



Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Shepherd!

Sanctification--The Christian's Daily Walk.

In the hearts of many evangelicals comes the temptation to think, "The Lord saved me; now it's my responsibility to follow Him in holiness/serve Him/obey Him..." This attitude, however, reflects our ignorance, unbelief, or rejection of the fullness of God's grace, which extends beyond our justification from sin to encompass our growth into His likeness as well. Obedience and growth in holiness is not so much our responsibility as it is our love-response to His grace and forgiveness. Men of old described the soul as feminine, indicating our role of response to God's wooing and winning.

The shepherd imagery of the Scriptures demonstrates this relationship. By taking us on as His sheep, He has taken upon Himself the full responsibility for our nourishment, health, well-being, and protection. Ezekiel 34 clearly illustrates this. As our Shepherd, He overwhelms us with "I will"

promises, not "you must" demands contingent upon any merit or ability on the part of the sheep.

This theme of the Lord's initiative in our sanctification also appears (in Ezekiel, Leviticus, and Exodus) in the name He ascribes to Himself: *YHWH-m'kaddesh*, "I AM who sanctifies you." Thus, as we pray, "May your name be set apart as holy," we can count on Him in full confidence to work that holiness into us "for His name's sake;" His reputation is at stake in us; His people are called by His name; He will see to it that His name is not disgraced (see Ezekiel 36:22-23). "For His name's sake" He will guide us in righteousness (Ps. 23:4, 31:3), forgive our sins (Ps. 25:11), and deliver us from our enemies (Ps. 79:9). Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, people of faith called on Him to answer their prayers for the glory of His name in accordance with His character.

His faithfulness to make us walk in obedience also pervades the descriptions of the New Covenant. Recognizing our continual, habitual unfaithfulness when left to our own devices, He promises to make a covenant with His people which we cannot

break; to give us a new heart to fear Him so that we will not turn away from Him; to write His law within us on our hearts; to put His Spirit in us, to cause us to walk in His ways (Jer. 31:31ff; 32:40ff; Ezek. 36:22-32, 37:24-28; Heb. 13:20-21). Amazing love! It is this covenant, which our Lord Jesus Christ inaugurated through His sacrifice of Himself (Luke 22:20; Hebrews 8-10).

He (Jesus) has taken upon Himself the full responsibility for our nourishment, health, well-being, and protection.

In light of these great and precious promises, we can confidently entrust to Him the responsibility, control, and consequences of our growth. The burden of our own sanctification lifted, we are free to respond to His grace by pouring out our lives as love offerings at His feet -- not in order that we may be forgiven, but because of the magnitude of His forgiveness (Luke 7:36-50).

As the parables of Luke chapter fifteen teach, even repentance is not an act of my

own righteousness or efforts, but by letting myself be found by my Shepherd who leaves all to go after me *until* He finds me; my Owner who searches the whole house with a fine-toothed comb *until* He finds me; my Father who waits and watches until I come home, runs to meet me, and showers me with kisses and presents, not considering for a moment my offer to return as His servant!

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LOVE WAS NOT IN QUESTION

It was the summer of 1993 on a family camping trip that gave the opportunity for my wife Shoshannah to have a heart-to-heart talk with me about our marriage. After Shoshannah's ten-minute, one-side dialogue, I was silent. "Did you hear what I said?" Shoshannah asked in frustration. I, Stewart, replied, "Yes, the only way you will be happy in this marriage is if I am dead."

Soon thereafter, some mutual friends introduced us to Bob Bingham. We began weekly sessions via telephone as we were on assignment with our mission board on the east coast. God used Bob to expose our communication problems. In a conflict, Stewart would emotionally shut down and Shosh would try to fix everything. The harder Shosh pushed, the more Stewart would retreat. We were at an impasse.

Love was not in question. We both knew we loved each other. We just did not know how to stop hurting one another. Bob led us through many biblical

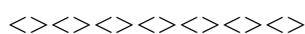
principles for a fulfilling marriage. We began to learn how to allow the Lord Jesus Christ '*call all the shots in our lives.*' There were some bumps in the road, a phone hang up and many tears. But, we were graining ground weekly. The evil one's tactics were being exposed. We agreed together that we had been unwittingly cooperating with our enemy and determined in prayer to have nothing more to do with him. We began to grow closer to the Lord Jesus and to enjoy our marriage relationship.

In the meantime, Dottie began discipling Shosh with the Gracestoration lessons. With each lesson Shosh saw areas of her life that were out of alignment. "First John 1:9 has become my life verse," Shosh tells every one. "That is how I came to faith in Jesus, and that is where I go daily." In the years since, Shosh has used the Gracestoration lessons with many women. "Every time I prepare and teach a lesson, I see areas where I still need to submit to the leadership of Jesus. These lessons continue to be used by God for my sanctification."

Things are pretty wonderful in our household now. We have seen great emotional and spiritual benefits. And our children have also enjoyed the results. We now have a peaceful home.

Stewart and Shoshannah continue to disciple men and women with the tools Bob and Dottie have provided. "Together we continue to grow in our relationship with God and in our fulfilling marriage!"

*Stewart and Shoshannah
Weinisch*



Memorial Day Retreat 2002 "Jesus, The Bread of Life"



This year's retreat was a blessing to both young and old as we learned about the grain of wheat and **Jesus, The Bread of Life**. Hearts were satisfied as Jesus was "lifted up" and our hungry hearts were fed.

The following comments express what was heard:

"I heard that Jesus is enough! The wheat and bread -- gives sustenance, strength, refreshment and multiplies--yielding much fruit."

"The main thing that came home to me was the need to have Jesus in me and myself in Jesus."

"I need to keep on entrusting my life to Jesus because it is so easy to take matters into my own hands and fail."

"I desire to be a gracious initiating husband and father like Jesus is to me."

"I heard God speak to my heart about being a faithful responder to my husband."

"My role as a gracious initiator with my wife and girls is about to expand. I am trusting Jesus to enable me to shepherd them by waking up before them so I can be there to care for them before I leave for work."

Plan to attend the next
Memorial Day Retreat
May 23-26, 2003
In majestic
Buena Vista, Colorado

