

Easter Sunday 2013

"Ready or Not!"

There is a story of a man, pulled from obscurity, anointed to rule, threatened by an enemy, who couldn't wait any longer, so he "forced himself to take matters into his own hands..."

His is the story of a man whose kingdom could not continue... it's the story of too many of us!

There is a story of another, a King stepped down from royalty, the Anointed Ruler submitted to an enemy, He wouldn't save himself, but entrusted His life into the hands of Another...

His is the story of a man whose kingdom will never end... it's the story of who we want to become!

There are many stories, calling to each and every one of us, "You were created for kingship, anointed for warfare, in conflict with an enemy, but wait on the Lord, who gives us the victory!"

This is the story of who we can be but there is no happy "ending" without the lessons of the cross!

Luke 9.23,24 And He said to them all, "If any of you wills to follow Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me... but know this, if you try to save your life you will lose it and whoever will lose his life for My sake will save it..."

Luke 9.23,24 (lit) "If any man will, wishes to, come after Me, to follow Me where I am going, let that man be prepared to give up earthly ease and comfort and daily be ready to bear the sufferings which will be sure to fall on all who follow after Me. If you are bent on preserving this life you will lose the nobler one – but if you will subordinate worldly considerations for your love for Me you will receive the crown of life!"

Daily, at the Cross... Is an act of our will/wishes/desires! *"There will be no perseverance w/o will!"*

The selfish will: I am valuable, need to preserve, please myself... what cross?

Unselfish will: I am invaluable to the cause of Christ, I must give myself to Him!

Selfish: let me gain the world to fit in with the world to befriend the worldly!

Unselfish: in the world to win the world and hands free to save the world!

Full experience with Christ means a *habitual* denial/self-forgetfulness!

"Self" denial is the reversal of our fallen condition!

From God-conscious and obedient to self-conscious and indulgent and back!

Self "denial" is the condition that opens the way to transformation!

It's not a matter of being ascetic but no longer pathetic!

"No better test of the reality of our commitment than, 'let him deny himself and take up his cross daily!'"

Every day activity to renounce/purge/ delete every hindrance... what is wrong/evil... (obviously). what is "okay" but not expedient to the goal of love/service! (not so easy). \

Jesus is no longer on the Cross... and He has made room for us, saved and unsaved, to come daily and lay down our lives so that we can live with Him!

This is not a typical Easter message, but this is not a typical time for typical people...

This is the time for people with atypical vision who see the halo around the Cross... and commend their lives into the hands of Another!