

Put God First Part 2

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

Christianity is commitment. Certain people of God they can still keep the external shape and keep commitment as long as things are going well and God is helping and providing. And so you find their short coming and lack of commitment are hidden from the sight and covered by the grace of God. Therefore and for this reason, certain times, the Lord would allow trials and hardship to pass in the life of the church and on His people in order to test people commitment and to show what is in their hearts toward God and toward His work and His body the church. The event of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion was a heavy event that the Lord allowed to pass on His church and on His disciples who were following Him. The hardship of that event had helped to lay bare what is in each and every one heart and life. We know that most of His disciples dissented Him in that situation. They love the Lord as we are today. But they were unaware that certain wrong things entered their lives and took the first place of God in their hearts and made them vulnerable and not able to stand firm in that trial. We will read what had happened that night from Luke 22:34-62 (Please read that in your own bible) and we will conclude what are the wrong things that were in the life of the disciples and caused them to move away from the Lord. The same things might enter your life and that will take away the first place of God in your heart and move you away from the Lord:

4- Lack of preparation and good stewardship: ³⁵ *Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?" "Nothing," they answered. ³⁶ He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one."* (Luke 22:35-36) Jesus was recommending to them the necessity of good preparation and how important to keep material things and use them for the glory of God when that is needed. Many disciples they love the Lord but they are not keen to keep and put aside what God is giving them in order that they will use that in God's service. God's ministry needs money and other material things. Therefore the disciple should be good steward of what they had received from the Lord. Lack of good preparation and stewardship is sin and would cause you not to be effective worker when God is calling you to serve Him.

5- Prayerlessness: ³⁹ *Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. ⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation." ⁴¹ He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." ⁴³ An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. ⁴⁵ When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. ⁴⁶ "Why are you sleeping?" he asked them. "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."* (Luke 22:39-46) The disciples of Jesus they fail to respond to God's call for them to pray. When Jesus went back to them the word of God tell us about them: ***“he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow.”*** The disciples were exhausted from sorrow. Sorrow and tiredness will creep into your life when you fail to keep a constant life or prayers. Daily reading the bible and praying are the very refreshing thing that you need in your life to keep tiredness and sadness away from your mind and thoughts.

6- The love of money: ⁴⁷ *While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, ⁴⁸ but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"* (Luke 22:47-48) Judas betrayed the Lord for a certain amount of money. But was he in need of that amount of money? To answer this question let us read the following: ³ *When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. ⁴ "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility." ⁵ So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.* (Matthew 27:3-5) Judas was not in need for that money, he just wanted to collect and have more money even if it is causing him to put aside and betray the Lord. Many disciples and workers of the Lord for the sake of more money they forsake their ministry and service unto God. They don't need money but they love it and want more of it, but they will find themselves away from God's service forgetting what Jesus and God word declares ***“Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.”*** (Matthew 4:10b) Loving money and putting it first instead of God in your heart and life is a dangerous thing that you ever do because this may attribute to you more troubles.

Many of the workers who started to follow Jesus and serve Him they are happy and glad with the Lord, but later on when they are tempted they will start to love money and spend more time to work so they can collect more and invest more of their times to gain skills so they can earn more. They will succeed in that and they will collect more. But in putting money first in their lives and as consequence of that they will start to have more troubles and hardships because they got more of money but less of God. Let the following be your principle in living your life for the Lord and to serve Him, ⁶ *But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. ¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”* (1Timothy 6:6-12)

My Dear and Beloved: The writer of the Psalmist wrote. ***“Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults..”*** (Psalm 1:12) You love God but what you are doing is sin and you are not aware of that. God called you to consider your ways, recognize your sin, repent and be willing to serve God as you agree to pray.

My Prayer: *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord I repent from the following sins _____ . Lord gives me more self control and enlightened my mind to know my priorities well, and to spend more time on prayer and reading your word in the bible. Lord gives me wisdom of how to be good steward of what you entrusted to me. This all I ask and pray in Jesus name Amen.*