

Maranatha Mirror Messages



AS GOD SEES THEM: PEOPLE OF THE WORD *(an excerpt from People of the Word)*



Christendom, even in this chaotic world, is full of success stories. Mega churches are thriving. Statistics coming from the developing world show dramatic growth in the number of professing believers. But where do people of the Word fit into this picture?

They seem to be missing from the structures of Christendom.

The People of the Word are aliens in Christendom. Even though they attend churches and mix with church folks, they seem to be out-of-sync with main-stream Christianity. For all practical purposes they are invisible.

Even the fruit of their work seems to be invisible.

But not invisible to God.

The same Lord Jesus who saw deep into the hearts of the seven churches of Revelation sees into us all. He sees beyond statistics, numbers, and money to the depth of our hearts. And from the day they first appeared on earth (Pentecost) the People of the Word have conformed to the call of the Master in three ways:

They are servants of God.

They are servants of one another.

They are servants of the forgotten.

THEY ARE SERVANTS OF GOD



*Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am,
my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.
John 12:26*

Above all, they are servants of God.

This is their focus.

This is the vision which dominates their hearts.

It is one thing to quote the words, "*We were bought with a price; we are not our own.*"

It is another to have that truth driving our lives.

A servant has one desire: to please the Master, to do the Master's will. A servant whose heart is given to the Master needs little prompting.

The servant just knows, and acts accordingly.

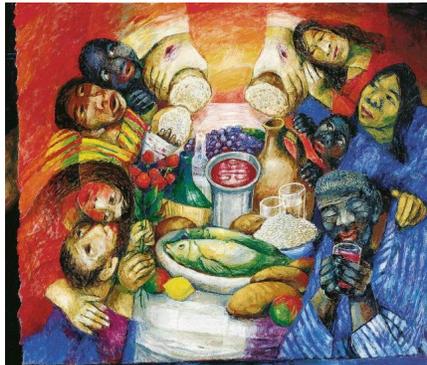
The People of the Word cheerfully serve wherever the Master puts them.



They go about their daily lives like everyone else. They go to work, they raise children, they buy groceries, they visit friends.

But they see themselves, wherever they are, as servants of God, fitting into his program in the everyday world.

They are broken bread and poured-out wine in the hands of the Master, conveying his presence and fulfilling his Word.



Like any servant, the Person of the Word checks in with the Master daily. Alone before God the servant opens their heart in prayer, drinks in the words of the apostles and prophets, who have left us an eternal witness to the Lord Jesus.

A major service performed by the People of the Word is intercession.

Alone before God, they lift up names and needs, and even nations before the throne of heaven. And in a mystery, the Spirit wraps these intercessions in the glory of heaven as redemptive power flows over lives completely unaware of the grace which hovers above them.



People of the Word faithfully pray the Father for laborers in the harvest, in obedience to the Lord's command. This is an essential part of their service to God.

Service to God takes place before the eye of God, not the eyes of men. True service to God is covered by God's hand, so that the glory of this service rises to God alone.

God's servants never aspire to greatness in the eyes of people, but only to conformity to the Master's will. Their service to God is hidden in God.

THEY ARE SERVANTS OF ONE ANOTHER

"You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

John 13:13-17

The Body of Christ is not only a "school of forgiveness," it is a "school of servanthood."

This is where we learn to wash feet.

Our witness to the world remains weak and powerless until we learn to serve each other simply and quietly, without glory or fanfare.

An authentic congregation of the People of the Word is almost never homogenous. The Spirit draws diverse souls into the assembly, people who are logically incompatible. We are truly a "motley crew." We were gathered from the streets and lanes of the city, the highways and hedges---we were the odd ones, the "speckled birds" of society.



Most of us carry wounds of one kind or another.

So we take care of each other.

We encourage each other.

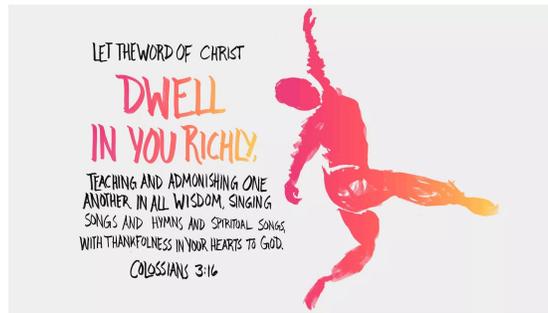
We pick each other up, when we're stumbling.

We wash each other's feet.

A simple phone call. Or a cup of coffee together. Perhaps a bit of financial help, given discreetly. And, above all, we pray for each other.

When the People of the Word gather, it is never a "spiritual supermarket," where individuals pick up their "spiritual food," and hurry on about their business.

It's a "family feast," where folks share with each other the riches of the Kingdom.



In the process of serving each other, strains develop between us...

Some feel neglected.
Some are overbearing.
Thoughtless things are said.
Feelings are hurt.

But as we wash each other's feet with words and deeds of encouragement, the strains between us are swallowed up in the Peace of Christ which rules our hearts.

THEY ARE SERVANTS OF THE FORGOTTEN



*Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offense at me."
Matthew 11:2-6*

John the Baptist, sitting in prison, could not believe that Jesus kept wasting his time with people who are of no account: the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind.

This is the Kingdom of God?

This is how God's Messiah spends his time?

Are you the one who is to come, or do we have to look for someone who knows how to take hold of power and get things done?

It's fine to help the poor and reach out to the marginalized, but things will never change if we don't get some clout in the halls of power. We need to make the world sit up and take notice, if we are ever to effect change!

So the thinking goes in Christendom to this day.

But the People of the Word have chosen to follow the Master by focusing their efforts as servants of the forgotten ones that languish in the shadows.

Servants, not "professionals" dealing with "clients." The People of the Word live their lives at the street level. No matter how well-off or well-educated they may be, their approach to the forgotten ones is always horizontal, never "from above."

When the Lord of the Universe chooses to shake things up, he can do it in an instant. He alone is the one who brings down the mighty and raises those of low degree.

Our job is to keep serving the forgotten ones right under our noses. Give them a taste of God's mercy as we open our hearts to share what we have. We cause them to hear the good news, as we **"speak a sustaining word to those who are weary."** This kind of service enables the King to make his voice heard as we **"bring good news to the poor."**



In the days when the Body of Christ first burst on the scene, Paul and the other apostles understood this. They focused on the forgotten ones, just as the Lord Jesus did during his days in flesh and blood.

For consider your call, brethren; not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth; but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore, as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord."

I Corinthians 1:26-31

We thank God for the NGOs that are feeding the hungry in massive refugee camps across the earth. We thank God for the men and women who are putting their lives on the line to help victims of earthquakes and plagues. Scattered among them are people of the Word, working side-by-side with other caring souls.

But there are billions of people who barely eke out a living in the everyday world who get no attention from anyone but the unseen God.

And the unseen God is sending the People of the Word to serve them as a sign of his presence until the Day of Accounting arrives.



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