

## **Bread Crumbs in the Bible**

On every Deacon's Meeting night, one of our deacons is chosen to bring our devotional thought. Our long-standing church member, Keith Troutman brought us into a very penetrating and thought-provoking reverie. He explained that it was his practice on our Lord's Supper night to open his Bible to Psalm 51 during the Table experience. He has encouraged his children to do the same. Keith's son, Kevin inquisitively noticed the crumbs in his dad's Bible at Psalm 51. He showed his dad his own Bible; he too had crumbs at Psalm 51. He later asked his mom, "Does everybody have crumbs in their Bible?"

This beautiful story piqued my curiosity, so during Keith's devotional, I got up, looked into his Bible and sure enough, I saw the tiny crumbs from unleavened bread. Keith didn't remove the breadcrumbs from his Bible, leaving them there as a reminder. That is part and parcel of the effect the Lord's Supper should have on each of us.

Let's join Keith and Kevin in our meditation on "bread crumbs in the Bible."

### **1. We should preserve the innocence of youth.**

The phrase "innocence of youth" is really a misnomer because the Bible says, "*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me*" (Psalm 51:5). "*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way...*" (Isaiah 53:6). The Bible teaches that Adam and Eve fell in the Garden of Eden and we have inherited the sin nature according to Romans 5:12.

Although the Bible teaches we are born with a nature prone to sin, it also teaches, "*...I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil*" (Romans 16:19). Kevin's question, reflecting of the innocence of youth, surmises that everyone would be sensitive to any sin that might hinder the sweet fellowship with our Lord. I believe it is spiritually healthy to stay as uninformed of wicked imaginations as long as possible. As a matter of fact, there is virtue in keeping a certain amount of naiveté throughout one's life. "*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret*" (Ephesians 5:11,12). One of my goals as pastor has been and shall continue to be to keep our youth "*wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.*" don't need to lift up the sewer lid to see if it stinks. We don't need details of how bad "bad" is.

### **2. Our behavior is affected by what we believe.**

Keith's and my history interlocked even before we were born. When Dr. Earl White was 13 years of age, my dad was his pastor. When I was studying for the ministry, Dr. White (Keith's boyhood pastor) was my Greek professor. Keith's dad was one of Dr. White's finest deacons and he (Dr. White) told me so. Keith gave his heart to Christ in his youth when I was a very young preacher speaking at his church. When Keith grew up he became one of our finest deacons here at Christchurch. So we share the same spiritual DNA. During Keith's devotional, he reflected on the impact of a certain well-known Bible teacher who convinced him that Jesus was going to come before he was grown. He said that believing this helped keep him on the straight and narrow.

Most of you may not know this, but Keith was a college basketball star and could have easily gone on to become professional had he so chosen. In a few days he will be joining Karl Malone ("The Mail Man") and other former teammates to celebrate their winning career together in a well-planned reunion. Last night I asked Keith how did he maintain his Christian testimony during those college days. I love his answer. He said, "Many of the guys I played basketball with (in college), I had played

basketball with all my life. They knew what I believed and when we got into a testing situation, they covered for me.” Keith believed he should live right as a Christian, he believed Jesus was coming soon and all who knew him admired him and would help protect his chosen lifestyle. We behave in accordance to our beliefs. Those crumbs in the Bible are a good visual aid to remind us to not stop believing or behaving.

### **3. We still have the capacity to sin, but we can and should seek forgiveness when we do.**

The practice of opening our Bibles to Psalm 51 is a wise thing. The entire Psalm describes the autobiographical recovery from the worst sin of King David’s life. Allow me to pinpoint just two verses: “*Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin*” (Psalm 51:2). Just a few verses below, it reads, “*Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation...*” (Psalm 51:12). This Psalm teaches us to deal completely and thoroughly with our sin. We will not be helped if we broach this subject nonchalantly. God hates the sin while loving the sinner. Let us also do the same. We can only be helped if we take God’s side against sin. Then the Psalm also reminds us of the irrepressible joy that a Christian has who is in right standing before his God. If we deny self and abdicate the “*pleasures of sin for a season*” (Hebrews 11:25), we will most definitely end up being overcome “*...with joy unspeakable and full of glory*” (I Peter 1:8).

After Keith’s devotional, I felt a desire to allow my unleavened breadcrumbs to mark Psalm 51 for me. The devil is a liar (John 8:44). Old Satan tells us what we are missing by not sinning. When we become involved in sin, he provokes us to sin more. God tells us the opposite in Psalm 51, in essence saying, cease and desist and find the joy that only He can give us.

### **4. We are who we are by the impartation of the grace of God!**

The Apostle Paul said, “*But by the grace of God I am what I am...*” . . . When our Lord instituted the Lord’s Supper, He said, “*...Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me*” (I Corinthians 11:24). Those broken bread crumbs remind us that our salvation is a free gift to us, but salvation is not free - it cost God the life of His only begotten Son.

In theology, we believe in the hypostatic union of the Divine and human nature of Christ embodied in the person of our Lord. Hypostasis (ὑπόστασις lang="el-GR">ἄσις) literal meaning is "that which stands beneath." Christ, Who was and is Divine, subjected Himself to this world and our temptations through His humanity, “*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*” (Hebrews 4:15). Through the breaking of His body and shedding of His blood, the only means possible was made available for us to partake of a redeemed and now elevated lifestyle. As Deity “stands beneath” everything Christ was and is, when we hold that bread in our hands we are reminded that He by grace stands beneath us and anchors us into a consistent and holy lifestyle that brings ultimate glory to God. “*And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock*” (Exodus 33:21), “*...and that Rock was Christ*” (I Corinthians 10:4). Imagine...crumbs of bread to remind us who we are and what we have in Christ!

- Pastor Pope

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