

Insecurity

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INTRODUCTION

The greatest problems I see throughout America and the world are negative relationships and insecure faith. Faith isn't faith if it's insecure. In businesses and relationships, insecurity is revealed constantly.

The sad part about insecurity is that those who are living in it always feel a need to blame someone or something for their own inadequacy. In every aspect of society today, insecurity is at work. Even in certain Christian movements, insecurity toward the Word of God causes believers to seek certain experiences and feelings. Some believers develop a sense of inadequacy because they have been taught that a mode of baptism or a specific gift is necessary in order to be eternally secure.

Every single stand of Satan is based upon a lie against Truth. Everything about God is based upon Truth against a lie.

This booklet will show that to have secure faith we must have a right relationship with God, a relationship built on the Word of God. No matter how many times we are knocked down, no matter how many things are against us, we can be totally and completely secure in Christ.

Chapter One
THE TESTS OF SECURITY

Throughout the Word of God, we find the teaching and personal ministry of Jesus Christ always revealing whether people were genuinely secure, insecure, or falsely secure. The Word of God deals with the issue of security so individuals can learn exactly how to live in the substance of the reality of the life of God, as it is intimately derived through grace from the Holy Spirit.

A classic illustration is found in Matthew 15:22-28, when the Syrophenician woman came to Jesus for her daughter who was vexed with a devil. Rejected, not only by the Jews but also by the disciples, that woman expressed through her actions before ever saying a word, "I believe that Jesus Christ loves me, even though I'm not a Jew but a Samaritan."

She came to where He was and then she cried out. When she besought Him, telling Jesus

how her daughter was in misery—distressfully and cruelly possessed by a demon—He didn't answer her a word. When she continued to pursue Him, the disciples said "Send her away—she's crying out after us!"

This is significant. Here's a mother crying out for her daughter. How many mothers reading this have, at some point, cried out for their daughters—not because they were doing wrong, but because of love and concern for them? This woman was crying out for her daughter, and, in this case, the daughter was vexed with a devil.

Jesus Christ was silent and didn't answer her a word. But then, to have heard the disciples say, "Send her away!"—wouldn't that have been a great opportunity for the woman to become insecure? *Yes!* What a time to display her insecurity and to go away wounded forever.

Then Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Please remember, He was saying exactly what His disciples in their arrogance and pride wanted Him to say. They had never wanted Him to heal blind Bartameus, and now they didn't want Jesus to heal the Syrophonecian's daughter.

The disciples had little faith and, at this point in their lives, the Word of God was not real

to them; it was purely academic—intellectual awareness of a perception with no personal experience—except when God would overcome them with power to reveal His nature through them, even though their character was not right.

Three Little Words

“Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me” (Matthew 15:25). Picture that! It was enough to send anyone away: the Savior, at first, not speaking to her; the disciples treating her like a dog, sending her away. Now, watch her humility. She comes and kneels, praying. She’s determined to intercede for her daughter who is demon possessed, and she’s *not* going to quit. She’ll risk everything. She kneels; she prays; she says three little words: *Lord, help me.*”

Jesus answered her, saying “It’s not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to little dogs.” In those days, all sophisticated Jews had little dogs in their houses. She replied, “Yes Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.”

“Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole

from that very hour” (Matthew 15:28)

Jesus was overcome by this woman’s security in who He was, in spite of what she saw. He couldn’t wait to answer her, to say, “O lady, great is your faith.” He called her a lady—which is the correct reading from the original Greek text. She was more than just a female; she had character because of her confidence in Him, so He called her a lady. Oh, how her faith pleased Him! Everything was against her. But she was secure in who He was.

The Insecurity of the Disciples

I want to stress this. The disciples walked with Him, talked with Him, and watched Him heal and deliver. They saw Jesus’ tears and His compassion. Yet, here was a woman who had never been around Him demonstrating faith that would be memorialized for eternity, while His disciples showed little or no faith. A stranger knew Him better than they did. She manifested security in the love of Jesus even when He did nothing to encourage her confidence.

The whole scene was to show the disciples true faith, which produces genuine security, and their lack of it. That’s why they forsook Him at the cross. Even though they had walked with

Him for three years, everything was sight, feelings, and experience—but they did not have faith. When He allowed the demons to cause the storm, and the waves overwhelmed the boat, Jesus lay sleeping; He just wanted them to trust Him—and they did not trust Him. Jesus was always bringing the disciples into places where there were no resources and no provisions apart from Him.

