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March 2022 “CAUSE-AND-EFFECT”

Dear Friends,

Every verse in the Bible is anointed and filled with the life of God. Even Jesus said that His words are spirit and life (John 6:63). God’s Word is the *only* source of nourishment for our born-again spirit (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In Matthew 4:4, Jesus said we are to live by every word that proceeds from God. Furthermore, God’s Word is filled with amazing and incredible promises to His children. Appropriating these promises enables us to live in the fullness of our born-again life (2 Peter 1:4). These promises cannot fail because they are guaranteed by the completed work of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 1:19-21). One of the greatest “promise chapters” in all the Bible is Psalm 91,

¹He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

²I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

³Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.

⁴He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

⁵Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day;

⁶Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

⁷A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.

⁸only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

⁹Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;

¹⁰There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

¹¹For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

¹²They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

¹³Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

¹⁴Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

¹⁵He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

¹⁶With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

The first two verses of Psalm 91 are the lyrics of a song that was sung in the church Kathy and I first attended. I also remember a lady who would sing a special solo in church; the song had a rather lengthy musical interlude during which she would quote all of Psalm 91. Quite honestly, this is one of the most encouraging passages of scripture you'll read. Christians are told to claim these promises and confess them over their lives. While I totally agree with that teaching, there is a bit of a problem.

Several years ago, someone told me that every Jewish person on Earth was going to be saved, even if they did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah. The reason, this person explained, is because they are the chosen people of God, and He was just going to save them. That would be nice, but it is not in any way true and there is no scripture in either the Old or New Testaments confirming such a belief (the person who said that to me had taken one verse completely out of context and formulated a doctrinal error). No one is going to be saved unless they first believe that Jesus is the Christ and then call upon His Name to be born-again; this is confirmed in Romans 10:9-13. In other words, there is a cause-and-effect principle at work for salvation: the cause is our belief in Jesus and calling upon His Name; the effect is our salvation.

This same cause-and-effect principle is at work in Psalm 91. Many Christians want to live their lives any way they choose, then expect the fullness of all the promises of Psalm 91 to manifest in their lives just because they confess each verse. I'm sorry, but that will never happen. You see, if we ignore verses 1, 9 and 14, we can't expect the other 12 verses to fully operate. Consider what God said in verses 1, 9 and 14:

¹He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High

⁹Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation

¹⁴Because he hath set his love upon me

Let's take a look at some of the words in these verses.

Verse 1 Dwelleth - From the Hebrew word *yāšab*, it means to sit, to dwell, to inhabit, to endure, to stay. One interesting aspect of this word is that it gives the image of an individual staying and sitting in the presence of another person, enduring whatever would try and distract that individual's attention away from the other person. Today, the individual in this verse would be the Christian and the other person would be God.

Verse 1 Secret Place - This Hebrew word, *siṯrāh*, means a covering, a hiding place; a secret, as in a special place that is in a secret location known only by those informed or invited. This secret place belongs to God (the most High). Prophetically, it is speaking of

the intimate presence of God, the place where only those who are born-again can approach and dwell. This word is translated as "hiding place" in both Psalm 32:7 and Psalm 119:114.

Verse 9 Habitation - Originating from the Hebrew word mā'iyin (or mā'ôn), it is very similar to sitrāh (verse 1 secret place). It means a dwelling, a habitation, a refuge. But because this word is used in describing the Lord as being that habitation, it presents a definite prophetic image of what Jesus said in John chapter 15,

⁴Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. ⁶If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Verse 14 Set his love - The Hebrew word for this phrase is ḥāšaq. This is an interesting word in that it presents the image of a person making a diligent, heart-felt decision to be attached to, love, delight in, and be bound to another. In this verse God is recognizing and acknowledging that a person has made such a decision, putting Him above everything and everyone else. This is almost identical to what Jesus said in Luke 14, that we are to love Him more than family, friends and even our own life and interests if we want to be His disciple.

Verses 9 and 14 Because - This comes from the Hebrew word kiy, which grammatically is called a demonstrative particle. To keep this simple as used in Psalm 91, it could be described as the catalyst for activating everything God has promised in this chapter. Said another way, choosing to love Him above all else and choosing to constantly dwell in His presence becomes the cause for the Psalm 91 blessing to manifest in our lives.

