

# Feast or Famine!

## Missing God's Best

1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2 **Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.**

3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

4 Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

5 Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the LORD thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

Isaiah 55:1-5

- A. The glorious gospel of Jesus Christ offers free wine and milk to thirsty and hungry souls (**55:1**).
1. "Ho" is an exclamation to attract attention. Does the Holy Spirit have your undivided attention?
  2. Are you thirsty in your soul? Do you feel bored, confused, discontented, dried up, empty, frustrated, lonely, missing out, perplexed, sad, unfulfilled, and wasted?
  3. The God of heaven offers sweet refreshment and nourishment for you at no cost at all to you.
  4. The waters here may be understood prophetically and spiritually of the Holy Spirit (Jn 7:37-39).
  5. If you do not appreciate this water, it is called the oil of gladness elsewhere (Hebrews 1:9).
  6. Wine and milk intend the nutritious and luxurious pleasures of the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  7. Compare this feast to the gospel marriage of a prince or Lady Wisdom (Matt 22:1-7; Pr 9:1-5).
- B. Why would anyone ignore satisfying delights for frustrating fare that does not satisfy (**55:2**)?
1. You put great expense and effort into finding happiness in foolish delusions of this world, but those things have already been proven by Solomon to be entirely vanity and vexation of spirit.
  2. The most stupid choice you can make this moment is to continue looking for joy in this world.
  3. If you will hear God calling, there is goodness and a delightful life of fatness available for you.
  4. But this listening cannot be casual, lazy, or partial – it must be diligent as stated (Luke 8:18).
  5. You will give an account in this life and before Jesus Christ for your treatment of the gospel.
  6. God can and will give you your world desires but with leanness into your soul (Ps 106:13-15).
  7. Ignoring the gospel is running faster and faster on the world's treadmill until thrown into hell!
- C. If you hear God's offer, believe Him, and seek Him; He will show you His covenant (**55:3**).
1. The satisfying life of walking with God depends on hearing, believing, and obeying the gospel.
  2. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the true shepherd of the sheep, came to bring abundant life (John 10:10).
  3. The everlasting covenant and sure mercies of David are Christ – the seed of David (Acts 13:34).
  4. David put all his salvation and desire in God's promise to him of this ruler (II Samuel 23:1-5).
  5. God does not make this covenant because of your faith, but reveals it to faith (Rom 1:15-16).
- D. The person of Jesus Christ is the greatest gift and consolation a man could ever want (**55:4**).
1. Jesus is the Faithful and True Witness of God and glory of His people (Revelation 3:14; 19:11).
  2. This is the only use of *commander* in the Bible, and it pertains directly to the Lord Jesus Christ.
  3. Do you love authority, glory, leaders, and power? He is King of kings and Lord of lords! He is the Blessed and Only Potentate! He is the Prince of the kings of the earth! He is Lord!
  4. This glorious Son that God gave to the Gentiles has a name called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace (Is 9:6)! Kiss the Son today!
  5. Some Greeks had the right attitude about Jesus Christ attending a feast in Israel (John 12:20-21).
  6. Mary chose the right thing to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear Him over serving (Luke 10:38-42).
- E. The Lord Christ would call Gentiles from among the nations to Himself by God's blessing (**55:5**).
1. Here is the seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, with blessings for all nations (Gen 22:17-18; Gal 3:8).
  2. He is not in a manger or hanging on a cross; He is sitting at the right hand of Almighty God.

3. Jesus Christ is the glorious gift of God to the Gentiles (Romans 15:8-12,18-21; 16:25-27).
4. God highly exalted Jesus for the church (Ephesians 1:19-23; Phil 2:9-11; Heb 1:5-9; 2:9-13).
5. Paul appealed to Gentiles to exchange carnal things for Israel's spiritual (Romans 15:27).
6. The great mystery of godliness includes preaching to Gentiles and their conversions (I Ti 3:16).