Don't be discouraged if you have a problem with faith—you're in good company. The disciples were insecure even after the resurrection. The apostles themselves went through these seasons.

We are not on earth to please men. We are here to please God. This woman's great faith pleased the Master. He could trust her as a tremendous life illustration to those of His "inner circle" who weren't getting the message. If it happened today, we would say He insulted her. He did not. In His omniscience, Jesus knew what her response would be. How many go around wounded and hurt because of people in a plan allowed by God? Be very careful. You can always tell when you are being immature, looking unto people instead of Christ, because you will always be hurt or insecure.

Old Testament Tests

Everytime a believer moves as he begins to grow, God will test his obedience and insecurities. Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees and, after some time, he came into a land of famine. He had a family to take care of, so being reasonable, Abraham went down to Egypt. But God said, "No." Abraham had been called by faith to a place he didn't know.

God promised to meet his needs and to show him great favor (Genesis 12:2-3), but Abraham was so occupied with himself and his personal needs by sight, that he never heard God. Of course, God would produce a famine to reduce Abraham to faith! Faith is the only thing that pleases God (Hebrews 11:6).

Never make a decision based on circumstances, needs, or provision, because your provision comes by faith in the living God. God deliberately allows His plan to make us insecure. He has to reveal it before He can deal with it.

The nation of Israel was miraculously delivered from bondage in Egypt. There in the wilderness, the Red Sea was moved back and the entire nation was delivered from bondage and slavery. Then, God deliberately led them to bitter waters.

The people were insecure with God's plan, and insecure with their pastor, Moses—the same man who had led them through the Red Sea. Now they murmured against him. This test revealed their bankruptcy of security in Christ. When we get insecure, we always blame somebody.

Later, in Exodus 17, the people murmured because they did not have water. They cried for a return to Egypt. Moses was told to strike the rock, and water came out. He showed them that they could be secure in God: Believe Him, trust Him, and God would bring the provision.

Forty years later—again there was no water, and again, the people in their insecurity rebelled (Numbers 20:1-13). Moses sought God and this time God told him to *speak* to the rock before the eyes of the congregation, and it would bring forth water. Instead, Moses got insecure at their rebellion and struck the rock twice in reaction—revealing his own nature instead of God's. God rebuked his unbelief. Moses was a wonderful, meek, holy man who walked with God. But the test revealed that he didn't trust God; the murmuring of the people made him insecure as a leader and it cost him to never enter Canaan—the promised land. God took him home early.

Job had all manner of things happen to him, yet he said, "Though [God] slay me, I will trust him." Esther went before the king, saying, "If I perish, I perish." The three Hebrew boys were thrown in the fiery furnace, saying, "If God delivers us, He delivers us. If He does not, we will worship only Him." For each of these people, the Word was adequate. Their faith was adequate. They were secure in the will of God.

We can always be secure in the will of God with the love of God, and we will always be rich with the Word of God. It doesn't matter what happens by sight; it only matters for our obedience to faith in Jesus Christ's love.

Chapter Two
INADEQUACY:
THE ACCUSATION OF SATAN

The Word of God uniquely teaches how Satan is always approaching Christians, trying to convince us that God's provision and everything about it is inadequate. Satan communicates two things. First he tells us that the Cross is inadequate, that it didn't deal with all of our sins and failed to open a way for us to be eternally secure in Christ. Second, Satan attacks the plan of God as being less than perfect, inadequate. Romans 8:28-30 says, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he

also glorified.” Yet, Satan comes to individuals and says the plan of God and the provision of Jesus Christ are inadequate.

Through the Fall, insecurity was established in humanity. Everything that comes from the Fall will reproduce insecurity, even if it’s disguised as pride. This is why some groups believe one can lose his salvation; it’s just another doctrine that promotes insecurity. Christians attack the adequacy of salvation by grace through faith when they attach any other requirements to what God says is sufficient.

Satan brings in distortions, immorality, promiscuity, and perversion in an effort to cause us to sublimate. He says that you need a relationship, an affair, perversion, youthful lusts—something that will make you have a “good self-image,” because yours is inadequate. These sublimations attempt to hide our natural inadequacies and will prevent us from seeing our need to draw near to Jesus Christ.

Some women find security in lesbian relationships; men enter into homosexual affairs. Why? Feelings of inadequacy have developed to the point where these people feel that they cannot relate intimately with a member of the opposite sex. They turn to a satanic lie for security.

