

A Gift for Grown-up Jesus

A Feast of Dedication (John 10:22-23) “love letter” to my family and friends

By Jonathan Wallace

Dear family and friends,

I know this will take more of your precious time than, like me, you already have SO many things waiting in line for... So I have prayed for the Lord to help me write only what He has put on my heart, for your heart, from His heart...

As I was struggling over all the things surrounding and leading up to Christmas (including the knowledge that so many I know personally are going through some of the worst trials of their life, such as depression, loneliness (even for some who are married), divorce, extreme disability (more than one I know), serious illness, and loss of loved ones, among other things...), I felt the Lord suddenly give me light and clarity that I felt were from Him, even for all of us, to help us and even answer our sincere prayers, so I want to simply lay that before you as briefly as I can, maybe even in the form of some questions that have come to my mind, as we all seek to really be a blessing to Him and others before He comes to this earth again...

This thought came to me: As we celebrate the birth and first coming of our Lord, and even waiting for His return, what is it that He would, and even does truly desire? I'm sure we could all name at least a few if not several things that would all be true to some degree at least, but I would like to do for you what I feel He has been doing for me, in answer to my sincere prayers, even to let me see “the big picture”... So because of your love for Him, I pray you will take time to read this, and as you read, I strongly encourage you to do the same as I continue to pray to do: sincerely pray for Him to open your eyes, “to behold WONDERFUL things” even from His “law”...

Psalm 119:18

More than just the usual, individualistic good (and scriptural!) things we often think of (such as Love, Joy, Peace (and all the fruit), and forgiveness, and even His desire for all men to be saved), is there an all encompassing “bigger picture” thing that the Lord greatly desires, and that the enemy greatly dreads?? I would say the most simple and even astonishingly profound answer many might give is “you”! And I would agree... He would have still come and gone through all of that just for me, even in spite of all my sick sin!! Wow- what a Life-changing Love this is- and how I pray all will come to see and know this as I have, and still am!!! We could and would all do very well to arrive and never leave the wonder of this fact...

And yet, as unspeakably wonderful as this is, is He calling us (at least many of us who are a little older in the Lord...) to see something even Higher and more wonderful?? What could be more wonderful than a life redeemed from such a hopeless and miserable existence, now being transformed from a near worthless clay (DIRT) pot into a living stone (even a precious gem stone!!)?

How about a whole lot of them (a plural “you”!)... and not just a big scattered mess of them, but what about a big, beautiful House- bigger and more beautiful than any mansion you have ever seen or could ever imagine- where we could all meet and eat together!? Or what about not just a House, but even an entire City - even a fortified mega City- that makes the most impressive metropolis currently on this earth (and I have recently seen very impressive photos of such) look absolutely pathetic in comparison, and that would be big enough for all of us to live in? I would submit to you that this is exactly what the Scripture lays out for us, and even though some or all of you may think you are familiar with this, I encourage you to again pray **Psalm 119:18**, even in the Spirit of **Jeremiah 29:11-13 and 33:3**, then look up and read the references I list here with fresh eyes, and really ask the Lord in true humility if there might be something we as His people have been missing (and not just something small, but something BIG (**Jer 33:3**), for Him and for us, and not only for the future, but *here and now*.

Consider how God often uses physical pictures in the Old Testament and parables in the New Testament to help us see things (even as marriage and children help us older ones see even more from His perspective). What is one of the first things we see in the scripture, even before sin and the fall? In addition to simply eating, we see first the lack/need, and then the provision of a mate to match Adam, which would (in the end) lead to the whole world being blessed by their fruitfulness. Now remember that Adam was made in God's image, and that Jesus (who was also put into a "deep sleep" for the provision of His Bride) is even called the "last Adam". Even throughout the OT, God speaks of His people as a woman who He marries...

And why not? Is not one of our greatest desires to find someone to love, and who loves us? And then to marry and be with them "happily ever after"? We are made in His image, not just physically, but in our soul (mind, will/desire, and emotions)...

Now what else is needed for this married couple to be happy and fruitful? Is not a house the next most sought after and expensive possession in this life (in general)? And not just any house, but one that most of us want to end up in, that we might call our "dream home" (which we usually want "custom built" or remodeled to suit our exact, particular needs and wants), right?

Now I encourage you to consider the OT scriptures again in this light, and again with prayer not to miss anything... even something VERY "GREAT" ...

I used to bemoan or wonder why the tabernacle and its furniture (not to mention all the "service of the house" that went along with it) took up so much of the chapters in the OT. Even the scriptures say that no man made structure could ever house God, so why spend so much energy, material, and time on it? I tell you, there is something BIG to see here...

And right in the beginning of the NT, what is up with Jesus wanting to hang out in "His Father's House" as soon as He turned 12? And why did He get so upset (**John 2:17**) about what was common practice there back then, even to the point that one of the first and last things He did on this earth was to "cleanse" it,

in spite of it being very upsetting to those “in charge” of it (who questioned His authority to do so, and who wanted to kill him for threatening their position in it)? Why did He tell parables about houses and even say (1st thing after His disciples began to recognize Who He was) that He would build one (out of living stones, on Himself as the Bedrock Anointed One)? Where is He preparing a place for us, and what is it made of? Is the “New Jerusalem” not a literal description of this “City House”, that will be “here” on the literal New Earth? Is this not what He calls “His Bride”?

There is so much more I want to get into with all of you, His precious children and dearly loved people- even “God’s Field, Building, and Temple”- but I feel Him restraining me to this for now, with just one more question before I leave you with Him and His words: In the light of all this and His prayer in **John 17** (His last, longest, and most passionate recorded prayer before He left this earth, in which He specifically prayed also for us now as a testimony to the world) *do you think He is getting His greatest desire **right now?***

Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18 & 22, 28:16-17 Exodus 6:7, 25:8 Deuteronomy 12:5

1 Kings 8 Ezra 1:2-3, 3:1 Nehemiah 8:1

Psalms 23:6, 27:4, 36:8, 48, 84, 87, 122, 127, 132, 133 Song of Songs 1:4, 6:3-4

Isaiah 56:7, 62:5 Hosea 2:23 Haggai 2:9

Matt 16:18 Mark 11:17 Luke 2:46-49 John 2:17, 14:2-3 (and chapter 17)

1 Corinthians 3:8-17 (plural “you”) 2 Cor 5:1 Ephesians 5:32 Hebrews 11:10

Rev 21:2-4 & 9-27, 22:14-17