### **Introduction:**

1. The gospel of Christ is a wonderful feast of fat things that is free and brings great delight to the soul.
2. The prophecy of Isaiah confronts men for paying and working for things that cannot satisfy the soul.
3. There is free fare on a silver platter that crushes anything you can buy from this world (Is 55:1-5).
4. Our Leader and Commander, the sure mercies of David, Jesus Christ, brought grace to us Gentiles.
5. Note a play on words. Your choices ... *miss God getting your best ... miss God giving you His best.*
6. You can miss God's best by not giving Him your best, for He deserves your utmost for His highest, and you will rue the choice in a day coming soon for having squandered the grace of God in this life.
7. You can miss God's best by cheating yourself of His blessings of all kinds that pass our knowledge.
8. You will give an account of your life to Jesus Christ, which will include an account of this sermon.
9. A song we sing, "All to Jesus I Surrender," accurately states the decision facing each hearer today.
10. Missing God's best is seen in the parable of the talents/pounds and the great difference among men.
11. The higher ground we seek as a church combines greater love for the preeminent One – Jesus Christ.
12. A real Christian is a disciple with His cross each day (Ac 11:26; Mat 10:38; Jn 8:31; Re 1:9; 12:17).
13. A real disciple is a branch of Christ the vine bearing much fruit visible to all (Jn 15:1-8; Phil 1:9-11).
14. Losing your life for His sake is to find your life – this is the gospel rule of discipleship (Matt 10:39).
15. What is a belly worshipper? Verbal Christian minding earthly things against the cross (Phil 3:18-19).
16. Who is an example of obtaining God's best in the two ways intended by the title? David and Paul!
17. Who is an example of missing God's best in the two ways intended? Lot, Samson, Solomon, Demas.
18. We cannot halt between opinions – either we are all-in for Jesus or all-in for Satan (I Kings 18:21).
19. From a New Testament perspective, we either pursue hot first love or get spewed from His mouth.
20. The Bible has examples of those that did not choose Christ, and their choice should cause us to fear!

### **Made Light of It** (Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 14:16-24)

- A. The gospel kingdom and church of Christ is compared to a wedding for a king's son.
- B. Servants sent to invite the guests are the prophets, apostles, and ministers of Christ.
- C. God did everything He could and should – the feast was ready for men to simply take.
- D. They, the Jews, all made excuses as to why they were not interested in attending.
- E. Matthew wrote they made light of the invitation and chose farm and merchandise.
- F. Luke gave three examples of making light of the gospel and choosing other things.
  1. One had bought some real estate and his desire to see his assets trumped Christ.
  2. One had bought some income-producing assets and their value trumped Christ.
  3. One had married a wife and this romantic relationship with her trumped Christ.
- G. God sent Roman armies to destroy and kill the remnant of those rebels (Luke 19:27).
- H. The result of this choice on their part, whether neglect or rebellion, cost them dearly.
- I. For more on this passage ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/exposition/two-parables-explained/sermon.php>.
- J. If you allow such things of this life to choke your growth, you are the thorny ground.
- K. If you do not forsake/hate all such things, you cannot be His disciple (Luke 14:25-33).
- L. If you neglect salvation of the gospel, you deserve worse than O.T. rebels (Heb 2:1-4).
- M. If you mind earthly things, you are a belly worshipping enemy of Jesus (Phil 3:18-19).
- N. For belly worshippers ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/sermons/practical/belly-worshippers-2/sermon.php>.

**Went away sorrowful** (Matthew 19:16-26; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-27)

- A. Some points of doctrine are raised in this event, but we only want the man's choice.
- B. The young man came to Jesus of his own accord and kneeled in reverence to Christ.
- C. He called Jesus Good Master and Master while affirming his devotion to God's word.
- D. Jesus identified the one area of his life he loved most and asked him to sacrifice it.
- E. He was sad and grieved at the Lord's standard of discipleship and turned from Jesus.
- F. The value of a thing is what you will pay to have it; he loved money more than Christ.
- G. Jesus Christ knows what you love better than you know, and you must make a choice.
- H. He went away from Jesus sad and grieved, since he could not put Christ over money.
- I. If he stayed with that choice, his future was a disaster compared to what it could be.
- J. It is trust or love of riches that is a problem, not riches (Mark 10:23;24; I Tim 6:6-10).

**Not Convenient** (Acts 24:22-27)

- A. Governor Felix, married to a Jewess, understood Paul's situation and deferred ruling.
- B. He gave our apostle liberty and allowed any that wished to visit him in detention.
- C. Felix later had occasion in Caesarea to call for Paul and hear him about the gospel.
- D. Paul went straight to key gospel facts – righteousness, temperance, judgment to come.
- E. Felix, under some conviction, chose to defer or procrastinate his choice until later.
- F. He used the common procrastinating words of “this time” and “convenient season.”
- G. He should have humbled himself by Paul's preaching to repent and believe on Christ.
- H. His trembling shifted to lust for bribes and intellectual pleasure to befriend the apostle.
- I. Though Felix had two years with Paul, there is no evidence he ever trembled again.
- J. If you wait until you are ready, you will never come at all. Conviction is for now!
- K. This man had a new life of joy and peace right before him, but he put it off for later.
- L. You cannot count on conviction later, because you may never have it again. Repent!

