

POWER

"... the gospel ... is the power of God unto salvation ..." (Romans 1:16)

BREAD AND TO SPARE: THE ABUNDANCE OF THE FATHER'S HOUSE (PART 2)

by David Sproule

Editor's Note: In the last installment of this study, David noted that there was bread enough, grace enough, mercy enough, forgiveness enough, and redemption enough to spare in the Father's house. In this second and final part of the study, David will discuss five more things that are found in abundance in God's house.

Love Enough And To Spare In The Father's House

Is there any greater, any more-loved topic to meditate upon than the love of God? It is beyond our comprehension that "He loved us, **even when** we were dead in trespasses" (Eph. 2:4-5)! *Oh, what love!* Paul declares that "the love of Christ...passes (present tense, continuous) knowledge" (Eph. 3:19). Its wonder, its beauty, its fullness are beyond any human mind to hold any more than a small trifle.

Is there enough love? Is there enough for me? Is there enough for everyone else who needs it? Paul spoke of God's "**great** love with which He loved us" (Eph. 2:4). Jesus Himself said, "**Greater** love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus said it does

not and cannot get any greater than this. *It is immeasurable!* You cannot find any device or combination of devices by which you "may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is **the width and length and depth and height**" of the love of Christ (Eph. 3:17-19)! *Oh, what love!*

In my Father's house (i.e., in Christ, in His church), and *only* in my Father's house, there is love enough for me, love enough for all, and to spare!

Reconciliation Enough And To Spare In The Father's House

The worst condition in which one can live (not merely "one of the worst," but the very worst) is to live "far off" from God, "alienated and enemies in your mind" (Eph. 2:13; Col. 1:21).f

When one is not *in* the Father's house, he is "afar off," "alienated" and separated from God because of his sins, no matter how far or how close he might think he is. How soothing, then, the thought that "in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ...that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross" (Eph. 2:13-16).

Through Christ's death on the cross, all of mankind (no matter how hostile or divided) can be reconciled to each other; but, even more importantly, all of mankind (no matter how far or alienated from God) can be brought near and reconciled to the Father. "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). The work of reconciliation was done by God through Christ, that our sins may not be imputed to us (2 Cor. 5:18-20). *What a glorious thought!*

Is there enough reconciliation? Is there enough for me? Is there enough for everyone else who needs it? The magnitude of God's reconciliation is so great that it took a people (the Gentiles), who "were without Christ...having no hope and without God" (Eph. 2:12), and opened the way that the **whole world** (2 Cor. 5:19) and "**all things**" (Col. 1:20) might be reconciled unto Him, if they would turn from their wicked works.

In my Father's house (i.e., in Christ, in His church), and *only* in my Father's house, there is reconciliation enough for me,

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reconciliation enough for all, and to spare!

Fellowship Enough And To Spare In The Father's House

Fellowship in the Father's house has two dimensions - there is the fellowship with fellow brethren, and there is the fellowship with our Father and our Savior (both of these are emphasized in the book of Ephesians).

Reconciliation naturally leads to fellowship on the human level. In Christ, we were made "one," when He created "in Himself one new man...in one body," that we might be "fellow citizens with the saints" (Eph. 2:14-19). We have fellowship with each other for "we are members of one another" (Eph. 4:25). Even greater, "truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

In the book of Ephesians, Paul depicts this blessing with these words - "For through him we both have **our access** in one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. 2:18, ASV). "What a fellowship! What a joy divine! Leaning on the everlasting arms!" We not only have access to the Father, we have **our** access to the Father - a special blessing just for His children! "He has made [us] alive together with Him" (Col. 2:13)!

Is there enough fellowship? Is there enough for me? Is there enough for everyone else who needs it? In the Parable of the

Great Supper in Luke 14, the Master (representing God, the Father) invited guests to a great feast He had prepared - a feast prepared not only for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. The message of the servants to the Master still rings true today "**still there is room**" (Luke 14:22). "**Whoever** fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:35).

In my Father's house (i.e., in Christ, in His church), and *only* in my Father's house, there is fellowship enough for me, fellowship enough for all, and to spare!

