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It is Not in Me

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Series: Joseph and the Sovereignty of God

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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It is Not in Me

Father, we love You so.

And we pray now, Father, that Your Spirit would guide us through this lesson, that You would be the teacher and that You would do that which would bring the most glory to Your precious name.

In Jesus' name we ask it,

Amen.

We were riding a roller coaster as we concluded our last study. Oh, we weren't the passengers; Joseph was. But we could almost gasp at the altitude changes as our living legend was exalted to the heights, then suddenly plummeted to the depths, seemingly without reason. But God had His reasons, to be sure. And soon we will see those reasons unfold in all their majesty. Our journey continues as we pick up where we left off midway through the life of Joseph. Joseph has lived a circumstantially roller coaster existence. Some of us can relate to that. He has come from the heights of his role as the favored son with dreams of greatness down to the pit of despair as he was sold by his brothers to a band of Midianites. He then was put back up to a position of exaltation as Potiphar's trusted administrator. He went down again to the prison house for a crime of which he was totally innocent. Yet, even imprisoned innocently, the presence of God was so evidenced in this man's life that immediately he was thrust again into a position of great responsibility. We read as we concluded the last lesson in Genesis 39:21:

But the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

You see, God holds the key to your acceptance by others.

And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all

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the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever was done there, he was the doer of it [was responsible for it].

The keeper of the prison looked not to anything that was under his [Joseph's] hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made to prosper.

(Genesis 39:22,23)

So that is where we left our living legend, Joseph. He was trapped in the executioner's dungeon, and yet even there he was made second-in-command over all the prisoners. Make no mistake about it, everyone knew, as we shall see, that Joseph's success was based upon one fact: that *the Lord was with him and the Lord caused all that he did to prosper*. But all the while, the Lord did not remove from him the circumstances that so humiliated him. God's prosperity did not mean deliverance *from* prison, at least not at the moment, but rather deliverance *in* prison. That truth alone is perhaps the most vital lesson any Christian has to learn. It is not that God *cannot* deliver you from your circumstances; He can do that in a twinkling of an eye. It is rather that often He chooses to bless you *in* the circumstances in order that He might take you *through* the circumstances and thus change you *by* the circumstances.

I do not believe Joseph prayed for God to release him. I believe he prayed for God's will to be done. You can badger God long enough through prayer to change your circumstances, and He may in time answer your prayer like the neighbor who stood outside and pounded until his friend gave in and listened. But will He not then have to say to us as He did to Israel, "I gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls"? Ought we not rather to pray as Jesus did, "Lord, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, Thy will be done"? Jesus prayed, "Father, if You can accomplish Your purpose and still avoid the cross, that is fine. But, Father, if the choice is between avoiding the cross or doing Your will, I choose the cross." Have you yet learned to pray like that? It gives you the freedom to share your heart with God, but leaves God the freedom to be Himself in your life.

As our story begins, a need for greatness has surfaced in the life of Joseph. Joseph and his fellow prisoners find their number increased by two as Pharaoh becomes incensed at two of his most trusted servants, the chief butler and the chief baker. At this point, we don't know what happened to the chief candlestick

maker but I think that is coming a chapter or two down. But we do know that Benny the Butler, Pharaoh's super servant, and Bobby Baker, the keeper of Sarah Lee's secret recipes and the custodian of the king's Oreo cream sandwiches, now find themselves in Potiphar's prison, relegated overnight to the role of nothingness, assigned to them as a result of the decision of the king whom they had offended.

Now isn't it wonderful that our King is not so easily offended, so quick to punish? Rather, He is long-suffering to us, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy. Even seventy times seven, He forgives and forgives and forgives and restores. What a privilege to belong to the kingdom of the King.

Now verse 4 of chapter 40 tells us of the immediate fate of our two new friends and the part that Joseph was to play in their lives:

And the captain of the guard put Joseph with them and said, "Joseph serve them." And Joseph served them and they continued for a season in prison.

