

## Monday, May 18, 2009

One week from today will be Memorial Day! That day will launch us into summer 2009. This week positions us on the launching pad for what might be the most significant summer of your life! Since Easter (April 12), we've been on a specific journey tracking the appearances of the Risen Jesus Christ. Those days following Easter prepared Jesus' friends for the mission He would entrust to them. Consider Acts 1:1-3 for Dr. Luke's assessment of these 40 days, and compare to Paul's perspective in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. Today is 37 days since Easter 2009!

We've walked the Emmaus road with two travelers who didn't recognize resurrected Jesus until He "broke the bread" (Luke 24); we've visited the locked room where resurrected Jesus first met with His friends (John 20) and one week later with Thomas. We've visited the hillside where Matthew tells us resurrected Jesus "commissioned" His friends to disciple the peoples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20), and we've joined Peter and 6 friends having breakfast with resurrected Jesus on the shoreline of Lake Galilee (John 21). This week, it's resurrected Jesus' final farewell and ascension found in Acts 1.

I notice Dr. Luke twice tells us the resurrected Jesus was eating with His friends (Luke 24:41-43 and Acts 1:4). Being a physician, I wonder if that indicates to us he was particularly fascinated that Jesus in His resurrected body, still was able to eat. You'll remember 1 Corinthians 15 is a lengthy description of what type of body you and I will have when we also are resurrected! I believe one reason Jesus appeared so many times after His resurrection, was to help us understand the bodies we too will have when we experience that transformation!

Note the instruction Jesus gave His disciples "*do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift My Father promised*" (Acts 1:4). It had been in the upper room of their Passover meal (John 13-17) that Jesus had spoken at length about "another Counselor" the Father would send after Jesus' departure. Acts 2 is the fulfillment of that promise. Have you received that gift?

## Tuesday, May 19, 2009

We understand gifts . . . what is the most significant one you've ever received? If you have your study outline from this weekend's worship, you'll recall I highlighted several "gifts" Jesus spoke of and made possible for His friends . . . and they are ALL available to you and me too!

The gift of HEAVEN as a promised future and eternal residence may be one of the most exciting gifts Jesus spoke often about. John 14:1-3 was a powerful promise. Are you confident heaven awaits you, and what do you suppose it will be like? If you've trusted Jesus to be your Savior, and God has done His promised saving work in you, then yes, heaven is guaranteed for you (John 6:37-40 and 10:27-30).

The gift of PRAYER is a promise of an attentive God who will hear your conversation with Him, and will answer within His Sovereignty. Exodus 3:7, 8 is one of the great examples of this. Jesus repeated this promise multiple times that evening (John 14:13; 15:16; 16:23,24). Do you understand how much the Father delights in hearing your voice? If you are a parent or grandparent, you understand. Don't you delight in the sound of the voices of your kids or grandkids? A book I am presently reading says "*the greatest sin of most Christians is the sin of prayerlessness*" because in our refusal to talk with God we live rebellion and we cheat Him out of the joy of conversation with us His people. Notice Jesus Himself often set aside significant times to meet with His Father in conversation. Consider each of these, and see if you can discover why they were each so important:

- Mark 1:35-39
- Luke 6:12-19
- Matthew 14:22-25
- John 17
- Matthew 26:36-46

If Jesus found it to be so critical to His life and mission, then what is God saying to you and me about the "gift" and priority of prayer in our daily lives? Does something need to change?

## Wednesday, May 20, 2009

In considering the "gift" Jesus talked about with His friends in Acts 1:4, I gave you several considerations in my message this past weekend. "Another Counselor" was how Jesus introduced the concept of the Holy Spirit of God to His disciples (John 14:16). Jesus explained much more . . .

- John 14:17 "the Spirit of Truth" was another name for the Holy Spirit, as He would guide us into understanding God's truth (John 16:13).
- John 14:26,27 "The Counselor" would remind us of all Jesus taught, and thereby bring us peace in times of turmoil.
- John 16:7-11 assures us that the Counselor will convict of sin. Aren't you glad! Can you imagine if you had no sense of conscience, no awareness that you have morally failed, or hurt another person? This is not for judgment but for restoration!
- Romans 8:5-14 speaks of a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit! Are you living this Spirit filled life my friends?