Peace Enough And To Spare In The Father's House

There is a peace "which surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7), and this peace is found and enjoyed only in the Father's house! It is "**the peace of God**" (Phil. 4:7), which is extended by "**the God of peace**" (Phil. 4:9).

In the book of Ephesians, Paul proclaims that Christ "Himself is our peace," having come "and preached peace" ("the gospel of peace," Eph. 6:15), that He might "[make] peace through the blood of His cross" (Eph. 2:15; Col. 1:20). How sweet the thought that, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation filled with hostilities and anxieties, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1)!

Is there enough peace? Is there enough for me? Is there enough for everyone else who needs it?

This peace which surpasses all understanding is nothing like the peace which the world seeks and offers (cf. John 14:27). It is a peace that can rule in **every** heart (Col. 3:15), for "the Lord of peace himself" is able to "give you peace **at all times in all ways**" (2 The. 3:16)!

In my Father's house (i.e., in Christ, in His church), and *only* in my Father's house, there is peace enough for me, peace enough for all, and to spare!

Inheritance Enough And To Spare In The Father's House

"Inheritance" is a word that often brings to mind receiving great wealth and property, but it entails so much more than that! To appreciate more fully our Father's inheritance, consider the "according to" statements in the first three chapters of Ephesians, which explain the basis and authority upon which this inheritance is made available - "according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5); "according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself" (Eph. 1:9); "according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Eph. 1:11); "according to the working of His mighty power" (Eph. 1:19); "according to the riches of His glory" (Eph. 3:16); "according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20). This is not something

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administered or executed by man; it is extended as God's good pleasure purposes.

We have the wonderful privilege of having been adopted "as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself" (Eph. 1:5), and based on that exceptionally unique relationship, "In Him also we have obtained an inheritance" (Eph. 1:11). *A thought too magnificent to fully comprehend!* May we give "thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance" (Col. 1:12)!

Is there enough inheritance? Is there enough for me? Is there enough for everyone else who needs it? The invitation and promise is made to "whosoever will" (Rev. 22:17, KJV), for in the Father's house, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28). We are all equally "fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Eph. 3:6, ASV).

In my Father's house (i.e., in Christ, in His church), and *only* in my Father's house, there is inheritance enough for me, inheritance enough for all, and to spare!

Conclusion

Those who are "in Christ" are those who are in "His body" (the church, the family, the house of God). Those who are "in Christ" experience "the fullness" of Christ,

"who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23). Every spiritual blessing that God has made available can only be possessed and enjoyed in His house! Only in the Father's house will one find the Father's grace, mercy, forgiveness, redemption, love, reconciliation, fellowship, peace and inheritance!

When one has never been "baptized into Christ" (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27), then outside of the Father's house (i.e., outside of Christ) he will never experience the Father's grace, mercy, forgiveness, redemption, love, reconciliation, fellowship, peace and inheritance! The prodigal learned this lesson, although he learned it the hard way!

Away from his father's house, the prodigal sunk to the lowest depths of despair, having

separated himself from all (not just some) of the blessings of home. "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!'" (Luke 15:17).

Humbled, the younger son returned home. When he arrived at home, notice what he experienced. "But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him...The father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best...for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found...[the father] received him safe and sound'" (Luke 15:20-27). When the wayward

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Deuteronomy 5:32

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son returned home, his education came full-circle. He had learned some things in the far country (learned them by experience in "The School of Hard Knocks"), and then those lessons were verified when he returned to his father. Immediately upon his return, he experienced all of those things that he had abandoned and left behind - his father's grace, mercy, forgiveness, redemption, love, reconciliation, fellowship, peace and inheritance! All of the blessings were still there! And, they were still there...even for him!

Brother in Christ, sister in Christ, where are you today?

Are you faithfully dwelling in the Father's house, partaking in and enjoying the bountiful blessings available only therein?

Do you realize how wonderfully sweet and abundant they are? Or, have you permitted familiarity to breed apathy?

Have you strayed away? Have you wandered from Christ? Have you wandered from His church, the Father's house, and from the abundance He so richly provides? Like the younger son in Luke 15, have you come to realize that there are zero blessings of the Father away from the Father?

Please come home! Your family is waiting and watching! Even better, your Father is waiting and watching! He "is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" (Eph. 3:20)! Come, there's bread in the house of your Father, and to spare!

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