(Genesis 40:4 paraphrase)

Now as I mentioned, the captain of the guard is none other than Potiphar. This, you remember, is the person who threw Joseph in jail because of an unfair accusation by his wife. Perhaps by now Potiphar had learned that Joseph was innocent. Or perhaps his pride or his need to appease his wife caused him to leave him in jail. We don't know. It is also possible that Potiphar thought that Joseph, in a moment of weakness, was guilty, but that his character and discernment still made him an acceptable person with whom to charge with responsibility. We don't know. But we do know that it was Potiphar himself that charged Joseph with the responsibility of caring for the butler and the baker.

Now the second interesting thing about verse 4 is found in the phrase, "*and he served them*". The Hebrew word used here "*to serve*" is the same one used in I Chronicles 27:1, where it says that the officers *served* the king. It is also used in Esther 1:10 in the same way. The meaning is "to be ranked under and thus to be a minister or servant". In other words, Joseph was not assigned to these men to guard them. He was rather assigned to serve them. Here we again see the real strength of his life: the consistency of a servant heart. Now let's read on and see what happens:

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And they dreamed a dream, both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were bound in prison.

And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and saw them, and, behold, they were sad.

And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in ward in his master's house, saying, "Wherefore look you so sad today?"
(Genesis 40:5-7 ASV)

Here is an illustration of the sensitivity of a servant heart. So often as peers, or particularly as overseers, we are insensitive to the feelings, the frustrations, and the fears of those right around us. But when we are in places to serve others and win their approval, we tend to watch their facial expressions and their attitudes, the things they say and don't say. We tend to enter more fully into their joys and hurts. A good example is a mother and her small children. Children want her approval so desperately. If Mom looks sad, hurt, tired or sick, it grieves them, and they want to know why. Perhaps that is why we were told to "*by love serve one another*". This is why Paul tells us to esteem others as better than ourselves.

Joseph was serving these two men with his whole heart even though he was assigned that task by the very man who had unjustly thrown him into prison. As a servant, he senses their sadness. Now they weren't sad just because they were in prison; they were sad because they had a dream. They had wrongfully assumed that there would be no one in this dungeon who could interpret a dream. But Joseph's concern went one step beyond recognizing their sadness. Now he searched for the cause. He comes to them and asks what is wrong and if he can help.

Now I was impressed again with how many there are in the body of Christ whose spiritual antennas are sensitive to the signals that others are sending out, so sensitive that they initiate the meeting of needs without a word from the one who is hurting. You don't need to have the gift of mercy to do that. You only need to ask Jesus to give you a sensitive spirit and then be available to let him.

What may be a happy time for some may be a time of grief and loneliness for others. It may be the separation from a loved one. Clouds of financial or emotional or spiritual pressure may

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be upon some. For others, there are too many memories, not all of them good. These memories cover the sunlight of the hour and cast upon them a cloud of gloom. The Scripture teaches us that as part of the body of Christ, if one of us hurts, we all hurt. Joseph's kind of sensitivity sensed the sadness of those about him. He then ministered to them. We need to pray that, like Joseph, we might be the instruments of God in sensing needs and meeting them. There are so many who hurt and so few who seem to care. So Joseph, aware of their grief, sought to find the cause of that grief.

And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell it me I pray.

(Genesis 40:8 ASV)

Now here is the first of five statements that Joseph makes in this passage which specifically accrue glory to God and refuses to accept it for himself. He was willing to be God's agent in ministering to these two men, but he wanted it clear at the beginning that it was not him; it was God. Having made that point, he listens to a narrative of their dreams. In a nutshell, here are the two dreams: Benny the Butler, who was also the king's cupbearer, tells his story first. He says: "I was holding a vine and it had three branches on it. Suddenly, it blossomed and brought forth grapes, so I took these grapes and pressed them and I put them in a cup and gave them to Pharaoh. Then I woke up." Joseph said, "That one is easy. The three branches are three days. It means that in three days, Pharaoh will restore you to your position and you will be his cupbearer again." End of dream. Joseph reveals this in verse 12. Then he adds,

