

Market Street Fellowship
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The Burial of the Lord

What I want to deal with today is something that has been on my heart for the last couple weeks. I've titled my time of sharing "The Burial of the Lord." I've begun to see that burial is synonymous with the Truth, and walking in the Truth. The term burial can be used to describe the transition of the Church from one man to Another. I've also begun to see that there is an expectation bound up with the term burial, as this is where what is true in the Lord becomes true in His Church. All that said, today I want to deal with the Lord's Appearing as the end itself of all that isn't Christ. I'm realizing that the Lord doesn't appear merely to bring something to an end, but rather, His Appearing IS the end of everything that isn't Him. So as we begin today and look at what I want to discuss, we always have to keep in view that the journey of faith and growing up in the Lord has nothing to do with me getting from one less-spiritual point to some greater-spiritual point. Rather growth is where our comprehension of the Lord continues to expand according to the measure that He has been revealed in our hearts. With that in mind, let's look to what the Lord's end is, and how He relates to that which He has already judged dead.

I feel like I need to give a little back-story to what I want to share this morning. Since a conversation with Jason a few weeks ago, I can't get the thought of burial out of my mind and heart. I've never really given much thought to the reality of burial. But as I began to consider it, I began to see the order of God's understanding as it relates to His Cross and His Church. I began to realize that I approach the Lord according to an order that isn't reflective of His Understanding...at all. I often find that I've been so quick to see what His Cross means for me, that His Death is my death, and that I can't possibly have Life apart from Him. But after agreeing with the Cross, and even seeing that Reality in Him, I'm quick to break away from His Understanding. Now what do I mean by that? I mean, it seems like having seen my death in Him and knowing that He is now my Life, I'm ok to approach my natural life "knowing" these spiritual facts. Is that wrong? No, not necessarily. But what the Lord has really put on my heart is that I haven't remained in His View long enough to see the Order of the thing. I comprehend His Death, which is remarkable and real and exciting. But I find that down the road, that which I've seen to be dead quickly becomes that which causes my greatest struggle. And I begin to wonder, "how could that possibly be?!" "I know that it's dead! I've even seen it to be dead in Him." But what I've recently found is that there is a reason for God's Order – Death, BURIAL, and Resurrection. What I've begun to see is that while I comprehend His Death as a fact (and even His Resurrection Life as a fact), my experience doesn't always equate with what I know be real. And I really began to question the Lord on why that was. I began to see that there was a grave misunderstanding as to how the Lord functions in me and in His Church.

The Lord has really put on my heart that I'm willing to comprehend what's dead and to agree with that, but that I refuse to let Him bury the dead in my heart. I keep the dead around. I leave it in sight and before my eyes and say "oh how dead this place is"... "look how dead I am." You can see God's order even in the natural creation. There's obvious reason for why, even naturally speaking, we immediately prepare the dead for burial. We don't even hesitate to bury it. It has to be buried. The moment death is realized plans for burial are made. Why is that? Well, its because once something has died, there's no reason to go back to it for life. It simply needs to be buried. Yet, it doesn't seem to work like that in my journey in the Lord. I see death as a reality...I see it as the condition of man...I see it as the work of His Cross...but I'm content to leave the dead in my heart, even though I've seen that it is dead. I continue to be motivated and constrained by the realm of the dead. It would be like having a relative die, and instead of burying that person, simply letting him sit in our living room. There he sits, totally dead, and yet totally left in view. And it almost speaks to the fact that we don't really believe he's dead, because if we did, the ONLY thing to do with the dead man is to bury him...get him out of sight. To do otherwise is completely unnatural, because it completely misses the order of Gods understanding. Dead. Buried. Resurrection. So why the burial? - because it removes the dead from view. It puts it out of sight, so that the dead man ceases be the motivation for anything, and we are free to live according to the Living.

The Lord would have it so that His Church would allow Him to bury that which no longer defines us. Death is no longer a master over Him. Why? Because he not only killed the thing - He's Buried it. And He did so, because He has no desire to return to it. He's buried the thing because He lives according to what's Living. He's motivated by what is alive and what is real. I've begun to realize that while I cringe at the thought of leaving a dead man in the living room of my home, I'm quite content to let the dead remain in the view of my heart. This is why I always run up against the things that I have seen to be dead, but never really seem to let go of. In essence, I'm saying that there still must be some kind of reason to keep the dead around. This isn't the mind of the Lord. When He declares something to be dead, He buries it. That's the very next step. And He does so, because He knows that it can't possibly define anything Real. It can't possibly be the measure of anything. It's dead. And to keep the dead in view as though it were living is to deny that it is dead.

Rather than turning my heart to the Lord to allow Him to remove from my view what has already been BURIED in Him, I'm content not to bear the view of the fact that I am totally and utterly dead, which allows an unburied condition to exist in my soul. What I want us to see is that the Lord offers tremendous freedom in His Cross, because He buries in us EVERYTHING that has already been buried in Him...Everything that He has already put away from His View. All of this happens in His Appearing as THE TRUTH. Jesus declares, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life," which can easily be paralleled with Death, Burial and Resurrection. While no one here will argue that the way in is death and that He is Life, often times I find that we don't always walk according to the Truth of the Lord. We accept it as spiritual facts, we see it to be real in Him, but then our heart doesn't bear the image of the Truth. But you and I must face the Truth, and we must be challenged by the Truth, and we must walk in the Truth.

Because the Truth will declare in you what is real and will bury in your soul everything that isn't true of Him. Jesus says, "I AM the TRUTH." And this is where burial can begin in you and I. - Where that which God has established begins to be established in me. Where the dead are put out of sight by the Appearing of the Living One. "You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall set you free."

