

BOUND IN THE BUNDLE OF THE LIVING

— GARY WIENS

INTRODUCTION:

The foundational truth that gives life to us as followers of Jesus, and that fuels us in the ministry of intercession is that in our weakness we are loved unconditionally by God as our Father and by Jesus as our Bridegroom. When the human heart is encountered by the delight and joy that God feels when He considers us, everything changes in our emotions, and we freely give ourselves to Him. We also give ourselves freely to the process of becoming like Jesus so that we might receive the full inheritance that God has in mind for each of us.

Here's the question I have: how do I live in the confidence that I am loved and enjoyed in my weakness, and yet still know that I will be brought into maturity? I don't want to stay immature and weak; I want to grow up into the image of Jesus!

One key to understanding this process is to realize what it means to be "in Christ."

I. AN ILLUSTRATION FROM THE LIFE OF DAVID – 1 SAMUEL 21-25

A. David's Experience of Early Favor

- 1. Cultivating intimacy with God in solitude – *1 Samuel 16:11 And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep."***
- 2. Anointed as King by Samuel – *1 Samuel 16:12-13 . . . And the Lord said "Arise and anoint him; for this is the one!" Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward.***
- 3. Early success in Saul's court**
 - a. Victory over Goliath – 1 Samuel 17**
 - b. Bonded in friendship with Jonathan – *1 Samuel 18:3-4 Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him, and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.***

- c. Favor with the people – *1 Samuel 18:7 So the women sang as they danced, and said “Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.”*

B. A Season of Pressure and Compromise

In order for us to come into our full inheritance, the character of Jesus must emerge in us. This can only happen if we realize our need for God’s mercy and grace in our lives. So, there come seasons in which the Lord withdraws His hand of blessing and allows us to experience pressure. This is so we will have a realistic perspective of our need for mercy and grace, and realize that His love is truly unconditional.

1. Saul rejects David and begins to persecute him.
2. David has to flee from the presence of Saul.
3. 3,000 soldiers assigned to find David and kill him.
4. Under this pressure, David discovers the mixture and compromise in his own life:
 - a. He lies about his situation to Ahimelech, the priest in Nob. As a result, all the priests and all the people in the village are massacred. David hears the report and takes responsibility for their deaths – 1 Samuel 22:22
 - b. David tries to hide in Gath – with Goliath’s sword! The Philistines recognize him, and he has to pretend insanity.
 - c. He has moments of strength and nobility – leader of 600 men and their families, fights the Philistines in the power of God, spares the life of Saul (twice!)
 - d. Experiences the death of Samuel – his spiritual father
 - e. Situation with Nabal and Abigail – 1 Samuel 25:23-31

. . . Yet a man has arisen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. (v. 29)

II. WE ARE BOUND IN THE BUNDLE OF THE LIVING, WHICH IS THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

- A. In Him is life – John 1:4
- B. We are chosen “in Christ” and accepted “in the Beloved” – Ephesians 1:3-6
- C. We believe God in the context of intimate relationship – living by faith “in His Name” – John 1:12

Illustration: Julie Meyer and faith for flying

- D. Jesus fulfills our righteousness by His obedience – Matthew 3:15
- E. Jesus defeats Satan in the wilderness while carrying us “in the bundle,” establishing for us a history of victory – Matthew 4:1-11; c.f. Ephesians 2:14-15

For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace.

- F. Every encounter of Jesus’ life establishes the way of righteousness for us.
- G. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus makes the choice for obedience that paves the way for us – ***Luke 22:42 Nevertheless, not My will but Yours be done.***
- H. On the cross, Jesus dies for us, carrying us in the bundle of His life – Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

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- I. In His resurrection, Jesus brought us with Him into the freedom of new life – Ephesians 2:4-7

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

- J. This is the place of our life, our well-being, our righteousness

1. Acts 17:28 – In Him we live and move and have our being
2. Col 1:16-18 – *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.*
3. Philippians 3:8-9 – *that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.*

CONCLUSION:

The whole secret of life is to remain in a relationship of intimate friendship with Jesus. He is the bundle of the living, and in Him all things are certain to come to fulfillment.