But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also I have done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

(Genesis 40:14,15 KJV)

So Joseph makes a gracious appeal to be remembered by the butler. Now I want you to notice the way he did this. There is no bitterness, no slurring remarks about his brothers. He never mentions that he was sold by his brothers. He simply says: *I was stolen out of the land of the Hebrews*. Secondly, he makes no disparaging remarks about Potiphar's wife or the grave injustice

of it all. He very quietly states: *Here also I have done nothing to deserve the dungeon.* We need to listen to that, because every one of us comes into situations where we are required on our job or in relationships to quietly state our position of innocence. But it is possible to state your innocence without ever destroying the character of another. That is what Joseph did here. So much for the butler.

Now Pharaoh's answer to the Pillsbury doughboy comes on the scene. He likes what he heard, so he proceeds to lie on Joseph's couch and tell Dr. Joe about his dream. He says, "I had three white baskets on my head. The top basket was full of good treats for Pharaoh to eat. But before I got to Pharaoh, the birds came along and gobbled up the goodies." Now this is a loose translation, but it is somewhat accurate. "What does that mean?" asks Bobby Baker. I think Joseph spoke softly at this point for his sensitivity must have cringed at what he had to say, yet, as always, he told the truth. He said, "Here is the answer to your dream. The baskets stand for three days, but instead of being reinstated, in three days you will be killed and hung on a tree where the birds will come and feed on you."

So verse 20 tells us that on the third day, Pharaoh gave himself a birthday party. On that day, he restored the butler and hanged the baker just as Joseph predicted. But in verse 23 we have to see a note of sadness for we see that Joseph's clock and God's were still not synchronized. It says very simply:

Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot
him. (Genesis 40:23 NKJV)

You say, "Why, God?" God answers, "Trust Me. My clock may seem slow, but it is always on time." You may ask, "But how long? This may go on for months." I will tell you how long,

And it came to pass that at the end of two full years, Pharaoh
had a dream; (Genesis 41:1a NKJV)

Two years. Twenty-four more months. Seven hundred and twenty days. God was not preparing Joseph just to be a man. God was preparing Joseph to be a leader of men. Joseph was destined for greatness and greatness is cured at a low temperature for a long time. God has no formula for instant godliness. There is no pre-packaged kit to add water and stir. The godliness that produces greatness is manufactured in dungeons and wells and ripens slowly; but once cured, it is virtually indestructible. So two

full years passed. It is almost as if we were standing in the wings waiting to shove Joseph onto center stage and we keep saying, “Now Lord? Now?” God keeps saying, “Not yet, not yet.” But the spotlight of history is about to shine in Joseph’s direction. We are soon going to see that the depth of his humiliation was necessary preparation for the height of the success that is to follow.

Do you not wonder how Joseph prayed those seven hundred and twenty more mornings? How many times his dreams must have died. How many times he must have simply said, “Lord, whatever You choose, I will stay in this dungeon forever, if that is Your will.”

Now the scene is set, and Pharaoh has a dream. But he is kind of a well-to-do dreamer and he dreams in stereo. His dream itself is a little gruesome. I thought at first that he had had another birthday party, eaten too much Pizza Supreme and run out of Roloids. First, he dreams out of his left speaker and he sees seven fat cows grazing in the meadows. Along come seven skinny cows and these under-nourished bags of bones eat the seven fat cows. Pharaoh then tunes in on another channel and dreams about seven fat ears of corn. Next come seven skinny sun-scorched ears of corn, and these ears eat up the fat ones.

