

Page I

NOVEMBER 2015
THE FRUIT OF GRACE part one

Greetings saints!

We pray everyone receiving this edition of our Living Logos newsletter is blessed beyond measure and marveling at the grace of our God!

Well, I obviously have returned from India in one piece, glory to God, and what a tremendous trip it was! Allow me take a moment before we get into this month's teaching to share with you what happened at my first stop, and then, Lord willing, I will give you an update from my final two stops in the upcoming months.

INDIA RECAP- HYDERABAD

"I came to teach, but I came to learn"... I received this statement from the Holy Spirit while in a taxi in Bangalore and it proved to be an incredibly accurate statement- for the things I learned on this trip were certainly my biggest take away from this trip. Many times when you go on a mission trip like this one, the lessons you learn yourself are invaluable. God is always interested in growing and developing us even in the midst of us teaching and instructing others.

Well, after close to a 24 hour trip to India, I arrived in the city of Hyderabad at 5:30 am on Friday, October 16th. I was scheduled to teach at the Charis Bible College there for 3 hours on that day. My subject was the Holy Spirit- which He seems to be the subject matter I am most led to minister on when I am in India. And it is no wonder...

The Apostle Paul prayed for the Church of Corinth in the last verse of his 2nd and final letter to them- 2 Corinthians 13:14. Mind you, these were his last words to this church that he birthed over the course of 29 chapters between both 1st & 2nd Corinthians. So do you reckon that these were important words for him to leave them with? I guarantee you that this prayer of blessing was extremely important- especially to Paul who prayed this.

He prays 3 extremely important things for his church- "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen."

Notice that 3 separate works of the Trinity are represented here- The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Spirit, the Three in One!

Most of us would agree with the first two and their importance to realize and understand, but the third and final work, most are completely ignorant of- the communion of the Holy Spirit. But why this is so significant is because with this being the Apostle Paul's final words to this church, they were going to need the fellowship of another. They were then going to need someone to step into their beloved apostle's role. Who would teach them now? Who would guide them into all truth? Who would impart to them spiritual gifts? You guessed it- the Holy Spirit!

Page II

You see, when we receive the Holy Spirit, we are immediately partnered up with a friend who sticks closer than a brother! We are immediately coupled together with one who can fill any void and complete any deficiency.

Just as Jesus said in His final words to His disciples (John 14-16), when He would ascend to the right hand of His Father, He would pray to His Father and He would send us another Helper who would abide with us forever! Amen!

So a question begged to be answered here is this: Who was the other Helper? In other words, if the Holy Spirit was another Helper then who was the original Helper? Jesus! Jesus was the original Helper- called alongside of His disciples to teach, instruct, lead and guide.

Now this word “another” is a very significant word in this verse. It means “another of the same kind” and describes an exact representation, a duplicate, or a twin. So what Jesus was saying is that the Holy Spirit, who would come in His place, would be the exact same kind of Helper that Jesus was to His disciples. So this is a worthy and wonderful statement: **The Holy Spirit is to you and I today what Jesus was to His disciples.** Amen!

Therefore, the Holy Spirit is a super significant subject that has been under-emphasized for too long. Why? Because He is all we need! And that is what the Lord leads me to minister to the precious people of India that I have the privilege of teaching... It is that when I return to the States, they don't have to wait until my next trip to be taught and instructed. They don't have to wait until the next teacher or preacher comes through town. No, they can take advantage of the One living within them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! Amen!

The following is an example I like to use regarding this... The Lord has blessed me on my last two trips with a traveling partner named Trinity. Trinity is native to the city of Vellore in the state of Tamil Nadu. He has been a huge help to me on these journeys as He helps me by taking pictures, navigating certain areas, and probably most importantly, reading the menus so I know what to eat. 😊

So on a couple of occasions, I used the example of while I am “traveling with the Trinity”, what if I never spoke to him? What if during these past 14 days, he would have been with me in the room, airport, vehicles etc. and I never acknowledged Him? That would be rather strange, wouldn't it?

Well, this is what the majority of Christians do with the Holy Spirit... We are walking hand in hand with the Spirit of Grace, but we have never learned to communicate with Him on a daily basis. Beloved, it would behoove us to start learning how to “travel with the Trinity.” Amen?