Everything Satan does is based upon a lie against who I am in Christ and what He has done for me, and against what it means to be hid with Christ in God. When I accept Satan's lie, I begin to think I have certain needs—outside of God's provision—because I am a "certain" kind of person. That's a lie. We have to know our enemy, but first of all, *we have to know our Christ.*

Here is a single person. God loves to save single people, to nourish and cherish them, to bring them up, helping and caring for them as a nurse for a little baby. Yet, that one finds that the Word of God is inadequate. They believe Satan's lie: "You need to have sex. Have an affair with someone you can touch. You can't touch God. He's inadequate!"

Something goes wrong in your marriage. Satan says God's provision is inadequate; he urges the individuals to be "realistic"—go to natural, human provisions, because God can't meet your need. That's a lie!

To someone who is married to an unsaved person, Satan tries to bring about divorce by convincing the Christian that it's an inadequate situation. Yet, 1 Corinthians 7:14 says that if the believer lives his life before God, the unbeliever will be "set apart." That spouse may not get

saved, but will be set apart and not be a hindrance to the Christian.

To the one who consistently falls deeply into sin and is weary of failing, Satan says that rebound is inadequate. This person probably has fallen on many occasions. Satan taunts, "You'll never change. You've been doing it for years." According to Romans 6:2 and 15, we should never use grace as a license to sin, but God will see that one through the process and give him the power to stand in grace.

No matter how tremendously weak a person may be, the Holy Spirit stands ready to say to him, "You are crucified with Christ. Enter into communion with Him, because you were already established in a union with Him the moment you were saved. You can trust God. He loves you deeply."

By attacking someone's emotional complex through trials and human rationale, Satan is trying to stimulate a belief that the Word of God is inadequate. The consistent cry of Satan has been "The Bible is inadequate." Throughout the history of the Church, he's been shouting against the promises of God.

The key to Satan's attacks is to convince a believer that he is not complete in Christ. He

wants to make the Christian view the Truth as theological idealism. “Do more to make yourself complete,” the devil whispers. “Do something to prove your adequacy. You don’t feel complete, do you? Reason tells you that you are not complete.” Next, demonic projections come to reinforce feelings of paranoia, insecurity, and condemnation. The believer who may acknowledge his position in Christ begins to see that his experience is far from perfect and begins to accept the projections of inadequacy.

Our sufficiency is in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:5*b*)! We are complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power (Colossians 2:10).

Satan constantly confronts the believer with human frailty and inadequacy. He challenges someone’s financial circumstances, that the finances will never change. Standing firm, you claim the promise that God said He would supply *all* your need according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19), but Satan chides, “Let me ask you, frankly—is it working?”

God places a vision in someone’s heart and Satan begins to attack. This person takes on the vision, believing that he can do all things through Christ, but when he steps out the door Satan says, “Look at you! You’re a big joke.

You'll only foul up the Kingdom of God if you keep this up. Who do you think is going to listen to you when I get done explaining what you're like?" The devil tries to bring in a deep sense of inadequacy to the visionary Christian who is going from faith to faith.

When the Word of God says that we won't be tempted beyond what we are able to stand, and that with every temptation He provides a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13), believe it!

Satan's Attack on Love

Satan's deepest attack by far is an attempt to make the believer feel that the love of God is inadequate. We would not experience consistent errors in our thinking if we realized that there's something truly adequate—that is, the love of God. The love of Jesus Christ is infallible.

Calvary puts a spotlight upon the nature of God's love. It begins to reveal the quality of His love and the way He expresses and reveals that love to every heart.

Galatians 6:1-2 says we are to bear one another's burdens, fulfilling the law of Christ. If a brother is overtaken in a weakness, you who are spiritual are to go to him in meekness, restoring him back to fellowship, considering yourself

lest you fall. In the Greek text, *bastazo* reveals that the word *to bear* means that you lift the burden to remove it and take it up. Because you love that one so deeply, you take it over; not because you are forced to, but because the love of God is shed abroad in your heart and you are functioning in the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 13:7 says that God's love bears *all* things. When you begin to study line upon line and stay with it, you will realize that God is revealing a phenomenal truth. Here, the Greek text for *bear*, *stego*, means to roof over, to cover with silence, to endure patiently.

