

Apart from Him, We Can Do Nothing.

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2 Chronicles

20 : 12 Our God, you are going to punish them, aren't you? We have no strength to face this vast multitude that has come against us, nor do we know what to do, except that our eyes are on you.
 [International Standard Version]

Psalms

127:1 Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor uselessly. Unless the Lord guards the city, its security forces keep watch uselessly.

2 Corinthians

3:5 By ourselves we are not qualified to claim that anything comes from us. Rather, our credentials come from God.

The first verse we read today tells us how wonderful the attitude of the people of Israel was; "We don't know what to do, except that our eyes are on you." Those who feel this way are truly blessed. Because when people show an attitude of reliance like this, the Lord would never fail to answer them with blessings. Let me read some more verses. I believe that you must have read them repeatedly. In these famous verses, to make his intention clear, Jesus explained the secret to winning the victory.

John

15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vintner.

15:2 He cuts off every branch that does not produce fruit in me, and he cuts back every branch that does produce fruit, so that it might produce more fruit.

15:3 You are already clean because of what I've spoken to you.

15:4 "Abide in me, and I will abide in you. Just as the branch cannot produce fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches. The one who abides in me while I abide in him produces much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

Apart from him, there is nothing we can do.

15:6 Unless a person abides in me, he is thrown away like a pruned branch and dries up. People gather such branches, throw them into a fire, and they are burned up.

15:7 "If you abide in me and my words abide in you, you can ask for anything you want, and you will receive it.

15:8 This is how my Father is glorified, when you produce a lot of fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

In this chapter 15 of John, the Lord Jesus described himself as the true vine and called people its branches. Trunks provide strength to branches to help them to bear abundant fruits. The trunk of the vine is full of strength and life. Paul explained the relationship between our Lord Jesus and ourselves as;

Colossians

2:9 because all the essence of deity inhabits him in bodily form.

2:10 And you have been filled by him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.

Jesus is filled with strength and life. Jesus dwells inside each one of us. Thus, to receive the strength and the life within him, we need to keep a lively connection with him. If we are apart from Jesus, we will never be able to believe, pray or love in a true sense.

Jesus said that there would be nothing we could do. This was exactly what Jesus, who never had to exaggerate anything, said. What is it that we lack in us? When we think and act for ourselves, when we make an attempt on our own to support Jesus, such a spirit of self-dependence deprives us of reliance on Jesus. These words of Jesus to Peter should apply to us today;

John

21:18 Truly, I tell you emphatically, when you were young, you would fasten your belt and go wherever you liked. But when you get old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten your belt and take you where you don't want to go.

We too have to experience this, don't we? Total reliance on Jesus is the secret to bear fruit and maintain our strength. When we rely on Jesus, we are liberated. Do we truly realize our poverty? Although we can do nothing, Jesus still dwells within us urging us to be the ones who act, love and pray for him. When we stand before this infinite treasure, we must look like beggars. When we rely on Jesus, we are connected to the fountain. Jesus himself is our fountain of

consolation. There is a countless number of people who are suffering, and are seeking some consolation. Nobody but Jesus has an answer to them. He said;

Matthew

11:28 Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest.

Suffering people need to be released and those who are loaded down with burdens need a rest. Today, our lives are filled with burdens of unimaginably different kinds. So many believers close their minds, which hinders them from finding true joy.

Some believers seek pleasure in something other than obedience to Jesus. Unless we are determined to sever the relationship with the devil, we will unknowingly be used by him. Whatever your relationship with Jesus is now, no matter how hard your distress and sufferings are, Jesus is still calling to you.

Are you suffering in pain, anxiety, distress or dismay? Jesus is calling you saying, "All of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, come to me, and I will give you rest." Are you unhappy, unsatisfied or tied down? Is there no joy in your heart? Jesus tells us to come to him saying, "In the world you will have trouble, but be courageous because I have overcome the world!"

Are you gloomy because you are tempted at your weakest point, where you can never protect yourself against it? Jesus has promised, "Come to me and call upon me. While you are in me, in all things you are triumphantly victorious."

Do you have an insatiable hunger in your heart, which nobody could have fulfilled? Jesus has promised, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never become hungry." Is there a drought in your soul just like parched land, which no doctor could heal?

Jesus says, "Everyone who is thirsty, come to me and drink." Is your day filled with disappointment, temptation and ordeals, which make you see nothing but darkness ahead of you? Jesus promised to us saying, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." You might have been astonished to see your soul stained with sins and you might be wondering now whether a filthy soul like this could really be cleansed. Jesus implores, "Come to me and call upon me. Even though your sins are like scarlet, they'll be white like snow." Jesus is incomparably great. Jesus provides us with all strength. For all the abilities and authorities we need in our life, the Lord is the provider.

Colossians

2:9 because all the essence of deity inhabits him in bodily form.

2:10 And you have been filled by him, who is the head of every ruler and authority.

Furthermore, Jesus is the one who provides us with forgiveness for our sins. If you want to obtain forgiveness for your sins, you have to begin with admitting that you are a sinner. It is not enough to declare yourself a sinner. Jesus asks us what kind of sins we have committed. Have we ever appreciated the great difference between the sacred Lord and ourselves? Have we ever confessed our sins?

We will be truly blessed if we can express our gratitude to Jesus for being the one who provides us with forgiveness for our sins. Jesus also provides us with true peace. Nations in the world pursue peace between countries and they keep calling peace conferences all over the world. However, most of the people don't even want to understand that Jesus is the only one who can provide us with ultimate peace. People in early church were so happy to testify, "Jesus himself is our peace." Let us understand and appreciate that reliance on Jesus connects us to the source of all consolation, strength, forgiveness of sins as well as peace.

What does it take to truly rely on Jesus? I would say that the answer can be found in Hebrews, 12:2.

Hebrews

12:2 fixing our attention on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of the faith, who, in view of the joy set before him, endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jesus governs us and cares about each one of us. David, the author of the Psalms wrote;

Psalms

34:5 Look to him and be radiant.

Shouldn't we pray so that we can experience this each and every day?

End