One way to use these definitions and paraphrase Psalm 91 would be this:

Because you have made the decision to stay in My presence and to linger in that special place of intimacy with Me no matter what tries to distract your attention away from Me; and because you consider Me to be your exclusive place of refuge, a fortress for your life, that place of abiding and unity with Me; and because you have chosen to trust Me with unwavering faith; and because you know Me by Name and have chosen to diligently love Me, find your delight in Me, put Me above all else in your life and be bound to Me with all your heart, here is what will happen in your life:

I will deliver you from the traps the enemy lays before you. You will be delivered from troubling, devastating and even deadly plagues. I will cover you with My glory and presence. My Word will be a shield of protection and the power of stability in your life.

You will not be overcome with, dominated by, or tormented by fear of the unknown, fear from threats, fear of sickness and plagues, or fear from what man openly says is a coming destruction.

No matter how many devils try to stop you, you will see them stopped and shut down, and the plans they have for your downfall will fail; you will see how completely they have been defeated. Their plans for evil will not touch you, and there will even be a type of cloud by day and fire by night to protect the home wherein you live and it will protect all who live there with you.

I will dispatch angels to watch over and protect you day and night, keeping you from harm you don't even know is headed your way. You will always stand victorious against every principality, power, ruler, spirit of darkness, and spirit of wickedness. You will trample them under your feet and they will not rise to stop you.

I will personally get involved in the affairs of your life and you will be established, unmovable on high with Me. When you call upon Me, you will hear My voice as I answer and speak with you. I will always be with you as you face the challenges of life, no matter how great they are, and I will see to it that you are always delivered. I will honor you with an honor no man and no devil can take away or stand against; you will have My favor upon your life. You will live out your days and will be a partaker of all the precious promises that come with your salvation.

The cause-and-effect principle in Psalm 91 should come as no surprise. In Deuteronomy chapter 28, God told Israel if they obeyed His commandments, incredible blessings would be poured out upon their lives. But He also told them if they disobeyed, their disobedience would take them into a place where terrible curses were waiting.

In the New Testament, the same cause-and-effect principle exists for all Christians. For example,

- If we continue in the faith (believing in Him and holy living) we will be presented before Him holy, unblameable and unreprouvable (Colossians 1:21-23).
- If we do not forgive others, God will not forgive us (Mark 11:26).
- If we willingly choose to reject God's holy standards and live in sin, we will face eternity separated from Him (Hebrews 10:26-32).

One of the worst things that has ever happened to the Body of Christ is the twisted presentation of grace that has spread into churches throughout the world. So many have embraced the heresy that nowhere in the New Testament are Christians told to repent, in spite of the numerous passages which state otherwise. Do you honestly believe that a Christian can commit sin and not be held responsible? As the Apostle Paul would say in Galatians 3:1, who has bewitched you?

Others have foolishly accepted a doctrine that the Bible does not teach that Christians should spend quality and quantity time in prayer, worship, fasting and Bible reading, meditation and confession of scripture. All such things are works of the flesh, they say, and change will come by God's grace when He wants us to change. What absolute ignorance! Nowhere in scripture has God promised to sovereignly move on a Believer and force that person to mature spiritually. We have a responsibility to reach forth unto those things which are before us and press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:13-14).

Psalm 119:130 reveals that the entrance of God’s Word (our reading and hearing scripture) produces greater understanding of Him and His Word.

Psalm 22:3 plainly declares that God inhabits praise. Therefore, if we do not praise, we are not creating a place of habitation for Him.

Romans 12:2 states that if we renew our mind we will be transformed and able to clearly know God’s good, acceptable, and perfect will.

The Bible is literally filled with the cause-and-effect principle. Failure to do the “cause” part is why so many Christians are not receiving blessings as they could, not being used by God in ministry, not seeing His promises fulfilled, and basically living a shallow, uneventful life in Christ. But God has guaranteed that if we do our part, He will always do His. Praise His holy Name! (If you would like more teaching on this subject, please use the form below to order a CD of my sermon, *From Promise to Manifestation*.)

In His Grace,



PS – Don’t forget that our Revival Now! Conference is next month, Sunday April 24 – Friday, April 29. For more information, visit our website www.jmmgrace.com or send me an email, PastorJimGCC@gmail.com.

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