No wonder Satan attacks God's love! It caused his ultimate defeat. Christ bore our sins upon a tree. He said, "My love for you is so adequate, that I'm going to take every single sin you have ever committed, remove it from you and bear it myself. I'm going to show you the adequacy of my love. Your sins are gone forever, and I will never see them again. Therefore, through everything that I give you in salvation and in discipleship, you will discover a growing relationship where I'll be adequate for your mind, emotions, and will."

If you love only as the publicans love, what is that? They love those that love them. "Be ye

therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven in perfect" (Matthew 5:46-48). What is this verse talking about? God the Father has accepted us inside of Jesus Christ. The Father's love for me in holiness is a positional love expressed inside of Christ. Jesus Christ's love is Calvary's love, and the Holy Spirit's love becomes my experience, shed abroad in my heart, expressed toward others, glorifying Christ.

Satan and all the demons of hell cannot touch the adequacy of my position. God loves me forever. He cannot impute sin to me because he has promised the Son that He wouldn't. I am accepted in Christ, and I am in an adequate position. If I can keep this in mind, I will never be hindered by feelings of inadequacy. Even in failure, the Holy Spirit will convict me and help me through it, enabling me to grow in grace and knowledge and into a deeper fellowship with God.

God is telling us that *He* will keep us from falling. He will make us stand in resurrection life, just as He made His Son stand. His provision is adequate, His plan is perfect and His grace is more than sufficient. He will provide for my needs; I must simply stay occupied with Him. I must focus myself on Him and not look away

with a feeling of inadequacy.

I am a new creation, old things are passed away (2 Corinthians 5:17). Satan constantly tries to bring up the past, but it's passed away. The devil challenges the adequacy of Christ's blood, but God declares that the Blood gives us remission of all sins (Hebrews 9:22). It's adequate, and when we understand this, it motivates our love, grace, and mercy.

When couples begin to feel as if their marriages are inadequate, I pray that they would begin to see that Calvary is adequate, that the Holy Spirit is sufficient, that the promises of God are more than enough. The precious fruit of the Holy Spirit will go way beyond any problem that exists in a marriage; it far exceeds any trouble a person has in his emotions. The love of God is enough to bear it all.

Our expectations must be from God (Psalm 62:5). Husbands and wives expect too much from their spouse's flesh. Each one tries to get the other to change. What would happen if one of them just got on his knees and began to praise and worship God, praying "God, you are adequate for this marriage. I set You before my face (Psalm 16:8) and I put You between me and my partner. You be the resource. Everything must

come through You. I know You're more than adequate"? I believe a great reconciliation would take place in that marriage. A time of prosperity would come unlike any that couple has ever seen.

Secure To Be Healed

There are constant accusations coming at us, telling us that what we do and what we are is inadequate. It's a constant threat to any healing we might receive in Christ. God's provision is more than adequate to heal my mind, emotions, and body. The love of Christ is expressed in us and we can experience the fullness of God as He does exceedingly above all we could ask or think.

As I sense the presence of God in me, I will begin to sense the adequacy of Christ as something more than theology, as something more than an idealistic principle. My disposition is then converted into God's mind. With these conversions, Christ comes in and gives me His blessings in every area. He shows me that He is indeed more than adequate.

Chapter Three

SECURITY IN CHRIST

“And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice,

and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you," (Matthew 5:1-12).

The Laws of the Kingdom

These are laws for the Kingdom of God today, beautifully stated here in the beatitudes. This passage says if we are poor in spirit, we will inherit the kingdom of heaven. If we are mourning over our spiritual bankruptcy, God will comfort us. We are not condemned, we are comforted. This makes us meek and, as a result, we have an inheritance—not only in heaven, but also on the earth. Because we see our condition, we become merciful toward others. A ministry of mercy leads to a ministry of peacemaking. This is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, the fruit of Calvary. We become pure in our hearts and we see God, who is invisible, in action. Then we discover that those who reveal the nature of almighty God will be persecuted and lied about. For this, we are told to rejoice and be exceeding glad.

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which in heaven" (Matthew 5:13-16).

Verse 13 of Matthew 5 says that we are the "salt of the earth." If the salt has lost its savour—which speaks of His resurrection power at work in our disposition—then it is good for nothing. It is trodden under foot. Every Old Testament offering had to have salt in it. It typified resurrection power that seasons the Christian's human disposition with the divine dynamics of God's viewpoint.