Pharaoh wakes up with a headache. He calls for the magicians and the wise men and he tells them to tell him the interpretation of his dreams. But God puts a veil over their understanding and they draw a blank. The best of the world are just not very good when it comes to spiritual things. If you read the Jeanne Dixons of this world in the newspapers, you will see a big spread and five of them will predict what will happen this year. None of them predict the same things. At the end of the year, if they were 50% right, they are delighted. But God’s man can be recognized, as we are told in Deuteronomy 13 and Jeremiah 28, by his success ratio. God’s prophet must bat a thousand or he is not a prophet. Now you weigh the world’s mystics on that scale and you will see where their visions come from. It is definitely not from God. If what they have comes from a perfect God, they will have a perfect score.

So in verse 9, God turns on Benny Butler’s lights and restores his memory. He confesses to Pharaoh, “I have been a naughty boy. When I was in prison, I had this dream and there was a young Hebrew with the gift of interpretation and I forgot to tell

you about him.” So Pharaoh sent for Joseph. Joseph changes his clothes and cleans himself up and shaves. In verse 15, Joseph, yanked out of his circumstances so fast that his head was spinning, is now standing in front of the most powerful man in Egypt. Take heart, my friend, because when God does decide to change your situation, He often does it with lightning-like speed.

Pharaoh tells Joseph that he had a dream and wants someone to tell him what it means. Now we would imagine that if we were Joseph, verse 16 would go like this: “And Joseph answered and said, ‘You’ve got the right man, Pharaoh. I’m a number one dreamer. You ought to hear the dreams I had as a kid. I just may well be the best interpreter in all the world. Give me a shot at it and I will show what I can do.’” Fortunately, however, we weren’t Joseph, so it goes like this:

So Joseph answered Pharaoh saying, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.” (Genesis 41:16 NKJV)

Here is the mark of greatness of God’s man. He has learned that of himself *he can do nothing*. He is not ashamed to be honest about it either, not even to the unbelieving world, so when God chooses to use him, all of the glory will go where all of the glory belongs, only to God. “*It is not in me,*” Joseph answered, “But let me introduce you to One who can.” He introduces Pharaoh to the real King. “You want answers, Pharaoh? Meet my God.”

So Pharaoh, desperate, recites his dreams to Joseph. In verse 25, Joseph tells Pharaoh that the two dreams mean the same thing. God is showing what He is about to do. The seven fat cows and seven good ears of corn stand for years of plenty. The seven skinny cows and seven bad ears of corn stand for seven years of drought and famine. In verse 28, Joseph tells Pharaoh that God is showing him what He is about to do. He says, “Pharaoh you will have seven good years, then bammo, the weather is going off the charts.” God, you remember, uses the weather to get the attention of men. In verse 32 Pharaoh asks why the two dreams say the same thing. Joseph tells him it is because this event is established by God and God will bring it to pass.

Now, therefore, let Pharaoh find a man, one who is both discreet and wise and give him charge over all of Egypt.

And then divide the land into five parts and appoint a man to be over each part and in the good years, let them keep back some of the grain and crops and store it for the drought so

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that your people need not perish.

(Genesis 41:33,34 paraphrase)

The plan looked good to Pharaoh and also to his servants, so he turns to them, and in verse 38 asks: “Where can we find a man like this? A man in whom the spirit of God is?” Isn’t that really what the world is looking for? Pharaoh then turns to Joseph, “Since God showed you all of these things, there is no one as discreet and as wise as you.” Would you be satisfied for men to make that appraisal of us? Or, do we want the glory for ourselves?”

Joseph, you will be in charge of all of the land and your word will be the final word; only I, the Pharaoh, will be greater than you.

(Genesis 41:40 paraphrase)

Had Joseph claimed any credit for himself, I believe Pharaoh would have thanked him and sent him back to prison. I believe humility was the mark of greatness that set Joseph apart. Here was a man humble enough to admit he could do nothing of himself, but bold enough to state that he knew a God who could. Giving God the glory, he meekly became an instrument of discernment. Pharaoh was not impressed with Joseph’s talents as a mystic. He was impressed that here was a man in whom the Spirit of God dwelt. Though Pharaoh didn’t know Joseph’s God, he now knew who Joseph’s God was, and it was with Joseph’s God that Pharaoh was impressed.

