

~ An Invitation ~

Initially we are called by the Lord—invited to freedom—freedom from sin and its penalty, its shame and its guilt. Subsequently we are invited to worship, to become a son of God in weight and authority, to become a soldier in the fight to undo the works of the devil—all those works satan does to try to corrupt every part of God's creation. We have an invitation, even a commission to spread the good news of a good and holy God—a Father in heaven for us, an invitation to His family both here on earth and a perfect family later in eternity.

Today as I was getting ready to get into the word, I felt my spirit being drawn to worship—a special, personal invitation to just enjoy His presence. He put a song in remembrance, and we enjoyed it together. It was a wonderful time with my Father Who wanted me to spend time with Him. As I started to step out of this intimate time, I remembered His promise, "I will never leave you." Of all the promises, I think this is the best!

Father, You are with me every step I take. Oh my God, You are my strength and my song! What more could I possibly want than a continual awareness of You Lord, walking with me!

I look forward to the day when every work of the devil has been completely undone, where we live in a holy atmosphere, where all corruption that we have lived with since the day we were born is done away. The day when corruption in ourselves and others, and in all of God's creation—brought on us and our world by satan to cause fear and lack of trust is finished once and for all. And I delight in the fact of Jesus' victory over satan being fully manifested with satan being destroyed eternally.

Imagine a "world" where you don't have to be on guard; you don't have to look for hidden motives, a world where intentions are always good and loving and suspicion doesn't exist; a world where you live with the pure in heart. We will just get to enjoy the bliss of God's plan for all of His creation. We will have the "oneness" that Jesus prayed for, for us—that for which we were designed.

CS Lewis said, "Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exists. A baby feels hunger. Well, there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim. Well, there is such a thing as water. And feel sexual desire. Well, there is such a thing as sex. If I find in myself a desire which no experience of this world can satisfy, the more probable explanation is that I was made for another world. I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country which I shall not find till after death. I must never let it get snowed under or turned aside. I must make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others to do the same."

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the



promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God....All these people (*Abraham's descendants*) were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. (See Hebrews 11:8-16 NIV)

I remember my mother asking me a question shortly before her death that I couldn't really answer with a strong scripture to support what she was looking for. She knew her time was short. She had lost many family members over the years, but probably the dearest was her firstborn, a son—my brother. He had passed as a marine in the Vietnam War. I think she was looking for assurance that she would see him again. The closest verse to fit her question that I could think of at the time was 2 Samuel 12:23. This is where David accepts the death of the baby he and Bathsheba conceived in his sin. David said, **“But now he has died; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.”** Was David saying the baby couldn't be brought back to life to be with David? Was he looking forward to being with his child after he (David) died? I am not sure, but I think so. I wish I had known or remembered 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14. **Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.** (NIV) I think these verses would have been more comforting and hopeful to her. Instead, to my mother I could only add that the God who created us would know what it took to make us happy.

It is so important to be familiar with the word of God. There may be a time someone will need a particular word from you. Will you be prepared?

And so, we have an invitation to feast at His table *in the presence of our enemies*—this is now! We won't have enemies once the kingdom has been set up and given to the Father by Jesus. To feast on His word, feast on Jesus; look at Him. See His compassion. See His humility. See His zeal. See His determination. See His sacrifice. **See His victory!** There is no end to what we can see in Him. We do this now. Through it we will be transformed and useful.

Psalm 23 verses 5-6:

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD
forever.

