

The Store Loaf – consecration for Beginners.



Where I live in the North East of England there is an expression in some old mining communities. ‘Like a Store Loaf.’ This is used in the context of hanging around for an indefinite period of time.

Each mining community would have ‘The Store’, a local shop run on a co-operative basis, for the benefit of the community, rather than for profit.

Whereas in a regular profit orientated shop you would try to have just enough loaves of bread for each day’s sales, at ‘the store’ they would make sure they had enough loaves to cater for as many customers as may need them.

So it would not be unusual for quite a few of these loaves to be hanging about the shelf all day, only to be discarded if not sold by the end of the day.

Hence the expression, ‘hanging around like a store loaf.’

This is not a pleasant experience. To have an indefinite waiting period, of making oneself available, but not knowing when, if at all, you will be called upon to be used.

Exodus 30:30 “And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister to Me as priests.

To be consecrated is to be set apart, made exclusively available for a specific purpose. Those who have been anointed with the Holy Spirit have been so that they may minister, serve the Father as priests. We ought not to become entangled again in the affairs of this world. There are no part-time priests. God chooses those that He wills to be His servants. He sets them apart for service. They have to be ready to serve as and when required by God.

Isaiah 40:27 Why do you say, O Jacob, And speak, O Israel: “My way is hidden from the LORD, And my just claim is passed over by my God”? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, And to *those who have* no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Waiting for God to speak, command or act can be frustrating. It can be testing. Perhaps it is meant to be, for our ultimate benefit. We have God’s word that He will strengthen us.

Matthew 20:1 “For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. “Now when he had agreed with the labourers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. “And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, “and said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. “Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. “And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’ “They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’ “So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the labourers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.’ “And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. “But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. “And when they had received *it*, they complained against the landowner, “saying, ‘These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.’ “But he answered one of them and said, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? ‘Take *what is* yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you.

Knowing that ‘of ourselves we can do nothing’ we have no option but to make ourselves available for the Lord of the harvest to call us, whom He chooses, when He chooses, for what He chooses, for as long as He chooses. Jesus Himself was the great example, in that for 30 years He did not commence His ministry, but learned submission through the things He experienced.

John the Baptist similarly;

Luke 1:80 And the child grew, and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing to Israel.

The kingdom of heaven, which is within us, is a realm of government of the subject (me) by the Ruler (Jesus the Christ, to whom has been given all jurisdiction and authority.) We have been given the Holy Spirit that we may be led....really! The Holy Spirit takes the words of Jesus and reveals them to us.

Jesus was always pointing out that He said nothing, did nothing, of Himself, but only what the Father showed Him, told Him.

If we are of the Christ then the mind that was in Him should/must be in us. This mind/attitude is one of 'waiting upon the Lord'.

This does require faith. Obedience. Submission. Humility. Repentance (in the sense of exchange of understanding, laying aside our thoughts for the Father's thoughts.)

When we lay aside our thoughts that we may rather have the Father's thoughts we then we find that our ways have been replaced with His ways.

For these necessary things we throw ourselves on Jesus, the Son of Man, the Son of God. His grace is sufficient. It is the Father's will to give us the Kingdom.

Perhaps we can see what a problem pride can be. My pride will not be happy with me hanging about all day in the market place, with no one hiring me. Obviously I'm too good for them! My pride may well induce me to leave and do something useful. Or entertaining. Or just disappear from view.

But, hanging about in the public view, unwanted, unoccupied, perhaps my pride will be humbled. Someone who can do nothing of himself has nothing to be proud of anyway, has he?

Maybe this is a point of the exercise.

It surely is a test of our faith. He who has begun a good work in you shall perform it until the Day of Jesus the Christ. Only hanging around the market place, it doesn't feel as if a work is being done. But it is. In me and you, if that is where we are.

I suppose the secret is in knowing whose we are. Who we belong to. Assured of being bought with a price, and that our Master knows exactly what He is doing.

It was never going to me about me, anyway. Thine be the Glory! Hallowed be Thy name.

Can we stand all day in the market place, visibly unoccupied, just glorying in Jesus alone? Revelling in our Father's love. Dependent on the Holy Spirit's fellowship.

In Jesus we can do all things, and that includes doing nothing, if that is the Father's will for us at the time.

Luke 12:35 "Let your waist be girded and *your* lamps burning; "and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. "Blessed *are* those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down *to eat*, and will come and serve them. "And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. "Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." Then Peter said to Him, "Lord, do You speak this parable *only* to us, or to all *people*?" And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* master will make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of food in due season? "Blessed *is* that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. "Truly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all that he has. "But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers. "And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. "But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus is a serious business. Our attitude matters. We may well be tempted to believe that He delays His coming. We would be foolish to do so or to let that thought influence our behaviour.

Acts 1:4 And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” *He said*, “you have heard from Me; “for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Here the risen Lord Jesus is telling His disciples to wait a short while until they are baptized, soaked, in the Holy Spirit. They did not know how long it would be but they did wait together in Jerusalem until the Spirit fell on them. Like many of us the disciples were very interested to know when the kingdom would be restored to Israel – that is on earth when Jesus returns as King. Jesus tells them that they are not to know such things. So they were going to have a very long wait for this. Waiting is a prominent feature of following Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:3 You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, *even* to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. *This is* a faithful saying: For if we died with *Him*, We shall also live with *Him*. If we endure, We shall also reign with *Him*. If we deny *Him*, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Jesus has done His part, let us remain in the market, ready for His call, that we may serve Him in His vineyard, as He chooses.

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