You'll notice Jesus spoke of being "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5). The New Testament speaks of four different "baptisms". John the Baptist's baptism called the Jewish people to repentance in anticipation of Messiah's coming (Acts 19:4). Jesus Himself was baptized as His public identification (Matt. 3:13-17). Those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior are urged to be publically baptized as a means of identification with Him and declaration of their "followership" of Jesus (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38-41; 10:47,48; 16:31-33).

The "Baptism of the Holy Spirit", is the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit baptizing the repentant sinner into Christ (Gal. 3:27); giving them a new spiritual nature (John 3:3-7; 2 Cor. 5:17); and sealing their salvation for all eternity (Ephesians 1:13). The empowering of the Holy Spirit happens on a regular basis for Christians in the normal journey of life.

Thursday, May 21, 2009

Most of us work as employees of a company. As such, our time on the job, the use of our talent, and the resources the company entrusts to us to accomplish our task are all expected to be managed well. Employees are “stewards” of that which is entrusted to them for the fulfillment of their mission, much as a diplomat or ambassador is resourced so they can adequately represent their nation and Sovereign. Jesus’ last words to His followers challenged them to live as good “stewards” of all He would entrust to them so they could “*BE My witnesses . . . to the ends of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8) Please take note . . . each of us has the same “mandate”, “steward privilege”.

God entrusts each person with a thinking, reasoning MIND and will hold us accountable for how we use that remarkable capability! Note the difference it should make when a person trusts Christ and fills his/her mind with God’s truth (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; Romans 8:5-9; Phil. 4:4-9 etc.). Do you think consistently in a God honoring way?

God entrusts each person with emotions, feelings, a “heart” with which we engage in relationships. Jesus modeled for us the compassion of God, the grace and mercy of God, and most of all the love of God. Jesus challenged His friends that it would be by their “love” that people would recognize that they were His followers (John 13:34,35). Remember how often Jesus was compassionate, even moved to tears? The cross, of course, is the ultimate expression of love (John 15:13; 1 John 4:9,10). Do you have a compassionate heart like Jesus?

TIME is one of God’s greatest gifts to you! Every moment you live is a gift from God. You know your birth date, but how would you live life differently if God let you know your date of “departure” (death)? 2 Corinthians 5:10 and other Scriptures assure us we’re being held accountable for TIME God entrusts to us. Best stewardship of time is a life lived “on mission” with God, would you agree? So what life mission has God designed you for? Are you living it to the fullest by His power and DAILY leading? There is nothing worse than a wasted life and it happens one wasted day at a time!!

Friday, May 22, 2009

“The Steward Privilege” has been our theme this week as we prepare for Summer 2009 which we launch this weekend. Get ready for a GREAT Calvary Summer!!!

Wasted TALENT is a terrible shame, would you agree? Musicians who never play, artists who never paint, singers who never sing, builders who never build . . . oh my what a disaster! God places inside each person talent, and then when we trust Christ to be our Savior, the Holy Spirit adds “Spiritual Gifts” (1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4:11-16). Combined with the Passion God entrusts to you, they form a potential in you that no one else on our planet has! So, how are you stewarding them?? Be careful not to waste them.

TREASURE, is a wonderful evidence of God’s entrusting to us something that can be greatly used for His honor to powerfully impact our world, or turned selfishly to such extreme that one drowns in his/her greed. Deuteronomy 8 is a tremendous chapter of hope and warning, I urge you to read it carefully as Moses prepared a young generation for moving into a land of bounty! Write here what the Holy Spirit whispers in your mind as you read this great chapter:

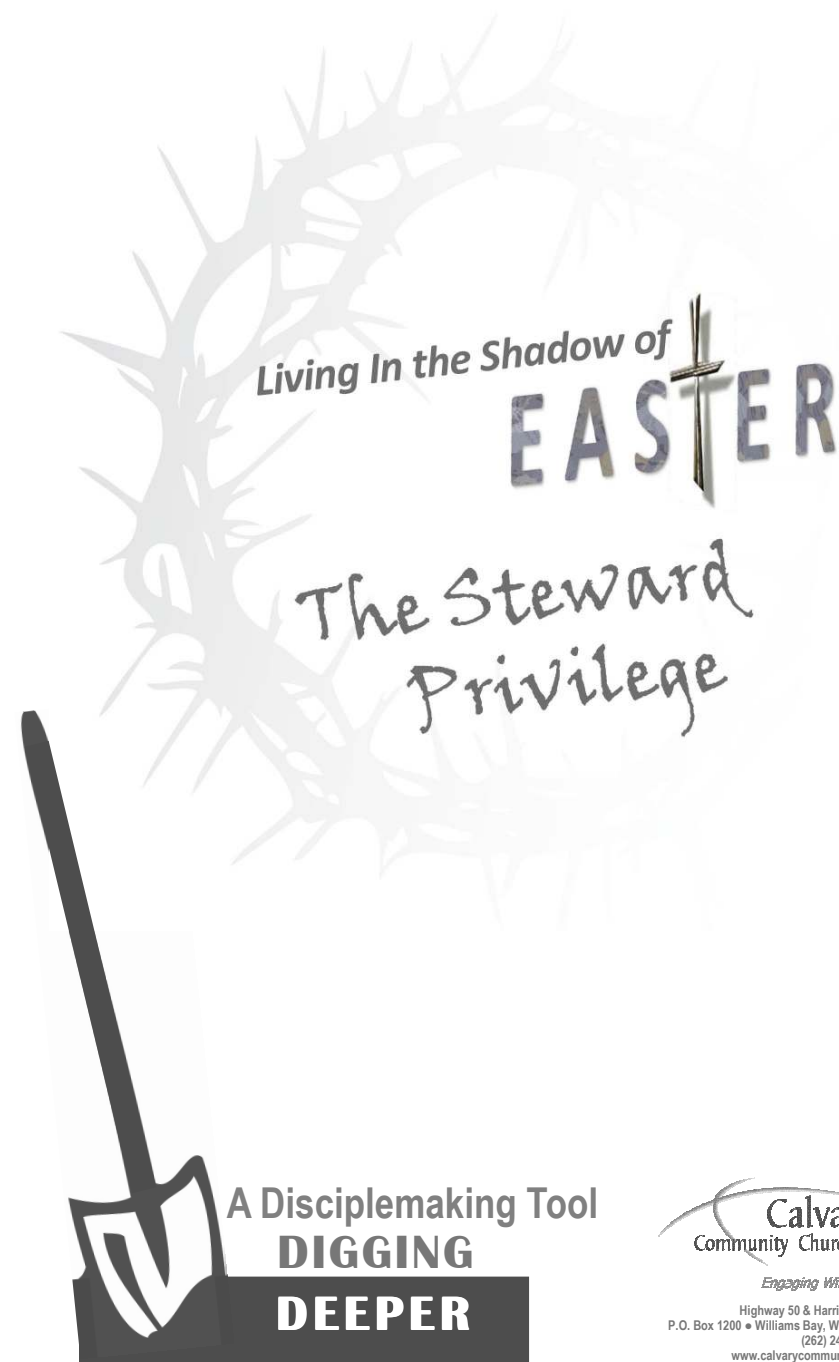
Remember Jesus’ several stories about how the treasure God entrusts to a person can either be a great blessing or an albatross? Consider Matthew 19:16-24 and Luke 10:25-37 and Luke 12:13-34. What does the Holy Spirit say to you about attitudes toward the Treasure God entrusts to you?

Finally, consider 1 Timothy 6:6-10 and Philippians 4:10-13, and what do you sense God speaking in love to you?

Friends, few things can be such a double edged sword as the financial resources God entrusts to you. If in your heart God TRULY owns it all, then you’ll have no problem yielding your management of those resources to His full authority with joy! When you begin to grasp those finances as YOURS, you’ll find your heart getting hard, selfish, greedy and life will get painful!

  
Pastor Doug Anderson

May 18 – May 22, 2009



Living In the Shadow of  
**EASTER**  
The Steward  
Privilege

A Disciplemaking Tool  
**DIGGING**  
**DEEPER**