Well, then on Saturday, the 17TH, I had the privilege of teaching the part time 2nd year students first for 2 hours- where the Lord led me to teach on the Ephesians prayers of the Apostle Paul.

This was probably the thing I had the greatest witness to teach on before I went and it ended up

Page III

being one of the best teachings I did. When I taught these 2nd year students, they placed such a demand on the Word, and it flowed out like rivers of living water! To the point, that at the end of the 2nd class, the Holy Spirit was moving in such an incredible way that I just began ministering to the students! It was wonderful!

A good lesson to learn here is that the minister does not always determine the quality of the messages; in my estimation, the quality of the ministry is half determined by the one ministering and half determined by those being ministered to.

Frankly, this is why ministering in India is so much easier- it is because they are extremely honorable people. Every place I went to minister honored me so well. I cannot tell you how many flowers (lei's and bouquets) I received. If I would have been able to bring them all home, I would have had a small nursery ☺. They also blessed me with shawls and other gifts. And while it is obviously not just about giving gifts to the preacher, it does show the level of value they are placing on the ministry that they are receiving. Sure, part of it is a cultural thing, but it is also part an honor thing. They are hungry and ready to receive the Word of God and show the value they are placing on it by how they receive me.

You know, people oftentimes have questions as to why they see more miracles in these places than we do here in the United States, and after you go, you understand why real quick. I believe that the Parable of the Sower perfectly illustrates the reason... You see, in this parable, Jesus taught us that there are four types of ground- representative of four types of hearts. Now, He said that the good and noble heart is what produces; the hearts that have been cluttered with rocks and thorns are the ones who do not produce fruit that remains. Herein lies the difference between third world countries and most of us.

You see, because of so many comforts we have in this nation, we have more of a temptation to let those thorns and rocks into our hearts, which choke the fruit God is trying to produce through us. The Word here is the same and God's intentions here are the same. As a general rule, the difference is our hearts are different. We have hearts that are too cluttered and stony.

That does not mean we are doomed to stay this way, however. We can make decisions to uproot any thorny and stony ground from our hearts, and to begin to place a greater value on the things of God that are readily available to us. Amen!

Later on that Saturday afternoon, I taught the part time 1st year students for two hours and shared with them the love of God, rounding out a good day of ministry. Now, Sunday started out a little rough...

I went to bed around 11pm Saturday evening and woke up and was wide awake at 2:30am. My travels had already begun to catch up with me and I was tired, not experiencing the grace for ministry early that morning.

It was then as Trinity and I were leaving for my two Sunday morning church engagements that

Page IV

he gave me a word- "From strength to strength and glory to glory." When I took hold of that Word, it quickened my body and senses and I felt rejuvenated. So I was awakened again to that lesson that God is my strength and I must depend on Him for that strength. The same lesson I learned two years ago in Madurai.

Both church services were great! I ministered on everything from our authority in Christ to our faith in God that morning and both messages were ones I received right before I took the pulpit. I saw several people immediately healed and numerous people were blessed! As I went from church to church, I also went from glory to glory! Amen!

On Monday, October 19th, I rounded out a blessed time of ministry in Hyderabad...

I was scheduled to speak again to the full time students for three hours and while I had planned to speak 3 more hours on the Holy Spirit, the school's director suggested I share 2 of the 3 hours on what I shared to the 2nd year students the day before- those prayers that Paul prayed in Ephesians. And, man, those 3 hours of teaching had a tremendous flow in the Holy Spirit! That smooth and life-giving flow of the Spirit never ceases to amaze me! Amen!

I greatly enjoyed my time in Hyderabad- which was my first visit there (a first of many, I envision)! I can see it as being a centralized location for certain meetings I can see myself doing. More to come on that in the future.

Like I said, next month, I will begin sharing on my other two stops- Bangalore & Chennai- and the lessons I learned there.

Well, speaking of learning lessons, I wanted to share with you one we all need to learn when it comes to life in the kingdom of God...

Last month, we talked about Joy's Cornerstone, which is grace, and how we need to let our hearts first be established in the grace of God in order to walk in that fullness of joy that is available unto us.

