

NOTES TO THE FAMILY

Issue #6, Help Yourself

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With arms wide and a broad smile she directed me to a solitary seat in the rear of the congregation.

“There’s plenty. . . just hep yourself.” The offering was so sincere I quickly scanned the sanctuary for food or beverages or token gifts often given to visitors. But there were none. And there were no other seats to be had.

The pastor spoke of what had been provided through Jesus, when it was provided, and how we could receive all that had been provided.

I’d heard it before . . .through Jesus, God provided all that we could ever ask or imagine, it was all ours as the children of God; all was provided from the foundations of the world, there was no time or distance in Jesus; and we receive our inheritance in the same manner as we had received our salvation, our freedom to serve Him. But while receiving salvation was a one-time event, receiving all that was provided was a continual process. . .you’d always have access and opportunity, but with infrequent or limited practice, receiving what you need when you need it could be frustrating if it worked at all. Having gained entry into the place of blessings we could miss all of the benefits by being ignorant of the process or simply not practicing what we know. And to top it off, the Pastor told us that although Satan is a defeated foe, he is good at encouraging Believers and others to do or say things contrary to our good.¹

It was clear that even with my best effort, serving Christ was a daunting task for a mere mortal. The more I listened to the pastor, the more I realized I was powerless to serve Jesus without Jesus. But the pastor continued . . .

He had not painted such a daunting picture to leave us prey to Satan—there was help! Our life in Christ was controlled by our tongue and while we might not be able to speak all of God’s word initially, there were certain confessions that empowered us and held us safe until we could learn and apply more. 1 John 4:15 was one such Scripture confession, “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.” He explained that with God dwelling in us we had access to all His wisdom and should never be defeated or slowed in any purpose.

Confessing 1 John 4:15 was like living in Devine health and protection, like having all things provided that we could ever need, like having no fear, like having unlimited power. Whatever we would need at any time, the constant confession of 1 John 4:15 empowers us to receive it. 1 John 4:15 spelled out the whole gospel in a simple Scripture that could be easily committed to memory. But even better for those who understand that Jesus and His name are the complete word of God, whenever befuddled we could simply call out JESUS for access to the power and wisdom of God.

Jesus is available to us, all we have to do is help ourselves.

1. Satan is at work encouraging Believers to shun The Name, particularly in times of need or weakness Its application by vain use as is warned against in Exodus 20, verse 7 “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” Both Believers and non-believers have begun to use the Name as a mere exclamation, their “*wow*”, “*shucks*” or “*damn*” not appreciating the power, and so not receiving the Blessings. Some Believers shy away from the Name wanting to avoid appearing unsophisticated, “voicing vain repetitions as heathens do.” Others avoid the Name wanting to maintain an ecumenical posture. Both groups suffer weakness.