So Joseph had served and submitted until every trace of personal ambition and every hint of personal glory were gone. Then, when there was nothing left for him to cling to but God, God called his number. Do you see the secret of success? It is in that one line,

“It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.”

(Genesis 41:16b)

Now the application of this lesson is found in the two-fold response of Joseph to this test. The first was his attitude. I believe here we have the secret of surrender. First the reality of it and then the realizing of it. Second, we see Joseph’s actions. There we visualize what we must do with the garments of glory the world bestows on the Christian. Both of these secrets unlock the keys to a life of power and spiritual success. It is a virtually impossible thing to communicate. So I begin as Joseph did, by acknowledging that it is not in me. I can’t do it. God must give

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you the answer you seek. I want us to stop and pray to that end.

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we approach once more, the issue of the surrendered life we ask that You would be the total communicator. We understand it is not in us. Would you teach us, please?

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

Joseph had learned his lesson in the sea of persecution. It was no longer Joseph doing something for God. It was no longer Joseph and God as co-laborers for glory. Joseph had died. Oh, he was still physically alive, but the old Joseph had died. Only God could ever make anything out of Joseph's life now. Joseph was no longer the power supply. He was only the cable through which the power flowed. He was ever grateful to be just that, for the power belonged to God. No truth runs so diametrically contrary to the philosophies of the world or the religions of the world than this one. It is the truth found in John 15 where Jesus says,

I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me, ye can do nothing. (John 15:5 KJV)

Do you really believe that? Do you really believe that there is nothing in your life that can produce anything good apart from His life in you? Or do you think, "Well, I can't do much." This verse says that if we remain surrendered to Him, we can't help but produce fruit because the natural result of His life *is* fruit. If we will just let Him be Himself, in and through us, fruit will be borne by Him.

Paul grasped this truth in increasing measure as his life unfolded. In I Corinthians 15:9-10 he says that he is, in essence, the least of the apostles. He then adds:

But by the grace of God, I am what I am: and his grace bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me. (I Corinthians 15:10 KJV)

Paul says, "I am not idle, I am active. That is my posture. I am not able, but I am available. There is my power." In II Corinthians 3, he ties the knot more securely as he says

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as

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of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God;

(II Corinthians 3:5)

Paul wraps it all together in Galatians 2. Most of you know this from memory.

I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20 KJV)

Paul says, "I died when Christ died, but I'm still alive. No wait a minute, I am not alive; Christ is alive in my old body. I don't have to live anymore, He does the living, I simply let Him by faith." You may say that is not practical because God needs our help. I don't think so. God didn't even need Jesus' help. Christ is the perfect example. He was all of God and all of man, yet He says:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself,...

(John 5:19b)

Nothing?

I can of mine own self do nothing: ...because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

(John 5:30)

My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

(John 7:16b)

When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself;

(John 8:28b)

Believeth thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

(John 14:10)

That is the reality of the Christian life. *Christ in you is the Hope of Glory*. It is God's perfect plan for living. The realization of it is the key. You wake up in the morning, a day full of pressures and problems surround you. What do you do? How do you live this surrendered life? You look at the day and fall on your knees and say to God, "It is not in me. God you must live this day for me. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Father, I yield my body for You to walk around in. Father I yield my tongue for You to speak through. Father I yield

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my eyes for You to see the needs of men. Be Yourself in me for *it is not in me*. Apart from You, I can do nothing.”

After you pray this, what do you do? You get up and begin to do the things you are supposed to do. You spend time in the Word. You make God’s temple as presentable as possible. You report for duty at work, at home, at school. You are in the car of life, but you are not behind the wheel. He will give you the choices all through the day. With your will, you will choose to share your faith. With your mind you know that it is not in you, so you give Him the privilege, and God will give you an answer of peace. You open your mouth and let God be God. You get discouraged or fearful or anxious and you find your trembling hands on the steering wheel. You don’t wait until the next day, you stop and in a split second, consciously take your hands off the wheel, and let them relax and say, “God I’m Yours again. It is not in me.”

