around us since we last met.
 - Testimonies are often a part of the conversation.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Praise & Worship**
- **Words of Prophecy or Knowledge** if they have been given during "Praise & Worship" (other times as the Spirit moves).
- **The Pastoral Message**
- **Prayer Requests**
 - Ministry to those present & intercession.
- **The Blessing**

