

Sunday February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007

**‘Nothing in Me...’ – Part Two**

1). Joh 14:28 ¶ *"You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming back to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I. 29 "And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. 30 "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. 31 "But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.*

a). We saw as we studied our scripture last week that the original ruler of this world, Satan, was coming and that he had nothing in time, space or relationship with Christ.

b). And we could perhaps understand this in the same way as the Lord tells Peter that Peter would Have no part with Him in the coming Kingdom unless the Lord was to provide for Peter’s on going cleansing – pictured in the washing of Peter’s feet.

c). In other words then there was nothing within the present world, under the authority of the ruler of this world with which Jesus had any part.

d). Joh 18:36a *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world.*

2). However we also saw that in relation to ourselves, because of our ever present sin nature – the ‘old man’ connected with our first birth, that which was born of the flesh – the same was not true for us as for the Lord.

a). We do have a part with Satan in his present kingdom.

b). The good news is that we can choose not to exercise that commonality - Ro 6:6 *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

c). The other side of the coin, so to speak, is that we can make the wrong decision. And when we do, we align ourselves with our enemy rather than with our Savior.

3). We had seen this last week specifically in relation to the Jewish religious leaders, Judas Iscariot and the Apostle Peter.

a). All are eternally saved individuals, yet by the confession of their mouths, translating into action we find them equated with the wicked one.

b). Most poignantly demonstrated in the Lord's rebuke of Peter in - Mt 16:23 *But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

c). Peter's focus and attention at this point in time was 'the things of men' – in other words he had a preconceived world picture that was at odds with the execution of God's plans and purposes – even though he knew that Jesus was 'the Christ, the Son of the living God'.

d). This would be an example of the very thing Jesus rebuked the religious leaders over in - Mt 12:34b.....*For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

4). And then we would see this again in - Jas 1:14 *But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.*

a). Now we may have too narrow a picture of sin – let us remember that from God's perspective, and therefore from ours also, anything contrary to His word is sin.

b). Sin = Greek word - *harmartia* = to miss the mark (And so not share in the prize)

c). As a further example let us also call to mind what the Lord says of unbelief in – Heb 3:12 *Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;*

i/ A heart of unbelief is here described as evil.

d). And please note in our James scripture that we are drawn away by our own desires and enticed – we are mindful of the things of men and enticed to follow our own agenda.

e). Whereas we need, by the renewing of our mind, to be mindful of the things of God - 2Co 4:16 *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.*

5). This is, from yet another perspective what we find in - Ro 10:8 *But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

a). Now we are clearly not dealing here with the free gift of eternal life, the salvation of our spirit, as believing followed by confession leading to salvation would take us into the realm of works where the free gift has no place.

b). Rather we are dealing with issues surrounding the salvation of the soul – and there is more involved in confessing with our mouth the Lord Jesus than just speaking those words.

c). We can find a clue to this in the word confess = Greek word – *homologeō* = to give assent to, to be in agreement with.

d). So then, that which comes from our mouth must be in agreement with the Lord Jesus. Not only must we believe that God has raised Him from the dead – remembering that His resurrection has given us the hope of our inheritance – but that which comes from our mouth must be in line with that which The Word has said about that inheritance. Not only in respect of its substance, but also in the practice of that which it takes to receive it.

e). We need to speak in accordance with scripture – not the things of men – and this is not quoting scripture all day long.

f). Jas 1:26 *If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.*

g). We will realize that being a doer of the word also encompasses what comes out of our mouth.

6). Note this scripture in Proverbs - Pr 18:21 ¶ *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.*

a). Now many people teach that we have the ability to speak words of life or words of death in relation to each other. And this would be true.

b). But can we also see that death and life, in relation to the age to come, for us as an individual, is within the power of our own tongue. We can make confession unto salvation and receive life.

c). Or we can not make confession unto salvation, but rather confess things, in agreement with our enemy, that result in rejection from a position with Christ in the age to come – receiving death, the loss of our soul.

d). Note the second half of our verse - *And those who love it will eat its fruit.* – those who love to speak things leading to death, those who hear the word but don't do it by not bridling their tongue, those who make this their lifestyle, will eat of the fruit that comes from it – rejection at the Judgment Seat resulting in the loss of their soul/life in the age to come.

i/ Those who love to speak things leading to life, those who hear the word and do it by bridling their tongues, who make this their lifestyle, who 'confess the Lord Jesus', will eat from the fruit that comes

from it, receiving the salvation of their soul for the age to come – receiving a position with Christ in His Millennial Kingdom - Mt 12:36 *"But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. 37 "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."*

e). Now let's look at - Pr 15:1 ¶ *A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. 2 ¶ The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. 3 ¶ The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good. 4 ¶ A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit. 5 ¶ A fool despises his father's instruction, But he who receives correction is prudent. 6 ¶ In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, But in the revenue of the wicked is trouble.*

(Teach this)

f). And do you see where our scripture brings us back to? – ‘a tree of life’.

g). The two trees in the garden – the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – and which ever one we love we will eat the fruit of it.

h). One leads to life in the age to come, and the other to death in the age to come.

7). Now clearly at this present time we are not dealing with two literal trees for us to eat from. Both the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are no longer located on the earth.

a). Presumably after the flood of Noah's day these trees were no longer to be found.

b). However the tree of life does reappear in connection with the coming Kingdom - Re 2:7 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

c). And here in our scripture we see it in relation to an overcomer's promise. Just as with Adam, we have been separated from this tree until issues surrounding the salvation of the soul have been dealt with.

d). So if we love that which leads to the tree of life, thereby achieving the salvation of our soul, we will eat its fruit in the coming Kingdom. Providing the necessary wisdom for rulership.

e). The tree of the knowledge of good and evil does not make a second appearance in scripture however – nor does it need to.

f). The consequences of eating from that tree – sin and death – have been present in the human race ever since Adam and the Woman ate from it. And in a figurative sense every time we choose that connected with the tree – our own determination of good and evil– we eat from its fruit.

