

Yoked With Christ

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Scriptures:

John 15:9-17

Romans 8:15-17

Matthew 11:28-30

Matthew 16: 24-27

Quite some years ago, I heard a preacher speak about his young son "helping" him clean their car, and what joy it not only brought the little boy but also how much he loved it. The little three year old didn't really know what he was doing, but he was working with his daddy, that was all that mattered, and it was fun. The fact that the father didn't need the little boy's help, that he could have done the job more efficiently and effectively without it, was put to one side so that the little boy could partner with his dad. So that he could receive the credit for helping, because his father wanted him to know that time spent working together was precious and how much he was loved and valued.

It takes true humility to invite someone far less adept than you to join with you, and to reward them far beyond the real worth of what they do. When Jesus left His throne in glory, He took on the mantle His Father had for Him, not the robe of Kingship that He deserved, but rough, homespun workers garments. In His early years, Jesus worked alongside His earthly father, as a tradesman, all the while very aware of who His real Father was. Then, during His ministry, He spent long hours in communion with His Father, watching and listening, only doing what He saw His Father do. All of this, despite the fact that He was the Word made flesh who had spoken the world into being, so that we could be invited to join with Him, to work alongside Him and receive a reward far greater than we could ever deserve.

When Jesus told His disciples that He loved them just as His Father had loved Him, He was offering them the choice to do as He had done. To lay aside their pride in their own worth, to watch with Him and learn from Him, to work with Him wherever their Abba Father led them.

As adopted children of God, our task is not to choose where we should go or what we should do and certainly not to tell God what He should do to fit in with our plans. Our task is to learn that the yoke offered to us by Jesus is one of humility. To be yoked together with Him means coming to terms with our own pride, recognising it and laying it at the foot of the cross, permanently, so that we can abide in His love, just as He abides in the Father's love.

Jesus says He no longer calls us servants, but friends. What does that mean? To be a friend of Christ the Lord, to spend time with Him, to allow Him to walk with me, leaves no room in me for the promptings of my fleshly nature, my selfish demands or my prideful expectations.

To be a co-heir of the Kingdom of God means laying down my life for my friends, just as Jesus lay down His Life for me. To suffer with Christ. To

humblly and joyfully see the reward He has for me, and endure whatever God allows to come across my path.

Humility is not weakness, although the scoffers threw this taunt at Jesus.

Humility is knowing, just as Jesus did, that we could call a whole army of angels to wipe out whatever is assailing us, but, instead, choosing to lay down our life in obedience and awe.

Humility is loving our neighbour, not only as we love ourselves, but more than we love ourselves. Placing the needs of our neighbour far above our own convictions and rights. It is seeing that God has not only invited us to partner with Him, He has already set the plan in place, He has all the resources prepared, all it needs is for us to say yes. For us to take up His yoke of lowness, of care, of absolute humility.

More than anything, humility is standing, or falling down, in reverence before God. It is understanding that this reverence, this fear of the Lord, will lead us into His wisdom, into a true understanding that humility is a precious gift that we dare not reject.

Prayer: Father God, I pray that You bring me to my knees, that I may walk with You, work alongside You and abide always and ever in You. Loving my fellow humans just as You love them, not seeking to save my own life, but rather giving it up for Yours. Amen

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