**Almost a Christian** (Acts 26:26-29)

- A. Paul knew that King Agrippa II understood the Jewish scriptures and recent events.
- B. We understand Paul's statement of Agrippa's faith to be a subjunctive mood appeal.
- C. There is no evidence here of Agrippa being an unconverted elect by Paul's statement.
  - 1. History confirms that this Agrippa lived incestuously with his sister Bernice.
  - 2. There are many that believe, but do not believe to soul salvation (John 8:30-48).
  - 3. Paul does not conclude with any unusual or exceptional admission of his election.
- D. Agrippa's words are so pitiful, weak, and terrible – an *almost* to the glorious gospel!
  - 1. These are words of a compromising belly worshipper. What competes with Christ?
  - 2. Almost may be acceptable in some things, but not so in the free truth of the gospel.
- E. *Almost persuaded* should haunt consciences that we would ever reject total obedience.
- F. Paul's desire for his audience was full conversion similar to his own all-in conviction.
  - 1. We must not accept any commitment to Jesus Christ short of Paul's (Phil 3:15-17).
  - 2. Only one wins the race – there is no prize for *almost* – so run to win (I Cor 9:24).
  - 3. If you settle as an average “Christian,” there is a 50%+ chance you end up in hell!
  - 4. Do not let anything in your life keep you from being fully devoted to Jesus Christ.

- G. What else do you need to hear to be persuaded? You have heard more than sufficient.
1. We sing a song that says, “What more can He say than to you He hath said?”
  2. Isaiah asked Israel, “What could have been done more to my vineyard?” (Is 5:4).
  3. God knows He has given reasons and encouragement far beyond “without excuse,” so when you stand before Him expect the judgment to be severe and strict.

### **Martha or Mary** (Luke 10:38-42)

- A. Martha and Mary were not reprobates or unconverted elect, but His friends (Jn 11:5).
- B. In their home, Mary sat at Jesus’ feet to hear Him, while Martha worked the kitchen.
- C. Martha worried so about the duties of life that she sought to deprive Mary her place.
- D. Jesus identified that Martha worried far too much about the details of hospitality.
1. This woman, above most others, should have recalled He could feed thousands!
  2. All things in life must take a secondary role to the kingdom of God (Matt 6:33).
- E. Jesus identified that Mary had chosen the one needful or most important thing in life.
1. Mary made a choice superior to Martha’s by valuing time with Christ over work.
  2. It is a good thing to put Christ and His word first, and it should not be taken away.
- F. Of course we must work for a living, maintain homes, and complete natural duties.
1. Of course we cannot and should not become monks or nuns with Bible and beads.
  2. However, the vast majority of Christians hardly even consider the choice of Mary.
  3. Even “noble” things like marriage/children can be dung for Christ (I Cor 7:29-35).

### **Conclusion:**

1. We cannot halt between opinions – either we are all-in for Jesus or all-in for the world (I Kgs 18:21).
2. From a New Testament perspective, we either pursue hot first love or get spewed from His mouth.
3. The Bible has examples of those that did not choose Christ, and their choice should cause us fear.
4. Chief rulers loved the praise of men more than the praise of God (John 12:42-43). What a shame!
5. Demas deserted our brother Paul due to his love of this present world (II Tim 4:10). What a famine!
6. If any man love the Lord Jesus Christ (Ep 6:24) ... or if any man love not Jesus Christ (I Co 16:22)!
7. Consider the email below from your brother and mine about his commitment to Christ and first love.
8. A song we sing, “All to Jesus I Surrender,” accurately states the decision facing each hearer today.

### **For Further Study:**

1. Sermon outline ... *Occupy till I Come* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/occupy-till-i-come.pdf>.
2. Sermon outline ... *Parable of the Sower* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/parable-of-the-sower.pdf>.
3. Sermon outline ... *Doers of the Word* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/perfect-mirror.pdf>.
4. Sermon outline ... *Are You a Bible Christian?* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/bible-christians.pdf>.
5. Sermon outline ... *Belly Worshipers* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/sermons/practical/belly-worshippers-2/sermon.php>.
6. Sermon outline ... *Wild Grapes* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/wild-grapes.pdf>.
7. Sermon outline ... *Spiritual Adultery* ... <http://www.letgodbetruerue.com/pdf/spiritual-adultery.pdf>.