We are the light of the world; we represent Christ, who is light, in the midst of the absolute darkness of this world. A city filled with light is not hidden, neither is a Christian's testimony hidden when he confesses Christ. A candle cannot be put under a bushel where it won't receive the proper oxygen to burn brightly. The bushel brings pressure upon it and the light has no value.

Then the Lord said that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. That He did. He

was the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believes (Romans 10:4). Our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20), or we will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The Pharisees' righteousness was human righteousness. Our righteousness is derived apart from the law—it is imputed, in our position, by Jesus Christ and imparted, in our experience, through categorical doctrine.

The whole issue of Christianity is in the heart. Men look upon the outward appearance, and God looks upon the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). If someone is angry with his brother, he has already committed murder in his heart. If a person looks on a member of the opposite sex in lust, he has already committed adultery (Matthew 5:22, 28). It's a matter of the heart. These are the laws of the Kingdom.

A Self-Image Derived From Christ

“The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down” (Psalm 145:14).

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the

LORD upholdeth him with his hand" (Psalm 37:23-24).

"Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:4).

A believer becomes so secure when the Word of God is allowed to dwell in his soul; the Spirit flows in the richness of grace. Psalms and hymns are alive in the heart. The richness of the Lord's personal presence is manifested in the revelation of His nature. This person has entered into a faith that rests in God's promises, in His love, and in fellowshiping with Christ.

People, circumstances, adversities, and negativity no longer affect this person. All the things that come against his emotions cannot wound or injure the self-image he is deriving from Christ. No longer is he occupied with his own failures. He recognizes that failure is only a temporary fall, because he can never fall below his position, which is justification in Christ.

The Exceeding Greatness of Grace

We are hid with Christ in God. Therefore, our failures can never nullify our acceptance in the Beloved. Yes, there is discipline for believers

who continue in failure, but it is loving chastisement from a Father eager to see His children grow. We can never fall below the redemption of Jesus Christ's power on our behalf or His multifaceted grace.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2). In the original text, the verbs here speak of something that happened in the past but have present, continuing results. In other words, the believer who is down has access to grace and to the throne of mercy. He is truly saved; it wasn't a make-believe profession he made. He has the real thing, and he needs to realize that these verbs make an assertion of a dogmatic reality. It is dynamically true and cannot be changed.

"For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation," (Psalm 149:4).

We were created for God's pleasure (Revelation 4:11). Now, don't misunderstand what I am about to say. We do not teach antinomianism—that grace gives us license to sin. God forbid! But we do teach that when a man has fallen, as in the

case of Abraham, it gave the Father pleasure to make him the father of our faith—even after thirteen years of silence between them (Romans 4:16).

We teach that David's sin against Uriah (2 Samuel 12:9) should have resulted in capital punishment. Instead, God took the child—the fruit of a murderous, adulterous affair—and gave David a beautiful wife and son, Bathsheba and Solomon.

It pleased God to make Bathsheba, as she raised Solomon, one of the greatest mothers in all history, among the ranks of Hannah (Samuel's mother), and Eunice and Lois. That gave God great pleasure.

Ephesians 2:7 reveals that He will be showing us the exceeding riches of His grace and kindness throughout eternity. The wounds will always be there upon Jesus' body to remind us of the price that was paid for us. Sixteen times in the book of Revelation we see Jesus Christ in eternity, still bearing the nailprints in His glorified body. Because of the blood shed from these wounds, our sins were removed. In Revelation 21:4, the former things are passed away. He will never remember our sins.

In heaven, we will have perfect bodies without the old sin nature. But the fresh nail prints

on His hands and feet and the fresh wound in His side will forever remind us that it was all by grace.

God is able to make all grace abound toward us in all things, so that we will have all sufficiency. In the grace of God, insecurity is gone. When we receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, we learn to reign by one Jesus Christ moment by moment, thought by thought, step by step. Now we can live in the confidence of His union, communion, and fellowship—all made possible by the blood of His New Covenant, which can never be changed.

The Problem of False Confidence

Paul, in Philippians 3:3-4, warned against putting “confidence in the flesh.” He was writing these things while chained in a prison, very secure in everything God had said. Paul had confidence in the Word of God. The circumstances were bad. The promises didn’t seem to be working. There was no encouragement from people. Nothing seemed to be going right. But the Word was true and pure. He knew that Jesus’ love, compassion, and provision would always be his.