I gave my testimony of how the Lord showed me His wonderful and unconditional love when I had made some pretty serious blunders during my Christian walk. I referred to the passage of Scriptures that the Lord spoke to my heart out of Philippians 1:6-7.

THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH

Now this month, let's notice what else the Holy Spirit was saying through the Apostle Paul in Philippians 1:6. Again Paul said, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." I want you to notice that this verse holds a second work that the grace of God will accomplish in our lives.

You see, this is one of the misconceptions about the grace and love of God... Many, when they

receive the truths of God's unconditional love and unmerited favor in salvation from sin, forget the role that God's grace plays in their sanctification from sin. It is easy for the focus to become wholly on the good work that Christ began in us, but as Paul said here in Philippians 1:6, that is only the beginning...

The Apostle Paul said here that the good work that the Lord began in us, He will complete! Amen! So, sure, God's grace began a good work in us and that is all well and good, but we must understand that this was only the beginning of what God's grace is capable of performing in our lives. God's grace is meant to finish what it started! The good work He began in us of forgiveness, redemption, and justification most certainly is the greatest accomplishment, but God's grace is intended to complete the work. Saints, the grace of God that freed us from the penalty of sin, will also free us from the dominion of sin.

This is what Philippians 1:6 is assuring us of- that the work the Lord started in our lives, He will complete. Now the implied meaning of this verse is that the work the Lord authored, He Himself will finish it. This is why Jesus is called in Hebrews 12:2- "the Author and Finisher of our faith." The grace of our beloved Lord and Savior is not only bestowed on us at the initial point where we bow our knee to Him; but we are to live every subsequent day thereafter totally dependent on the grace of Christ.

So, you see, not only does understanding God's unconditional love and unmerited grace begin a good work in us; living in these truths will bring that good work to completion!

And guess what happens as a result of living a life totally dependent on the grace of God? The same joy that we had at the beginning of our walk will be maintained throughout our walk. Amen! Yes, putting our full trust in the grace of Christ from beginning to end will enable us to possess joy from beginning to end. For when we truly look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, we will not only begin our race with joy, but we will finish our race with joy. Glory to God!

BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

But so many Christians fail to understand this.

Most believers have adopted the belief that sure God is the One who does the entire work that gets one saved, but from that initial salvation experience, you must do the rest. Even though it might not be specifically said this way, they believe that although you cannot earn your salvation, you must earn God's blessings. Let me tell you, nothing could be further from the truth.

Grace is not just something that God gives us upon receiving Jesus as our Lord and Savior. No, God intends for our entire lives to be lived fully trusting and depending on the grace of God. It is not that we are just initially saved by grace and then the rest of our lives we are left to live a Christian life on our own. Everything in the Christian life is to be accomplished the same way we received the Lord- by grace through faith.

Page VI

The Apostle Paul said something very interesting in Colossians 2:6... He said, "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him."

What this verse is saying is that the same way you received Christ Jesus is the same way you are supposed to walk in Him. So how did you receive Him? By grace through faith, right? Most Christians have no problem embracing the truth that we are saved by God's grace and through simply putting faith in His grace, but what most fail to understand is that this is exactly how we are supposed to receive everything from the Lord post-salvation!

This is exactly what the Apostle Paul was saying in Colossians 2:6... Everything in the Christian life is to be received the same way- by grace through faith. We will never cease to receive from the Lord this way, and if we do not ever embrace this truth, we will live a weak and frustrating Christian life.

It then should be no surprise why so many believers experience the joy of the Lord when they are first saved and then as time elapses they lose their joy and even become more miserable than they were before they became Christians. I believe that the main reason for this pattern in so many Christians is because they have no problem receiving the grace of God for all the sins they committed before they were saved, but then they feel like they have to earn and work for everything else they receive from the Lord after that point. Their focus was on the Lord- His love, forgiveness, mercy, and grace- at their initial salvation experience, but then they begin to focus on themselves and their own goodness. This, I believe, is one of the biggest "joy-killers" in Christianity today.

So the same way that we are sanctified and made holy by the blood of Christ at our born again experience is the same way that we are going to experience that same victory over our flesh- by grace through faith. The Lord our God will complete the good work that He began in us by His grace because He is not only the author of our faith, but He is also the finisher of our faith.

Until next month... Maranatha!

Victoriously,