# Scott Testimony

## of Renewing First Love for Christ

August 30, 2015

Quite a few weeks ago, I was talking with Jerry and he mentioned about doing the first works and returning to his first love. He was rejoicing in it, and I was pricked in my heart. Work was going well, university studies were going well, and by all outward appearances, I was blessed. But the Lord knows the innermost thoughts, and I was found wanting. I had slipped, and could not hide it from the Lord. I was deeply ashamed at where I was. My soul used to pant and thirst fervently after the Lord. I used to cry out daily to the Lord, begging him to come and sup with me. I would fervently reason with Him, daily, that I am a stranger and pilgrim on this earth, that this world disgusts me and I want nothing from it and want no part of it: all I want is His Son, my Lord and King, Jesus Christ. I did not care or ask for any carnal blessings in my job or life; all I wanted was Him. He was my portion, my all in all, and He consumed me, and the pursuit of Him consumed me. And I left Him.

For what?

I write emails telling how well I am doing in university classes and thankful to the Lord, when my heart is far from Him. That is perverse and it disgusts me, and as I write this, I am more than deeply ashamed: I can smell the stink of my flesh; the putrid wormwood and gall, and the vomit dripping from me. My favorite Psalm is 22. I love it. It reminds me of the grief, shame, pain and sacrifice my precious Lord and Savior went through for me. When I read from verses 1 to 22, I am humbled and brought to my knees. It should have been me, the wretched man that I am. I can truly say that I am not worthy of the least of His mercies, and am the least of all the saints in the Church of Greenville.

However, Psalm 22 also reminds me of the glory of the cross of Christ: my redemption through the shedding of the precious blood of the everlasting covenant. He tasted death for me so I will never taste punishment for my transgressions. His righteousness for the remission of sins. Justified by His faith. Able to stand holy, unblameable, unproveable in the sight of God. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

**I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: I will praise thee among much people.**  
**Psalm 35:18**

I repented of my perversion of God's commandments. Then, forgetting all those things that are behind, I pressed on to win Christ. Part of this was circumspectly examining my ways. In particular, what disciplines had I used when I was in close fellowship with the Lord? It came down to one thing, the purpose of my life under this sun:

**Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.**

**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**

For fearing God and keeping His commandments shows that you love Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ will manifest Himself to you; the Father and Him will come and sup with you. Keeping His commandments and wanting to please Him are my consuming desire. It is above all else. It starts as soon as I open my eyes and am conscious first thing in the morning, and it does not end till I lose it when falling asleep.

Practically, measures have to be taken to achieve this desire. In Psalm 119:11, David wrote, *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against thee.”* The answer was to hide His word in my heart, and I had a method that I used to do this, but I had abandoned it, as I thought I did not need to use it anymore. This method enabled me to *remember* and apply God's word in my life and at work.

When using it, God had blessed me. I prospered in everything I did. I saw the blessings that resulted from fearing God “all the day long” (Pr 23:17). I was extremely thankful for these blessings, but much more so for the communion with my Lord Jesus Christ. I had such peace and joy. With Him, I did not need and did not want anybody else. I did not want anybody to distract me from my fellowship with Him. My heart, soul and mind were taken.

I had a journal that I would write scriptures that I considered important to remember when going to out to the work environment. It got to six pages, and I would read it every morning and meditate on them on the drive to work and at work. I would hide them in my heart, and the constant repetition of doing this day after day would further establish this. I have a new journal, and it has three pages of scriptures so far. I read them every morning and also at work during breaks to bring them to remembrance again. I have to do this, as I know my flesh and my heart and its deceitful and wicked ways.

One of the most important verses I read each morning is this one:

**And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.**

**I Kings 18:21**

I read this verse and meditate on it. I consider the options: 1. Declare myself all in for Jehovah, or 2. Declare myself all in for the Devil, or 3. Halt between the two and the Lord Jesus Christ will spew me from His glorious mouth. It is important to make this decision and make sure its consequences are clear before I begin my day. I verbally

declare to the Lord, I will follow Him this day. I find there is no worth at all to proceed from here and read other scriptures until I declare to serve the Lord as a living sacrifice this day: it is the driving determination of the heart, soul and mind to seek God and His righteousness, for this day, and this day only. I do not ponder about tomorrow. It is not guaranteed. This day has enough for me to concentrate my efforts on. If the Lord wills, I will be able to repeat this again the following day.

