

To Be Sifted

John 14:12: Most assuredly, I say to you he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also and greater works he will do, because I go to My Father.

What are these works?

As seen in Luke 4:17-19, Jesus entered the synagogue in His hometown of Nazareth where just as He was ready to begin His 3 year ministry He declared that what was stated about Him in prophecy was exactly what He was going to do. He quoted Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me.....to preach the good news to the poor; ..to heal the brokenhearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty the oppressed; to proclaim that the acceptable year of the Lord is here."

This weighs heavy on my heart, for my desire is to be that believer who does the works that He said I would do believing in Him.

So what am I missing?

For Jesus said, "assuredly" which means that what He has said is certain. Therefore the problem is to be found with me. I know that because the Spirit of God, of Jesus, abides in me, that He will never leave me, that His love is unconditional, that there is great worth in me. But I also know there is within that which stands in the way of my desire to be all that He has said for me to be. The indication is undoubtedly that God-powered sifting is needed to separate the worthless from that which is valuable in me.

I see it in my mind this way: the sifting of the kernels of wheat. The kernel is the fruit, the life giving part. But it has a covering, a natural husk covering which must be removed for the kernel to be used as the creator intended - to give nourishment. The inherent character and makeup of the husk, as can be seen when removed, makes it of no value for life-giving food. It, like the character of our natural flesh covering, needs to be treated as garbage - striped off and disposed of. The fruit of the kernel God planted within me will give nourishment, life. But the husk, my old death-invoking flesh, must be separated from the living kernel for it to be of value in the kingdom of God. Will I surrender to the work of God's sifting? And the sifting is not complete if there are remains of the husk left intact. If they are not recognized and cleared out, the mind will continue to be influenced by and responsive to the deceit and misleading of the old flesh nature.

Evidence of remaining "husk" nature, flesh infiltration, is seen in my application of the world's standards and view-point and my old habitual patterns of thinking and responding to too many daily situations and circumstances. In a Spirit guided sifting search of my heart I find the remaining husk of pride and presumptuousness in a corner of darkness.

Pride - the armor of "I am" - that which Satan has established as the defense and offensive weapon of choice in legitimatizing his kingdom of darkness. In retrospect, I see myself using the weapon of "legitimizing" when I have justified pushing forward my agenda in prideful righteousness because of my "God-given" position and knowledge.

Presumptuousness - the disregarding of rightful boundaries. Though usually done in ignorance, yet resulting in my taking liberties that are not honorably mine.

This is why it is taught, "Every thought needs to be captured" before it goes its own way.
(2 Corinthians 10:4-5)