In Mark 14:29 and 31, Peter told Jesus twice

that he wouldn't deny Him. Even if the other disciples failed Him, Peter said that he would stay true. He had a false confidence that soon would be challenged. Peter denied Jesus three times (Matthew 26:69-75).

In 3 John 9, Diotrophes had a false confidence in himself and wanted preeminence over the apostle John. In 2 Timothy 4:10, Paul wrote of Demas who put his security in this present evil world, and forsook Paul in order to gain a portion in this life (Psalm 17:14). It was a false security.

In Philippians 4:1-2, two prominent women were battling for preeminence. Their insecurity brought in contention and a competitive spirit. Insecurity motivated pride, and pride revealed their arrogance as they went about sowing discord in the church. It got to the point where Paul had to address the situation by mentioning names in his letter to the Philippian church.

Subjective people always display false confidence. Their convictions have to be confirmed by sight.

When God told Balaam not to go with Balak, in Numbers 22, the message was clear. The conviction was there—*Don't go!* Then Balak offered him wealth and honor, and Balaam went back

and prayed again. God told him if he couldn't have convictions that remain, then go ahead.

Balaam asked, and he was told what to do, but he went back to have his convictions confirmed. This is very serious. When God leads, we don't need to have our direction confirmed. When God ministers His Word, we don't need to have our convictions confirmed. That was settled years ago.

Many of the convictions I have had for years have never been confirmed by sight. Christ is still the only way. The Word of God is still everything to me. Heaven is real. Hell is real. Judgment is real. Sin is real. Grace, forgiveness, and love are still real. My conviction is that drug addiction is sin, that alcoholism is sin, and that immorality is still sin. Purity is still real.

I don't have to pray to find out if these things are right. Years ago, I made up my mind about what was right and wrong by studying what the Word says. I have followed after the One who knows the Way.

Following After God

Occasionally we hear people say, "Those people follow a man." Years ago I heard this answer: If the man is going in God's direction, then

follow him. If I were lost in the woods, I wouldn't mind following the man who knew his way out. I would be following a man for my safety and well-being. Paul encouraged people to follow him as he followed Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

In John 6:53, Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." After hearing this, many disciples went back and followed Him no more. What He said made them feel insecure. They were not willing to trust the Master. They wouldn't trust His heavenly calling, a calling that would keep them far above the principalities and powers of this earth. They were too insecure to follow in a holy calling, being separated unto the Holy Spirit and categorical doctrine. They were insecure about a high calling, a call that would have separated them unto the greatest vocation in the world, allowing them to serve Christ and to become more like Him in time.

Christ endured the cross, despising the shame and yet counting it all joy (Hebrews 12:2). He was belittled and called a womanizer. He was called Beelzebub and the prince of demons. Yet, He was so secure in the Father's plan that He endured the cross for the joy set before Him—

the joy of being seated at the right hand of the Father.

Jesus was secure in the Father's provision when He had no place to lay His head. He was secure during those three hours of darkness, when there upon the cross, all of our sins were placed on Him. The sun said, "I'm not going to shine." The earth revolted and trembled with a great earthquake as though it were saying, "This is because of the suffering of the Son of God." Ancient documents in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran record three hours of great darkness and an earthquake. In each place, the documents are in agreement about the day this happened.

All of creation groaned on that day. It happened when Jesus committed His spirit to the Father's hand, secure in the knowledge of the Word that said He would rise again.

CONCLUSION

Do you feel insecure when people are silent? When they are sarcastic? When people belittle you and send you away, do you start getting introspective? Silence and sarcasm from Jesus and the disciples didn't faze the Syrophenician woman. She didn't let these things make her insecure about Jesus. Yet, many people who had been listening to Jesus for years turned away and followed Him no more in the face of His challenge to eat His flesh and drink His blood.

Suppose you had one talent and I had one talent, but there was a brother with three talents and then another with five talents. Should we be insecure? Should we be caught up in feelings of inadequacy? No, because if we all work together, we have ten talents. Everyone has one or more gifts from God, and together we can use them to edify and build up the Body of Christ.

We never have to be insecure. The Word is near to us, even in our hearts (Deuteronomy

30:14; Romans 10:8). We cannot think evil (1 Corinthians 13:5), not even about ourselves. If something unkind is said or done to me, I shouldn't identify myself with it. Instead, I must identify with Truth and speak to myself only according to God's Word. In this way, I can thrive in the provisions of His plan, rightly related to His love and grace.