

WEEKLY MINISTRY MEDITATIONS

Pronounced "Soul"

Stop Beating Me Down!

A while back, I ran into an acquaintance that I had not seen in 9 years or more. As we got into a conversation, all he could do was talk about what we used to do (you know, sins). What was even funnier, he was reminding me of what I did and he was right there doing it with me. Finally, he asked, what are you doing nowadays? I told him I was doing the work of the Lord. His response was "you"?! He laughed and again started reminding me of my past.

As he was talking, the Holy Spirit reminded me of the passage in **John 8:2-11**, NASB. Verse (2) Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and began to teach them. (3) The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court, (4) they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. (5) "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" (6) They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. (7) But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." (8) Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. (9) When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. (10) Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" (11) She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either Go From now on sin no more."

The words you see highlighted in green kept ringing in my mind! My brothers and sisters, we must stop beating each other down. The past is your past and sin is measured equally in God's eyes! "No condemnation" says Christ our Lord. (**Romans 8:1**) My brothers and sisters, when one wants to remind or make fun of your past, they are either encouraging or discouraging you! Let's review the book of **Philemon 1: 10-21**, NASB (10) I appeal to you for my child Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, (11) who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. (12) I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very heart, (13) whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; (14) but without your consent I did not want to do anything, so that your goodness would not be, in effect, by compulsion but of your own free will. (15) For perhaps he was for this reason separated from you for a while, that you would have him back forever, (16) no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. (17) If then you regard me a partner, accept him as you would me. (18) But if he has wronged you in any way or owes you anything, charge that to my account; (19) I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it not to mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well. (20) Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. (21) Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

Onesimus was a runaway slave and after running into Paul, he was properly counseled and encouraged to return to his master. Paul even sent a letter to his master speaking on his behalf. Total encouragement! Paul was not saying "oooh your'e gonna get it for running away". My brothers and sisters, we must come together and encourage. Remember, we we're once there ourselves! I am not saying we cannot or should not address our brother or sister who is in the wrong, but there is a way to do this according to **Galatians 6:1 -10**. NASB Verse (1) Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. (2) Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. (3) For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. (4) But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. (5) For each one will bear his own load. (6) The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him. (7) Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. (8) For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. (9) Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. (10) So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. Do not worry about those who will not listen to God's wisdom, you simply plant that seed! For when we do not listen, **1 Thessalonians 4:8** and **Hebrews 9:27** is something we must remind ourselves of.

God is telling us to "stop beating each other down". Nobody has it like that except our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ! Even He doesn't treat us in such a manner. But for those who believe they can remind or beat someone down about their past or even their present, I challenge you to read **Matthew 7:3-5**. God has called us to love one another, not beat each other down.

SCRIPTURE READING

JOHN 14:6

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Earth's best does not compare to heavens least.