One thing I have found that is so helpful is to stop occasionally through the day and sit down in a chair and let your body relax a minute. First your hands, and then your shoulders and as you relax, consciously say, “God I am giving it back to You. It is not in me. Simply live Your life through me.” Then you get up and continue to do the things you had planned to do. Your body is strengthened. At the end of the day you can relax. No self-incriminating pity parties. Christ takes the responsibility for your day. There are no pride parties either, because what do you have to boast about? Remember: *it is not in you*.

So our exciting challenge is seeing God be God and seeing every detail of life as an adventure. It is an adventure without the pressure of your trying to do the impossible, live the Christian life. Jesus couldn’t live the Christian life, so He let the Father do it. Paul couldn’t live the Christian life, so he let Jesus do it. You can’t live the Christian life, I can’t live the Christian life, but praise God, He isn’t asking us to. He is only asking us to relax and let Him take our minds and our bodies and do His will.

The second issue is the matter of glory. There is not enough time to cover that in this lesson, but the secret of keeping your hands off the wheel is the secret of keeping none of the glory for yourself. It all belongs to God. Jesus said in John 8:50: *I seek no glory for Myself*. You think about that. When you realize God is living through you, you realize that for you to accept credit for what He has done is as foolish as a bottle taking credit for the

orange juice it contains. *We are containers.* He is the substance. To Him alone belongs *all* the glory.

In our next lesson, we will look at how to deal with success and give the glory to God. We will look for a definition of glory and at whom we rob when we take the praise that belongs to Him. Remember: if we are dead men, what is our right to glory? Can you imagine going to a cemetery where all the bodies are lying there arguing about who had the best day?

I want to close by asking this question: Is there anyone reading this who is a Christian, but perhaps has never before consciously realized that it is not in you to live the Christian life? Maybe you are weary of struggling in your own energy to be the man or woman God wants you to be. Would you consider right now just quietly saying to God, "It is not in me, for I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live." As you pray, quietly let your hands relax and by so doing say to God, "You take the wheel. It is not in me." It is not that all of your problems will vanish. You may even get some new ones. But the problems won't be your problems. As you watch God solve them, there is a whole new burst of victory. It is called the surrendered life.

My dear friend, if you do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, I would like just a word with you. I would like to say to you in all honesty that this is the essence of Christianity. God isn't asking you to join a club and go to work to preserve His reputation. God is asking you to die. He is asking you to give up your claims to life as you know it so that you can be born again. Let God Himself come to live in your heart and rule your life and lift your burdens and calm your fears.

He does not vie for control, He wants to *take* control. He is not asking you to pilot the craft, He is asking you to put your trust in the pilot. He knows that you cannot land the craft safely, He is only asking you to give up to His call. He says,

Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.
(Revelation 3:20)

Would you just slip your hand into the hand of Jesus right now and by dying begin to live?

Lastly, are there not some who, like me, suffer from the forgotten moments of surrender? Some of us who have lived days

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or months or years in the sheer exhilaration of the surrendered Christian life, free from the anxiety of succeeding, free from the pressures of conforming, free from the consequences of failing; yet gradually, like the children of Israel, we have bowed to Satan's subtle whispers, "Hey, you are pretty good, God really needs your help." Clutching a piece of God's glory in our hands, we have lost the capacity to relax and let Him be God. We have gotten back on some kind of performance-based bandwagon and can't seem to recapture the joy. It is time for some of us to drive another stake in the ground and give it all back to God.

You may be in the ministry. You may have started out with God in total control of your life and in total control of your ministry. Yet gradually, as you saw God prosper you and use you, you began to take a little bit of the credit. You began to say, "Hey, God, we've got a thing going." God answered, "Hey, wait a minute, I've got it and I am in you." Perhaps you didn't hear Him. Maybe right now you would like to say to Him, "Lord, let's start over again. My ministry is *Your* ministry. My life is *Your* life. Everything I have belongs to you."

