

Significance and Security

When personal significance and security is tested

Pip and I have experienced two types of seasons in our walk with the Lord. The first is when it is clear that God is working *through* us and the second is a season when God is focusing his attention on working *in* us. The first is outward and the second one is inward. For example, over a period of 10 years we followed a clear vision from God to form an international team of mature Christians. As this team developed, God sent us on assignments to different parts of the world to engage mainly in prayer over changing global events. It was significant, it was exciting. Then a time came when, in a dramatic way, God told us to end this ministry; so we did. At first we thought it was a temporary stop, maybe three months; a nice sabbatical so that we could listen and hear again about how things were to go forward. That temporary stop turned into many years. Having been active with a great team and travelling to global meetings we came to a complete halt. We had nothing to do; no-one to communicate to; no need for others to communicate with us; nothing in our diaries; and even worse, it became quite clear that this is what God wanted! We were not to get another job; we were not to raise any money; we were to learn 'to be' and wait upon him. These times are sometimes referred to as wilderness seasons - a time when God is working in us not through us.

One feature of this wilderness season was the absence of any sense of personal significance that we could draw from through what we were doing or in ourselves and it wasn't long before we both lost a sense of security and certainty. Everything was gone. As those years rolled by we faced difficult times when it seemed as if God had left us. Yet it was through those painful times that God began to work something very deep in us and in hindsight we became so grateful for this 'wilderness season'. We discovered one powerful reality; that the answer to our deepest needs for security and significance comes from having been made one with God. These next verses explain something of this union.

1 Corinthians 6:17

'But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.'

Ephesians 2:4-5

'But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).'

John 17:22-23

'And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one.'

We become one with God through receiving righteousness

We are deliberately created by a loving God; we are not a product of random possibilities. An intrinsic part of our makeup is the need to be right with God. In the first chapters of Genesis we read about Adam and Eve. They knew righteousness with God and this righteousness made them one with God. Righteousness was intrinsic to them – it was an attribute. When Satan tempted them and they sinned, righteousness was lost and this attribute became a need. We are all born with this deep inner need for righteousness.

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Outside of Christ we have no other way to fulfil this need other than to establish it ourselves. Even the most evil men in history try to establish a sense of self-righteousness in order to satisfy this need. Adolf Hitler in his book '*Mein Kampf*' speaks about his beliefs that led him to kill 6 million Jews: - "*Hence today I believe that I am acting in accordance with the will of the Almighty Creator: by defending myself against the Jew, I am fighting for the work of the Lord.*" He is clearly trying to justify himself and his intentions in order to establish some form of righteousness.

Righteousness can only come from righteousness. God is righteous and only he can make us righteous. When we accept the work of Christ on the cross, then he gives us his righteousness and it is at this point that we have union with God; we become one with him. There is no one as powerful and as loving as God. Being in union with him fulfils our deepest need of security and significance. The deeper we grasp this, the less internal turmoil we will have in life. The alternative is to try and satisfy these two deepest human needs from our own efforts.

What does our significance and security in God mean in terms of our practical needs?

It means that our practical earthly needs are not primarily dependent upon our earthly conditions or provision. In other words, he will order and command your provision as you walk in his will. He can do this through changing the circumstances around you or he can do this through a direct miracle.

What does our significance and security in God mean in terms of our health needs?

It means that our health needs are not totally dependent upon earthly health provision. God has given knowledge about health and healing and he will use them to make us well, but we are not ultimately dependent on them.

What does our significance and security in God mean in terms of our course in life?

It means that your need for direction is not dependent upon what others decide. It means that he will order and command direction for you as you yield your trust into him.

What does our significance and security in God mean in terms of hope?

It means that our need of hope is not dependent upon the conditions around us. Biblical hope means a '*confident expectation of good.*' It means that he has provided hope for you as you put your trust in him.

What does our significance and security in God mean in terms of emotional wellbeing?

It means that our need for emotional stability is not dependent upon what happens to us or upon what happens around us. It means that he will by his Spirit be your emotional strength and stability, your peace and your joy.

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What does our significance and security in God mean in terms of our relationships?

It means that we do not need to push ourselves forward to find recognition, acceptance or pride of position. It means that he will by his Spirit be your fulfilment in all these areas.

With such certainty, why worry?

To worry and be anxious is like saying to God that he means nothing to you. It is to deny him; it is to reject all that he has done for you and all that he has planned for you. It is to separate yourself from his love, care, direction, provision and protection.

In **Matthew 6:25-27, 31-33**, Jesus teaches...

'Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. ARE YOU NOT OF MORE VALUE THAN THEY? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.'

We have seen from the above points that being made righteous has made us one with God. Being one with God means he takes responsibility for us. Yet the reality of this in daily life is dependent upon the exercise of our faith. This faith does not come from us; God is the giver of faith. Christ dwells in our hearts through faith.

Ephesians 3:16

'...that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.'

As we align ourselves with Christ, faith is released.

Galatians 2:20

'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.'

As you move forward in faith many things will look impossible. When you think all is impossible, imagine Jesus looking at you and speaking these words to you.

Matthew 19:26

'But Jesus looked at them and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'

Our deepest human needs for personal significance and personal security have been provided for through faith in Christ. As you live by faith his provision is released.