

CHRISTIANS SEEKING IDENTITY

Newsletter

July/August 2012

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TOTALLY SURRENDER?

Greetings Family and Friends,

Man's fundamental desire has always been to be the best he can be. It seems like his sense of security and stability in who he is has been based on his or her ability to succeed in life.

In the same respect, when man has not been able to succeed in his endeavors it has served to send him the message that he is somehow "less than" and a failure.

Man's own measuring stick has become Satan's "whipping stick." Please do not misunderstand what I am saying because I believe in working, in striving to be the best that we can be, and in doing all that we can do. Just look at man through the ages in any field, technology, athletics, science, just to mention a few. We are breaking through barriers every day in those areas.

But what I am saying is this: Sometimes in the midst of our lives we become challenged with unforeseen circumstances that seem to put up a road block between us and our goals in life. Satan often seizes the opportunity and flashes these circumstances in front of our eyes. He tells us what we have done to cause the problems or what we need to do in order to overcome them and then adds pressure: If you were really the man of God that you ought to be, you would not be in this situation, if you were really a man of faith you would take control and command this situation to go away!

He puts the pressure and burden of solving the problem on our shoulders in such a way that it produces a sense of helplessness fueled with guilt and it becomes a load that cannot be lifted. We have all fallen prey to the enemies "whipping stick" at one time or another in our lives. This month's teaching addresses this and we hope that you will be enlightened and blessed. Also we want to take this opportunity to say "Thank you" for all of your prayerful support. We love and appreciate you ALL so very much.

God Bless you.
Your Friends,
Mickey & Suzan



Upcoming Itinerary:

Belize CBC - August 14-23

*Costa Rica, Nicaragua
August 24 - September 15*

Scotland- September 19-30

Ireland CBC- October 1-3

*St. Petersburg, Russia CBC
October 5-November 3*

*Atlanta Georgia CBC
December 3 - 8*

AOI Ministries is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. As a result, when you donate to this ministry, your love offering / donation will be fully tax-deductible when you file your tax return at the end of the tax year.

THE SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY

Luke 13:11 *And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of Infirmity [febleness of body or mind, malady, moral frailty, weakness] eighteen years, and was bowed together [to stoop altogether, to be completely overcome by], and could in no wise lift up [unbend, reverse] herself. (note: definitions in brackets from Strong's Concordance)*

We read this scripture and conclude that the woman had a disease that kept her from standing up straight. According to the definition in Strong's Concordance, it could have been any moral, physical, or mental issue that she was not able to overcome.

The spirit of infirmity is associated with intimidation and accusation coming from the adversary over one's inability to overcome a situation. He causes us to feel like a failure, like God does not love us, like we just don't have enough faith. In her case for eighteen years she had tried everything that she knew to try and nothing had worked.

The scripture says that she could not lift up herself! We get caught in the trap of the enemy and begin to take personal responsibility for not being able to overcome our weaknesses. It produces guilt and condemnation that brings us into bondage because no matter how hard we try, it is not good enough. Anytime you are plagued with a burden that seemingly has no answer, the spirit

of infirmity is behind it.

Jesus says His yoke is easy and his burden is light. Jesus has compassion on people and heals those that are oppressed [to burden spiritually or mentally] of the devil.

Acts 10:38

Luke 13:12 *And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed [relieved, set free] from thine infirmity.*

Luke 13:13 *And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight [lifted up], and glorified God.*

She was lifted up because of what Jesus did for her, not because of what she did for him. In Luke 13:6-9 Jesus spoke a parable. He said a man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and came looking for fruit. When he did not find any he told the gardener to cut it down! The gardener said, "No. First let me take care of it and work the soil. Then if it does not bear fruit you can cut it down."

The dresser of the vineyard transferred the burden from the tree to himself. We can find the same scenario in John 15.

John 15:1 *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every*

branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Once again the tormentor would have us to believe that the branches are at fault for not producing. We believe that if we, as the branch, are not bearing fruit, then we must do something that will reverse it. The phrases "he taketh away" and "he purgeth it," both come from the root word expiate which means to make atonement for. The branches ability to bring forth fruit is dependent upon the gardener's touch. The branch just rests

Now that sounds really easy to do, but the truth of the matter is, we don't know how to rest! That is the hardest part. It is hard because once again, the enemy points to us and we believe that we have to "pull ourselves up by our own boot straps" and it becomes an impossibility.

The best thing that we can do is admit that **we can't do it and let Him lift us up.**

2 Corinthians 12:10 (AMP) *So for the sake of Christ, I am well pleased and take pleasure in infirmities, insults, hardships, persecutions, perplexities and distresses; for when I am weak [in human strength], then am I [truly] strong (able, powerful in divine strength). Today, let us **let** God be that "Heavenly Father" that He so desires to be in our lives. And let us learn to live in His "rest".*