Turn with me to Numbers 13. I think that the type that exists in Israel is a clear example of what I'm attempting to describe. Here we have the Israelites. They've come out of Egypt. They've comprehended the death of the Lamb as their Way out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. They come out in the light of the morning as "Israel is My Son." The Lord has dealt with them in the wilderness according to these realities. As we get to Numbers 13, Israel is right on the edge of the Promised Land.

What I want us to see here is the condition that has developed in the heart of Israel. I want us to see the condition that exists in the Land. There are heathen nations living in the Land. The Lord promised a land that would be filled with an inheritance that could not be numbered. He promised a land that would be filled with His glory. Here they are at this land. Yet the condition they find is quite the opposite of what they were expecting. Israel sends a group of men to spy out this land to see what its condition is, whether or not possession can take place. As we look at Numbers 13:27, we see the spies reporting what they have seen to Israel. Here's what they say.

Numbers 13:27

27Thus they told him, and said, "We went in to the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. 28"Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there. 29"Amalek is living in the land of the Negev and the Hittites and the Jebusites and the Amorites are living in the hill country, and the Canaanites are living by the sea and by the side of the Jordan."

30Then Caleb quieted the people before Moses and said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it." 31But the men who had gone up with him said, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us." So they gave out to the sons of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants; and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great size. 33"There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight."

Chapter 14

1Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the

people wept that night. 2All the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, "Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness! 3"Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the sword? Our wives and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" 4So they said to one another, "(E)Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt."5 Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel. **6 Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; 7and they spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. 8" If the LORD is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us--a land which flows with milk and honey. 9"Only do not rebel against the LORD; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them, and the LORD is with us; do not fear them."**10But all the congregation said to stone them with stones Then the glory of the LORD appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.11 **The LORD said to Moses, "How long will this people spurn Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, despite all the signs which I have performed in their midst?**

"As surely as I live, my glory shall fill this land."

Look at the condition of Israel. They came through the blood-covered door. They came out in the reality of the morning as a new creation (Israel is my Son). The Way was established. The Life was established. Yet in Israel, they did not walk according to the Truth of what had been made real. They wandered around in the wilderness of their darkened comprehension not really knowing what happened at the Passover. Their whole journey with the Lord becomes some great struggle. There is constant fear that somehow the Lord isn't going to provide. There is constant debate, uneasiness, misunderstanding. Israel walks right up the Promised Land, still thinking that Egypt is an option. Still thinking that the Cross allows them to go back there. Still thinking that the death of Egypt was not buried in that Lamb. The fact of the matter was, while they comprehended the death of the Lamb, they did not comprehend that the next step was burial...get Egypt out of sight. It's dead. Now the Lord deals with Israel according to His Understanding "Israel is my Son." He deals with you and I according to the same understanding. Not still struggling with how to deal with the dead. There's only one way to deal with the dead. Bury him. The Lord would do that in you and I in the revealing of His Truth. We need to turn our hearts to face that Truth.

See, Joshua and Caleb see the land with the Mind of the Lord and understand that those heathen nations don't need to be killed. They need to be buried from view. They don't belong there. That blood covered door dealt with them. The Death of the Lamb fully dealt with them. It's a dead issue with the Lord. Israel simply needed to walk according to the Truth of the matter. And when the Lord

appears in the midst of His enemies, immediately those nations are dealt with. The dead are put out of sight. The Living One buries the dead. The King conquers His land, and does not leave His enemies in view. You and I are the land wherein He appears. And His appearing works in you the TRUTH of Who He is. The Truth is Romans 6. You have died, and been buried with Him in baptism. Let us let that burial take place in our hearts. I know we often struggle with things that seem to be alive. But if we just turn our hearts to Him to ask Him for His View, He won't just show us what's dead. He'll remove it from view, and He'll move right on to "As surely as I live, my glory shall fill this land."

I want to quickly mention the laver this morning. For me, it has just been an awesome place to see this reality of burial in the Church. When you look at the tabernacle, and the order that existed in the priesthood of Israel, you see God's order of His Cross. Death. Burial. Resurrection. An Israelite acknowledges that he/she has transgressed the Covenant of God. That in some way, that Israelite has stepped outside of the relationship that exists. So he comes to the altar, where an animal is killed, burned representing His Death. Once that death takes place...Once it is final, and death has been realized, what does the priest do? What's the very next thing? He turns to the laver and washes the remnants of blood and death from Himself. He washes in the water of the laver. He cleanses himself of death so that the death is no longer on Him. When you look at the priest, you see one that has been cleansed of that death. Yes, he just killed the thing, but He also just buried it. There's no spot of blood or death on Him.

Ephesians 5:25 (Julie G. was reading this on Friday night)

"25Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless."

Can you and I see the work of our High Priest in His Church? In His Body? Cleansing her in the water of the laver. Cleansing our heart/our conscience of the death that remains in view. Washing in the water of the Word (Psalms – Your word is Truth – Truth is burial). Washing/Burial takes places so that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory. "As surely as I live, my glory shall fill that land." Let us ask the Lord to reveal the Truth in our hearts.

Hebrews 1:1 tells us that. "At the end of those days, the Lords speaks in His Son." At the end of what days? The days before the Lord appeared. The days where man functioned according to an outward display of reality, but never had the Reality Himself. At the end of those days....remember I said that the Lord doesn't merely bring something to an end, His appearing is the end of it...at the end of those days...well what signified that those days ended? THE LORD APPEARED! So now, in His appearing, when He shows up on the scene, everything changes! Reality is established. It must be established in our hearts. You and I must come to comprehend as He comprehends, and that only takes place in the revealing of His Son.