

PREREQUISITES FOR GAINING HIGHER SPIRITUAL GROUND

This is your Friend and Minister, dr. Joshua Uhiara, bringing you Healing Word from the Master, a program of the Master's Vessel Ministry which lets you know that Jesus loves you as you are, but loves you so much that He will not leave you as you are.

Friends, I come to you again in the Name of the LORD Jesus Christ. We thank Him for this opportunity again He has given us to search the scripture. Today, I will be speaking on Prerequisites for Gaining Higher Spiritual Ground.

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Prerequisites for Gaining Higher Spiritual Ground.

PRAYER:

Father, thank You again for this hour. I want to commit into Your hands, all my friends and myself, and ask that You will speak to us now from Your Word, in Jesus Name. Amen!

We have seen gaining higher spiritual ground as exemplified in the life of the Apostle Paul. We saw Paul's intolerance of status quo Christian life, his dissatisfaction with which he worshiped, Sunday only, pure warming Christianity. The apostle Paul wanted more. He wanted to know Christ and His fullness, as he expressed in,

Philippians 3:10

¹⁰ That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

He desired very strongly to gain a higher spiritual ground. With every fiber of his being he strained for the price of knowing Christ experientially and intimately.

What do we mean by gaining higher spiritual ground? To refresh our memory from the previous lesson, it means experiencing Jesus Christ in a personal intimate or deeper way. A spiritual high is the same as a spiritual depth. Deeper spiritual life is what gaining a higher spiritual ground is all about. In practical terms, one who is gaining a higher spiritual ground is becoming more and more like Jesus. He or she is increasingly becoming a reflection of Jesus Christ, not a distortion of Him. How do we gain higher spiritual ground?

- i. Reject promptly the flaws in your character the moment they try to rear up their ugly heads.
- ii. Always remember that you have not yet arrived. You are still an ongoing divine project, an unfinished spiritual product.
- iii. Forget your past successes and/or failures if they do not help you to do better in the present.
- iv. Press on, pursue, and chase Jesus Christ instead of yielding to discouragement.
- v. Lay hold of the purpose for which Jesus laid hold of you. Don't ever forget that the Lord saves for His own purpose, not yours, not mine.
- vi. Fix your eyes on Jesus Christ. That is, live a life of dependence on Him, the only one who will lift you up to the higher spiritual ground.

Let us see two simple prerequisites for gaining a higher spiritual ground in the words of Jesus, in the text we read: John 7:37-39. When did He (Jesus) give these prerequisites? In other words, we are asking the question regarding context. The scripture says on the last day of the feast, the feast of Tabernacles...

John 7:1-5

¹After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him. ²Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. ³His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. ⁴For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." [In other words, advertise Yourself. And that is the last thing Jesus will do] ⁵For even His brothers did not believe in Him. [that is why they spoke like this] Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready. [This is an indictment – not a compliment]

God established the feast of tabernacle under Moses.

Leviticus 23:33-34

³³*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁴“Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD.*

The feast of tabernacles represented Israel in the wilderness, on their way to the Promised Land. During the Feast of the Tabernacles, the priests would draw water from the pool of Siloam, and take it back to the temple, and pour it out from the altar and it will flow. And as they poured it out the choir will be chanting Psalms 111 to 118.

On the last day, the highest day of the feast, was observed as a Sabbath. The priests made their usual procession around the altar, but seven times instead of once. It was at this high point that Jesus cried out apparently as the priest poured the water out from the altar. And as the water flowed down Jesus made this utterance: if anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

In the scripture water is a symbol of God’s provision of Grace, the image of God’s life: the gift of life. The river of water of life that proceeds from the throne of God. In Revelation 22:1, is what Jesus offers in John 7:37 to anyone who thirsts. Here now lies the first prerequisite for gaining higher spiritual ground, thus: thirsting.

David spoke of this thirst in Psalms 63:1

*O God, You are my God;
Early will I seek You;
My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.*

The sons of Korah did the same in Psalms 42:1-2

*As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So pants my soul for You, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?*

Thirst is desire, intense desire...as we see in

1 Peter 2:2

²*As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.*

Thirsting represents intense desire. Man's desire or thirst for God is made only in Jesus Christ. Sin is substituting this thirst with anything other than God has manifested in Jesus Christ. The reason people sin is because they find in it something to satisfy the longings inside them. Those who desire God are willing to give up the things that interfere with getting this greatest desire. This is one principle behind fasting. The laws God gives us are His way if saying to us, drop that – so you can have Me. God is not trying to deny you some pleasures of life, He is trying to give you greater pleasure.

Gaining higher spiritual ground. Knowing Him more intimately.

One dear servant of God once said, we find ourselves able to say no to some things because there is a bigger yes burning deep within us.

Let me conclude with the Prerequisite number two. The first one is thirsting and the second is drinking.

Drinking means believing. It means aligning yourself with Jesus. It means trusting Him. It means receiving Him and His teachings and doing what He says. That's what it means to believe in Jesus Christ. The water of life here is here is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in the believer, not as a lake, but as a river. And He wants to flow out. Will you let Him out so the world will see and believe that Jesus is the only Savior and Lord, their primary and only need?

Friend, have you received this Jesus?

PRAYER:

We are thankful again, Father, for Your Word, we are praying, O God, that those who have heard me will come to the experience of having this water of Life which the Holy Spirit ministers in the lives of all who have believed in Jesus Christ. May this Water of Life flow through us all, and may it also wash off all the dirt and everything that hinders us from gaining a deeper knowledge of You, in Jesus Name we pray. Amen!