I asked God for a prayer to pray that I might yield again all that I have to His will. It is a prayer that maybe you could pray with me. It goes like this:

Dear God,

I'm so weary of living life in my own energy. By your divine grace may I die again today that I may become a usable dead man. I want a body totally filled and flooded with Christ. Live Your life through me today and may I simply let You. And dear Lord as I start to get in your way, (and I will), please remind me that it is not in me so I can rest again.

Amen

You may not fully understand what we have said in this lesson. May I suggest to you that you just ask God in time to make it clear to you, and keep asking until it becomes a reality to you. The reality is this: It Is Not In Me. It is not in you. It is all in Him. Hence, not I, but Christ.

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NOT I

“Not I,” said Paul,
“I cannot do a thing apart from Him.
Cannot you see, by simply
Knowing what I’ve been?”

“Not I,” said Joseph,
“Not one dream can I reflect for Thee.
God’s the one and you must know
It is not in me.”

“Not I,” said Jesus and these words mean
That in awe we fall
“Without the Father,” said the Son,
“I can do naught at all.”

If Jesus, Master, Lord of life
Alone could do no thing,
What right have we to boast at all?
Our power is in the King.

He is our life; He is our strength
He is our very breath.
He has the power over time,
He holds the key to death.

He owns the sun, He rules the night,
There is no “hand of fate”.
He owns the power to humble men,
He only makes them great

I cannot live the Christian life
As it was meant to be.
Praise God! You’ve only asked that You
Might live Your life in me.

“Not I, Not I,” though plaudits come
From all the world’s acclaim.
“Not I, for I’m unworthy
But to call upon His name”.

Oh, God. may men see naught but Thee
As my life goes on trial.
Not I, but Jesus may they see
Then life will be worthwhile.

It is Not in Me
For Focus and Application

1- Joseph's humiliation was intensified when he was told to "serve" the butler and the baker; and he was told by the same man who had wrongfully thrown him in prison. What was Joseph's response? Did he serve them grudgingly? How do you know? How would you have treated these men?

2- Joseph stopped to inquire of these prisoners concerning their sad countenances. How often do you inquire *seriously* about the well-being of others you meet who seem to be discouraged or depressed? How often do you run the other way or make casual remarks such as "Hope you feel better!" or "Cheer up, things will work out!" Why don't we want to enter into the hurts of others? Why must we? Where would we be if others had never cared? What have been your experiences in the body of Christ when *you were hurting*? Did anyone notice? Did anyone help?

3- Joseph humbly asked to be remembered when the butler was set free. Why didn't the butler remember? What would you have thought? How would it have affected your confidence in God's answer to prayer? How long is two years when you are in bondage? Why do you think God left him in prison so much longer?

4- Joseph's big chance came when he was called to appear before Pharaoh. What were the dominant qualities in Joseph's life at this point? How did he get such qualities? Would you be willing to go through what he went through to have that kind of character? Be careful how you answer that question. Be honest with yourself and with God.

5- Meditate on Galatians 2:20 this week. Insert your name between "I" and "am". Quietly say throughout each day, "yet not I".

6- If you have not done so, memorize John 5:19,20; 7:16; 8:28; and 14:10.

7- What struggles do you have accepting the surrendered life in which Christ does the living and you simply "let Him"? Why

It is Not in Me

is this so simple, yet so difficult? Have you ever experienced the freedom of it? If so, how does Satan steal that peace and joy from us? If not, what do you think is keeping you from it?

8- Once we begin to live in the freedom of surrender, why is the subject of glory so important?

9- Are you willing to become accountable to someone for one week to purpose that *no matter what*, you will live a life of rest, in the arms of Jesus? Are you willing to let that person know when you begin to struggle and live in your own energy, so they can pray for you and pray with you until you enter the rest of God again?

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