

Head of the Church

by Tricia Berg

And Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters. Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where?" 1 Samuel 25:10-11

I believe Jesus' choice of words is significant to those who call Him "Lord, Lord," and yet He tells them He doesn't even know "where they come from" in the following passage. Those are the same words that Nabal said. He was the fool who would not share his worldly goods with David and his men even though he benefitted from their protection. (1Sam. 25) That reminds me of how God sends rain on both the righteous and the wicked. Everyone benefits from His existence, whether they acknowledge it or not. (Matt. 5:43-48) Our mission is to share the Gospel and to live in such a way that they can "wake up" before they have to find out what it's like to live without His unappreciated mercy and grace. David was about to take vengeance on Nabal when, by the grace of God, Abigail stopped him. (1Sam. 25:32-35, Rom. 12:17-19)

*He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. And someone said to him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" And he said to them, "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us,' then he will answer you, '**I do not know where you come from.**' Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' But he will say, 'I tell you, **I do not know where you come from.** Depart from me, all you workers of evil!' In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last." Luke 13:22-30*

There's another similarity between what Nabal said and what Jesus said. Jesus told of a future time when He "never knew" certain people who will claim to know Him. Nabal said to David's men that many were "breaking away from their master" those days. Everyone in the land, including Nabal, knew very well that God had anointed David as the future king. (1Sam. 16:1-13) Nabal was

deliberately being disrespectful (and greedy). (1Sam. 25:36-38) I think that every single believer certainly SHOULD know that Jesus is the Head of the Church, and that God has put ALL THINGS under His feet. Like David at that time, Jesus has not yet begun to exercise the power given to Him to reign over ALL. Perhaps for this reason, some who think they can do whatever they want, and God will be pleased with them. Shockingly enough, there are even some who have tried to appoint another "head of the church." (Eph. 5:23, 2Pet. 2) They would seem to have "broken away from their Master," wouldn't you agree? Jesus told a parable about some who didn't want Him ruling over them in Luke 19:11-27.

*You made him for a little while lower than the angels; **you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.**" Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. **At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him.** But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, **namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor** because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. Hebrews 2:7-9*

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the **kingdom of his beloved Son**, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. **And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.** For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister. Colossians 1:13-23*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his

*blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an **inheritance**, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the **riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints**, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.***
Ephesians 1:3-23

So another lesson we can glean from David and Abigail's story is submission to sovereign rulership. Jesus taught about how to enter the kingdom of God (Matt. 5:20, Matt. 18:3, Matt. 19:23-30, John 3:5); whereas, Abigail generously delivered supplies to David and asked him to remember her when he came into his kingdom. (This brings to mind the thief on the cross making his confession of faith in Luke 23:42.) When David's servants came to bring her to be David's wife after Nabal's death, she offered to wash their feet. (1Sam. 25:40-41, Luke 13:12-17) She humbled herself and was exalted by King David, according to his good pleasure in her character, as shown by her generosity and the honor she showed him. (Luke 14:7-11, Jam. 4:10, 1Pet. 5:4-7, Matt. 19:27-30)

*And **when the LORD has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince over Israel**, my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord working salvation himself. And when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then **remember your servant.**" 1 Samuel 25:30-31*

Jesus is often called the Son of David in the Scriptures. (Matt. 1:1, Matt. 9:27, Matt. 12:23, Matt. 15:22, Matt. 20:30-31, Matt. 23:1-17) He is our Eternal King and He will be judging His own first. Judgment always begins with the house of God. (1Pet. 4:17-19, Heb. 10:30-21, Rom. 14:10-12, Heb. 4:11-13, Ezek. 9:3-6) Afterwards, He will judge the nations.

*Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the **time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.**" Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail. Revelation 11:15-19*

*And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" **And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great."** Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "**Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.** Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. **Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God***

the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." **And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.**
Revelation 19:4-21

*They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is **Lord of lords and King of kings**, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful." Revelation 17:14*

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, **'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'** "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the

*least of these, you did not do it to me.' **And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.**" Matthew 25:31-46*

*But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared **for those who love him.**" 1 Corinthians 2:9 (Also see John 14:15-26, Jam. 1:12.)*

In addition to submitting to His authority, Jesus told us not to be stingy with what we have received from God. (Jam. 1:17, Gal. 6:6, Matt. 10:42, Mark 9:41, 1John 3:16-18, Jam. 2:14-17, Rom. 12:20-21)

*"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. **Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.** "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:38-48*

*Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?" And he said to them, "**Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.**" And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'" But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' **So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.**" And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And*

which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. **Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.** Luke 12:13-34

Jesus taught much during His earthly ministry about what He expects of His own. (John 17:6, John 6:37-40, John 14:2-3) He wants us to forgive as we have been forgiven. (Matt. 6:12, Matt. 5:21-26)

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. **Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants.** When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. **Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.'** Matthew 18:21-35

*"Judge not, that you be not judged. **For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.** Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." Matthew 7:1-5*

And Jesus wants us to use what we have been given for His glory, and to be honest and fair. (Ex. 23:1-9, Zech. 7:8-10, Matt. 23:23-24)

*"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. **Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them.** And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' His master said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.**' And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' His master said to him, '**Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.**' He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' **But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'**" Matthew 25:14-30*

Now **listen, you rich people, weep and wail** because of the misery that is coming on you. Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes.

Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. **You have hoarded wealth in the last days. Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence.** You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you. James 5:1-6

My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? **Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?** If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. **For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.** James 2:1-13

Jesus told his disciples: "There was a **rich man** whose manager was accused of **wasting his possessions**. So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.' "The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg— I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' " 'Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.' "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' " 'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. "He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' "The master commended the

dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. **For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.** Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve both God and money.**" The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but **God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight.**" Luke 16:1-15

So once again, our treasure is IN HEAVEN. We must not squander our Lord's blessings (which INCLUDE talents, skills, resources, etc.) on ourselves (beyond what we actually NEED) and on the same worthless things of this temporary world that unsaved people value. Those blessings were given to us to BE a blessing to others in such a way as to show others how awesome He is. We can invest wisely or unwisely, our choice. (Matt. 5:14-16, Titus 2:11-15, 1Pet. 2:9-25, John 15:8, 1Tim. 6:6-10)

The point is this: **whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.** And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may **abound in every good work.** As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." **He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.** For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. By their approval of this service, they will **glorify God** because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift! 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to **an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you**, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold which is refined by destructive fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.** Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look. Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. **As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."** And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, **conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.** He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever." **And this word is the good news that was preached to you. 1 Peter 1:3-25**

Let's read the word of God, and do what it says. Jesus is our LORD, and He is worthy of our obedience. If we love Him, we will heed His instructions, and be

glad we did when we stand before Him. (Rom. 10:9-10, John 14:15-24) Let's not be like foolish Nabal, but wise like Abigail. Let's be faithful servants with our lamps lit when He returns. (Matt. 25:1-13, Psalm 119:105)

"Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great." Luke 6:46-49

*Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. **Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.** "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? **Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.** Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,' and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 24:42-51*

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