

A labor divided

"then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature." Genesis 2:7

Man was created with a dual nature, as both a being of the spirit, and a being of the flesh. Both were in union with one another while man walked with one accord with God. All that man did was fruitful and edifying to both body and spirit, for all was well in accordance with God's will. Yet, when man was given a choice to edify the flesh over the spirit, the fall of mankind from the graces of God came hard, and swiftly. A veil came between the two natures of man; no more could one see the other. Man could no longer see the fullness of God, for where we were one with him in spirit, we could see the spirit no more, and therefore were blinded from the fullness of God.

"By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Gen 3:19

The labors of man, once of benefit to the whole being of man, was made more laborious, yet who's benefit was for the flesh alone. Any benefit of our labors for the spirit of man was given by the grace of God, for it is only by God's grace alone that we can be what God is by nature.

Christ came to mend the divide between man and God, between man and Spirit, making possible again a union of the two, by returning to the tree with a willing and loving sacrifice of blood and humility, that which was taken through pride and deceit. The flesh of man, which was made good in the sight of God has been reconnected with the spirit, which was given of God, and is also good. Man is now fully capable of mending that which was broken by man, the fruits of his labor able to be of equal benefit again to both flesh and spirit; yet, man still chooses to edify the flesh over the spirit.

The fruits of man's labor are often given for the benefit of the flesh, while the spirit, like in Eden, is left wanting. Many of us are abundant in material wealth. We enjoy the fruits of our labors here on earth. Yet, there are many who have not, and suffer without. What edification is brought to our spirit in our material wealth here on earth? Yet, should we give to others as they had need, then we move in the spirit.

God has given us many foods of the earth, all of which were created good in the sight of God. We should eat of it and enjoy what has been given to us by the grace of God. Yet, we find ourselves in excess, and so we have the epidemic of obesity. Also, on the other end of the scale are those that are starving, having none of the same pleasures because their portion was eaten by another, or greed prevented the necessary giving to the needy. What edification is brought to our spirit by our gluttony of that which is good, and given by God?

God has given the physical pleasures between a man and a woman, and it was created good. When a man and a woman knew each other, they became as one flesh. Yet, man has made perverse what was once beautiful in the sight of God. Men and women in great numbers are promiscuous, and often have multiple partners. Is it any wonder that divorce rates are so high? Is it any surprise that mental health issues have been on the rise over

the last century? Man has divided his flesh between many. Yet, what edification here is brought to our spirit?

I could go on with multiple other examples, but I think the point has been well made.

The labors of man could edify both flesh and spirit, but we instead choose to make the choice between one or the other. Man can toil his whole life for the things of the earth, edifying and rewarding only his flesh, yet he shall take none of it with him to the grave. He may find himself rich in this life, but poor in the next, and will find for himself no treasures in heaven. Yet, the man who chooses to labor for the good of the spirit, acting in the spirit, may live for a time with fewer treasures here on earth, but he will find his treasure in heaven, that which lasts for an eternity. What is the point of laboring for the goods here on earth without the benefit of the spirit? How vain is it that which dies with him upon death, only to be inherited for the good of another here on earth.

This is where we find one meaning of *"The last shall be first, and the first shall be last."*

No, the true labors are the ones of God, beneficial to that of the spirit. Yet, if we seek alone the Kingdom of God, all else will be given to us.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Matthew 6:33

The above assumes, however, that judgment was favorable upon death, for God alone judges both the righteous and the unrighteous. Woe to those who are judged and found wanting, for not only has all their labors been toiled in vain, but their soul is lost also.

"For what will profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?" Matthew 16:26

"What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live, also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil – this is God's gift to man." Ecclesiastes 3.9-13

Be our labors for that of God, for that which we receive from Him in the Kingdom of Heaven shall be eternal, and for all ages. That which we do unto the will of the Father will be rewarded to us in heaven. In doing His will, we serve the one true Lord of our lives. Yet, if we toil for that which is of the earth, we serve some other master, of whom which is not God. Man will labor for the one whom has his heart.

"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and possessions." Matthew 6.24

We must know that the Lord God is the only one worth our service here on earth, for that which he gives does not die. Serve him in all faithfulness and fear, with the hope of that which he has promised to all his laborers.

"And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." 1 John 2.17