

PUT A RING ON HIS HAND!

Gen.41:41-44

INTRODUCTION: (Text)

- A. Joseph in Egypt had overcome many obstacles:
1. He'd been the **favorite** of his father.
 2. He'd been **sold into slavery** by his brothers and taken to Egypt.
 3. There, he'd been **imprisoned because of false accusations**.
- B. But, **NOW**, he'd **found favor** in the sight of Pharaoh. Did you ever really consider what it meant for Pharaoh to put his ring on Joseph's hand? **A ring normally signifies:**
1. **Rank** [*position or identification*]
 2. **Authority** [*power of position*]
 3. **Ownership or relationship**
 4. And, even to us today, it's often a **mark of education**
- C. Of course, **a ring is not the ONLY way to signify these things.**
1. **NOT having a ring** doesn't necessarily mean you didn't graduate.
 2. And **ALSO, having one** doesn't mean that you learned anything!
- D. The purpose of our lesson tonight is to focus our attention on **a question that pertains to US:**
WHAT DO WE HAVE, OR DO, TO SIGNIFY OUR RANK AND AUTHORITY AND RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD?

I. NO MATTER WHAT OUR HISTORY HAS BEEN, OUR STATUS WITH THE LORD IS DETERMINED BY OUR PRESENT CONDITION!

- A. It is good to look back over a life well spent in the Master's use!
1. **But it's sad if all we can see are just wasted years behind us!**
 2. **BUT**, notwithstanding, either **good** or **bad** backgrounds can be completely changed by the way we're living right now!
- B. God sees us, and knows all about us, no matter **where we are** or **what we're doing!**
- Psa.139:7-12-***"Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," Even the night shall be light about me; 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You."*

II. OUR STATUS W/GOD IS NOT ONLY MANIFESTED IN OUR WORKS, BUT ALSO IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WE INFLUENCE! [THOSE WE HANG OUT WITH!]

- A. Some things make it impossible for us to **live right, AND be a good influence** on others, viz:
1. **Always associating with ungodly people! 1 Cor.15:33.**
 - a) It matters not if we've just met them or known them all our lives: whether relatives, neighbors, or friends!
 - b) Illus. A young lady with a white dress wanted to tour a coal mine: *"What's to keep me from going into your mine wearing this white dress?"*
 - c) ANYONE who hasn't lost his reasoning ability knows that **we can't live right NOR influence others for righteousness** if we're always seeking the companionship of those outside Christ!
 - d) Even if it's **THEIR** option, we also need the *association of kindred spirits* for strength!
 2. **Never asserting one's self positively in the doctrine and work of Jesus Christ! Jno.9:4**

- a) Precisely, in what ways have you taken the initiative recently to encourage others to do the will of God?
 - b) Although at times it's necessary to be NEGATIVE to be a Christian, we MUST be positive on some things! cf. 1 Cor.15:58.
3. By letting OTHER THAN the mind of Christ control our thinking and actions! 1 Cor.1:10; Phil.2:5-8- "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."
- a) Can you asking others to believe that you really **THINK LIKE CHRIST?**
 - b) Are you telling me that you are **THINKING LIKE FAITHFUL BRETHREN?**
 - c) Do you really feel like you have **A MINDSET TO SERVE THE LIVING GOD?**
- B. Our children and closest friends are the most susceptible to our influence!
1. Can you say that you are a HELP or a HINDRANCE to those who are weaker than you?
 2. Do you really feel like there are very many who are WEAKER than you? Gal.6:1.
 3. One man said: "I would be wretched indeed, if my only punishment were to hear my lost son's words in eternity: 'I'm here because I followed my Dad's example!'"

III. WHERE DO YOU BELIEVE THE LORD SEES YOU -- RIGHT NOW?

- A. This is a PERSONAL question that each one must ANSWER FOR HIMSELF!
- B. Where does the LORD see you, in RANK?
 1. No matter which way you consider it: as an officer of the congregation; as a parent; as a citizen/neighbor; or even as a measure of your faithfulness; et al.
 2. Do you really have and are you fulfilling the RANK which is truly dictated by your physical abilities and spiritual qualifications?
- C. Where does the LORD view you so far as the AUTHORITY you are showing? viz, What POWER of POSITION OF SERVICE are you demonstrating?
 1. Of course, we understand that NO ONE has authority in the service of the Lord except that which HE has granted -- and it's ALL for the purpose of fulfilling responsibilities!
 2. And also, it is only KEPT by USE! Our "authority" is Divinely and uniquely connected to our USABILITY!
- D. Finally, and very distinctly, WHERE do you suppose the LORD sees EACH OF US IN OUR RELATIONSHIP with Him?
 1. Do you think that we truly feel like we're SHOWING OTHERS that we *belong to the Lord?* 1 Cor.6:20- "*For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*"
 2. Do you think that we sincerely believe we're acting like children of God, yielding constantly to His will as our Father? Rom.8:16-17- "*The Spirit Himself beareth..*"

CONCLUSION:

As stated earlier, what we are/ or what we determine to do/be RIGHT NOW may well be the seal of our eternal destiny! If we're away from God, we need to return to Him NOW. Do you need assistance in obeying the gospel of Jesus Christ? Do you need encouragement to return to the service of the Lord. BE ASSURED, HE WILL RECEIVE YOU! Luke 15:21-23- "*And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.'* 22 "*But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 'And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 "for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'* And they began to be merry."