There are many more scriptures that follow set headings in my journal that guide my thought process: such as my '3 Goals for the Day', from Psalm 119:11 and Psalm 101:2-3 ... the preeminent goal of the day: not grieving, quenching or vexing the Holy Spirit of God ... the previously mentioned 'Decision' ... the Purpose of the Day which includes Eccl 12:13-14, Ps 147:11, Prov 19:23, John 14:21 ... and 'Remember Where your Life Is' which includes reminders about where my life is hid, where I will find it, what I should do to find it, and my true home. All these are designed to help me put up my guards so I can live sober, righteously and honestly in this evil generation. The scriptures constantly change relative to what the Lord is impressing on me, but the principle still remains: hide them in your heart, so you don't sin against Him.

This overall desire for this was birthed in the Psalm 101 sermon. I was convicted of being puffed up with knowledge and being satisfied with that. It is tempting in the Church of Greenville to become complacent with doctrine instead of making your calling and election sure. I became sick of being complacent. My prayer to God after the Psalm 101 sermon was not to help me to behave myself wisely in a perfect way nor help me walk within my house with a perfect heart. My prayer is rather for the Lord to give me understanding and knowledge in His ways, and *I will* behave myself wisely in a perfect way and walk within my house with a perfect heart. He has already given me all things that pertain to life and godliness - I have the Holy Spirit within me to fill me with the fruits of righteousness to do this!

I have seen blessings from doing this. I considered my ways, and I told the Lord I was marking the calendar (Hag 2:15,18). The Haggai sermon was a great blessing to me. The Lord has stirred my Spirit and given me great zeal to obey His commandments and seek Him. Knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and His love, which passes all knowledge, is the prize here. He is wonderful and glorious! I have also cut down on my university study to focus more on the Lord. While still doing a reasonable amount, my last analytical chemistry exam worth 12.5% of the final grade, I topped the class with 96%!!!! I am still marking my calendar, after all the Lord did not give an end date that He would stop the blessing.

I hope this encourages my brothers and sisters to abandon the world and its inputs. They simply do not compare. And it is never too late to revive the first love. Read Psalm 22. Jesus Christ has paid the price and redeemed us. Justice has been satisfied and the Lord is

knocking at the door (Rev 3:20). The Jews spent *15 years* building their own houses and attending to their needs instead of the temple. As soon as they obeyed the Lord's words from Haggai, the Lord said, 'I am with you,' and He stirred up their spirits and told them He would bless them. He is abundant in mercy and goodness and abounds in grace towards us. It is why He is so glorious and worthy of all our praise, and all our might.

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless everyone hearing or reading this and give you knowledge of Jesus Christ and His love by the Spirit of God. May your love abound more and more toward each other, and may Jesus Christ be preeminent in the Church of Greenville forever. Amen.

Scott

P.S. You probably do not want to read this publicly, but I am stirred up. I do not want to be around anyone that is not seeking our God and His righteousness. Simple as that! When I read Psalm 22 and see what Jesus Christ went through for His sheep, to see saints enamored with TV, movies, worldly music, worldly 'friends', 'Christian friends', saddens and distresses me. David hated all these, and so do I. Who people associate with outside the Church baffles me the most, especially socializing regularly with “Christian friends” that do not hold to the same doctrines. It's another Jesus! If these brethren were to start talking about justification by Christ alone, incarnate Sonship, doctrine of representation, 5 phases of salvation etc., these other “Christians” will run a mile and never talk to them again. If our brethren don't talk about these things, what do they talk about with their “Christian friends”? Are these things not close to their hearts? They are compromising their own faith, not their “Christian” friends. As soon as that decision to compromise starts, the corruption begins. For the record, I am talking about friends in this paragraph that people choose to *socialize with*, not family or if you have to go to work functions occasionally, or attend school with (although these have to be handled with wisdom as well). David was very selective and discriminatory when choosing who he wanted to be around, and who you associate with can sharpen you or corrupt you. I only want to be around the ones I can sharpen or the ones who can sharpen me: the ones that are fearing the Lord, bearing fruit, and glorifying God. How can I even be certain of their election if they don't bear fruit? How can they be certain? Sitting in the pews believing the doctrine means nothing and proves nothing (well, it does prove something: devilish faith).