

I'll Have What God Gave Me!

Throughout the Bible, particularly the Old Testament, we see the many promises that God provided. Countless times He instructed and specifically reminded His chosen people, the Israelites, to take ownership of what He had provided for them—what was already theirs. However, on occasion the Israelites made the choice not to accept Him at His word and did things their own way. They chose to do what many of us do in this day and age...to take things into our own hands and create an existence that is much less than what God had intended.

When we do not listen or pay attention to what God is telling us, we become distracted with other things. We have a choice. We can put the things of God first and focus on His Kingdom, or we can focus on the details of our own problems or lack. The Father doesn't want us doing that. He doesn't want our minds occupied with our troubles or tribulations because He has already provided a way for us to come out of them. Colossians 3:2 tells us, "*Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*"

We live in a world that is filled with sin. People are doing crazy things, and they are doing them in a way that just baffles the mind. It is wasteful to consume our energy with the craziness of the world. It is unproductive to worry about all the stuff that comes with living life on earth, because life IS what it is. Your responsibility is to pray for people, but you cannot control what others do; you can only control what you do. You can only walk in the steps that God has ordered specifically for you.

Your steps are ordered through God's Word...doesn't mean that you're always going to walk perfectly. It means that when you get off the path, you know the way to get back on it. You know that Heavenly Father has provided this "*way to get back on it*" through Jesus Christ. This is your right and privilege as a child of God—to always get yourself back on task, back in alignment with His Word.

Isn't this a wonderful thing! To know that when we screw up and ignore the good sense God gave us, we have the right to self-correct through His Word and get ourselves back on track with His good pleasure. This is a birthright. We are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ! This means that we can enjoy certain privileges that come along with being in the family of God, and those privileges include His forgiveness and correction.

A privilege is a special honor. It's a restricted right that is given to a group of people. The thing that makes a privilege worthy is the fact that it is ONLY given to a special group. In general, people will only make use of a privilege if they feel or know they are deserving of it. I can have

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the keys to my neighbor's car, but until that neighbor grants me permission to use the car, the keys are of little value to me.

We have to understand that when it comes to the things of God, privileges come to those who prepare themselves to use them. God is a God of order, He wouldn't provide us with something we shouldn't, couldn't, or wouldn't use. He has given us all these great promises, privileges, and provisions because He knew we would need them. It's simply up to us to take advantage of all these gifts and make them ours.

I don't know about you, but I want to make sure I get all I can and all that belongs to me. I can't stand when I find out that I had the wherewithal to take advantage of something really special, but I missed out because I didn't know what I had. This is the message God broadcasts to us over and over again. Through other people and also through our circumstances, He is constantly beckoning us to open our eyes to see what He has already provided.

Talk about eye-opening experiences, look at the Apostles Paul's encounter with our Lord and Savior in Acts 26 (The Message):

15-16" I said, 'Who are you, Master?'

"The voice answered, 'I am Jesus, the One you're hunting down like an animal. But now, up on your feet—I have a job for you. I've handpicked you to be a servant and witness to what's happened today, and to what I am going to show you.'

17-18" 'I'm sending you off to open the eyes of the outsiders so they can see the difference between dark and light, and choose light, see the difference between Satan and God, and choose God. I'm sending you off to present my offer of sins forgiven, and a place in the family, inviting them into the company of those who begin real living by believing in me.'

Jesus Christ opened Paul's eyes so that Paul could in turn help others to open theirs. This love in action is what reveals the glory and happiness that we are all seeking.

The privileges we enjoy are given through God's love. This is how they are given and this is also how we use them. You can't walk by the world's standard and walk in God's privilege at the same time. You have to empty your heart of arrogance and vengeance. You must clear your mind of worry and doubt. You must feed your soul with His love—with faith, peace, and joy—this is how you own what God has already given you; this is how you walk in victory every day. It's a choice to stay in a heavenly mind-and-heart-set, for no other reason than the great truth that it is your privilege to do so.

God has given you far more than you'll ever use. He has provided all that you will ever need to be victorious and successful in your every endeavor, but you've got to take ownership of these rights and privileges. You've got to get up every morning and make a commitment to walk by the spirit. You've got to know that God has given you the keys to the Kingdom, and He has granted you permission to use them. ●

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