8). So let's look for a moment back at events following that original eating from that original tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

a). Ge 3:12 *Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."*

b). So who is to blame, according to Adam's newly acquired sin nature?

c). Notice Adam's train of thought – the woman – You gave me.

d). It is the woman who is blamed, but the underlying criticism is of God.

e). And here is something most instructive for us. Adam's focus is not on his own action, but the fault of the Woman, and in drawing attention to her fault he is really being critical of God.

9). And as we bring this over into the NT the Lord has some very serious things to say about it - Mt 7:1 ¶ *"Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? 5 "Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

a). Please see what the scripture says –

v1 – if we judge – if we condemn others, we will be judged

v2 – we will be judged by the same judgment we use on others

and it will be given back to us in the same measure that we give it out.

b). This is a very sobering thought.

10). The problem is that our judgment/condemnation of others is usually in relation to our own expectations of them in contradiction of God's word.

a). We set standards that we expect those around us to live up to and if they don't we condemn them for not meeting our requirements.

b). And if we do this – which we do – we are always going to be disappointed as our brother or sister will at some point fall short of our mark.

c). And really our criticism is not of our brother or sister but of God, because He should have done a better job in that person's life.

d). Do we realize that when we do this we are wanting to exalt our throne above the throne of God – guess whose idea that was.

11). Jas 5:9 *Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!*

a). We will remember that - Ro 8:1 ¶ *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

b). What do we see then? Grumbling against one another is walking according to the flesh.

c). We would have to choose not to grumble against one another in order to be walking in the Spirit.

12). Judging, condemning, grumbling, in respect of our brothers and sisters is probably the biggest thing that the ruler of this world has in us. And it is probably the fruit that Christians like to eat the most - Ge 3:6 ¶ *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.*

a). Grumbling against our brother or sister must of necessity expose their imperfection in order to reveal, in our own eyes, or the eyes of our hearers, our perfection. We put them down in order to exalt ourselves.

b). This is most likely not a conscious premeditation – but is certainly the result of what we do.

c). And this is an area in our lives that we may need to address rapidly and with all seriousness.

d). And the need to do this is most likely fuelled by what we call a poor **self image**.

e). Church we need to settle once and for all who we are in Christ

f). Our heavenly calling

g). We don't have to trample anyone else under foot to get there.

h). We need to replace the lie of our self image with the reality of the image into which we are being transformed - 2Co 3:18 *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

i). Don't ever take that which God is working in you and call it worthless. Instead confess with your mouth unto salvation.

j). Or our grumbling against one another will come out of a religious spirit that is rigid and inflexible – wanting to see people get what they deserve rather than extending them mercy.

13). Yet what do the scriptures say?

a). Ro 14:3 *Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him.*

*4 Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.*

b). Ro 14:10 *But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." 12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.*

(Teach this)

14). Let's continue with some more scriptures

a). 1Co 4:5 *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.*

(Teach this)

b). Jas 4:11 ¶ *Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. 12 There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?*

(Teach this)

c). Evil = Greek word – *katalaleo* = to speak against, be critical of

15). Remember Paul's admonition to the Philippian Church

a). Php 2:12 ¶ *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. 14 ¶ Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16*

*holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

b). This clearly brings everything once again into the focus of events at the Judgment Seat relating to the salvation of the soul.

c). Paul admonishes them to do all things without complaining and disputing, so that when they appear at the Judgment Seat he will not have labored for them, he will not have taught the gospel of the glories of Christ to them to no effect.

16). Oh let us pray that the ministry of the word of the kingdom given to us here will be for rejoicing in the day of Christ, and that the ministry of the word will not have been in vain. Let us refuse the poisoned fruit of complaining and disputing, that we may instead eat from the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God.

17). Scripture itself of course gives us the solution to our grumbling against problem and it would be good for us to meditate on its implications.

a). To begin, look at this first mention - Le 19:18 *'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

b). And now - Mr 12:30 *'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. 31 "And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

c). And again in - Jas 2:8 ¶ *If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;*

18). We are all in varying stages of process and we must allow for each one to be in a different stage than us.

a). We must realize that we do not see the details of the outworking of God's plans and purposes in each person's life – therefore our trust must be in God, not what we think we see.

b). Cf. Darlene Wilkinson

19). And Jesus of course is our example - 1Pe 2:21 *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges*

*righteously; 24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed. 25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

a). And continuing - 1Pe 3:8 ¶ *Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. 10 For "He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it. 12 For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil." 13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?*

20). Now in all this of course we are not seeing that we should condone sin in our brother or sister's life – and scripture is very clear on the steps to be taken if this is the case – and we are not going to deal with this today.

a). Suffice it to say that even when dealing with sin our purpose is not to be condemnation, but restoration - Ga 6:1 ¶ *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.*

21). Church we have come too far to end up tripping over our tongue at the last minute.

a). There would be nothing our enemy would like better than for discord and disunity to exist amongst us.

b). But that cannot be unless we choose to let him have that in us.

c). As we interact with each other we may have to put up with a lot from one another that we would love to grumble against.

d). Let us please determine not to do that. After all what does the scripture say? - Pr 19:11 ¶ *The discretion of a man makes him slow to anger, And his glory is to pass over a transgression.*

20). As we close for this morning let us take the opportunity once again to encourage someone with the good news of who they are in Christ. And to

pray over them that which we would pray over ourselves in respect of our race of faith.

a). No family members – no usual friends.