pioneer + perfecter of our faith
joy set before Him

RESURRECTED BY GIVING (Mt: 21:43 / Heb. 12: 12,2)

DO YOU CATCH? IF YOU WANT TO BE PART OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, YOU MUST BE PART OF A PEOPLE WHO WILL PRODUCE ITS FRUIT! YOU MUST KEEP YOUR EYES FIXED ON JESUS & LET HIM BE THE ROLE MODEL FOR WHO YOU ARE & HOW YOU BEHAVE. WE MUST KEEP ASKING: HOW DID JESUS LIVE HIS LIFE & HOW CAN WE LEARN FROM THAT? ..... JESUS WAS DIRECTED BY PRAYER, WE HAVE JUST COME FROM A PRAYER VIGIL & FOR JESUS PRAYER WAS NOT JUST TALKING / IT WAS A WAY OF WALKING. AS SOMEONE SAID, JESUS WAS A GUY WHO GOT UP IN THE MORNING & SAID, "OUR FATHER" AND WHEN HE WENT TO BED AT NIGHT, HE SAID, "AMEN" & EVERYTHING IN-BETWEEN WASH "PRAYING." PRAYER WAS A WAY OF LIFE & NOT JUST TALKING. IT WAS A WAY OF BEING! WHEN THE DISCIPLES ASKED, TEACH US TO PRAY, HE SAID, FIRST OF ALL, MAKE IT INVISIBLE / DON'T STAND ON STREET CORNERS / DON'T DO IT IN PUBLIC. ..... I HATE TO PRAY OUT LOUD / THINK ABOUT THE WORDS, NOT ABOUT GOD / IT'S ABOUT YOU. SO JESUS SAID, MAKE IT INVISIBLE -- LET YOU, FATHER BE MAGNIFIED / NOT ME..... GIVE ME WHAT I NEED: MEALS / MERCY / MAXI! LET ME MAGNIFY YOU BY THE WAY I WALK TODAY & GIVE ME THE BASIC THINGS I NEED ---- FOOD FOR TODAY / MERCY --- RECEIVING & GIVING FORGIVENESS / MAXI --- THE COURAGE & POWER NOT TO GIVE INTO TEMPTATION. AND THEN JESUS SAID, THAT'S IT! & THE DISCIPLES WERE DUMBFOUNDED. PRAYER WAS A WAY OF LIFE --- NOT TALKING TO GOD, BUT WALKING WITH GOD! ..... IF WE ARE GOING TO FACE THE CHALLENGE OF THE 21ST CENTURY, WE MUST BECOME A GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO SAY EVERYDAY, GOD, SHOW ME WHAT TO DO & GIVE ME THE COURAGE TO DO IT! ..... SECONDLY, JESUS WAS PROTECTED BY SCRIPTURE. FOR JESUS, SCRIPTURE WAS NOT SOMETHING TO BE MEMORIZED / BUT SOMETHING TO BE METABOLIZED. HE TOOK THE WHOLE WEIGHT OF SCRIPTURE & PUT IT INTO HIS INNER MOST BEING. IT WAS PART OF HIS IMMUNE SYSTEM. IT KEPT HIM FROM WALKING DOWN THE WRONG ROAD / FROM SELLING OUT TO THOSE WHO WERE BAITING HIM! HE METABOLIZED THE BIBLE & WENT AROUND LOVING PEOPLE & LIVING SCRIPTURE. LUKE TELLS US THE WHEN JESUS WAS 12 YRS. OLD HIS PARENTS TOOK HIM FROM NAZARETH TO JERUSALEM TO CELEBRATE HIS BAR MITZVAH. WHEN IT WAS OVER, HIS PARENTS WENT BACK TO NAZARETH WITH SOME FRIENDS. JESUS WAS NOT THERE / WENT BACK TO JERUSALEM & FINALLY FOUND HIM SITTING WITH ALL THE TEACHERS OF THE LAW & THE EXPERTS / THEY WERE SITTING AROUND HIM DUMBFOUNDED AT HIS KNOWLEDGE OF SCRIPTURE ..... WHEN THE DEVIL TEMPTED JESUS AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS MINISTRY, EVERY

TEMPTATION WAS ANSWERED WITH SCRIPTURE. ..... I DON'T KNOW HOW WE ARE GOING TO SURVIVE HERE AT HOLY CROSS, IF WE DO NOT METABOLIZE & MAGNIFY SCRIPTURE AS WE LIVE OUT OUR EVERYDAY LIVES. ..... A FRIEND ASKED ME, IF YOU COULD PERSUADE EVERY MEMBER OF HOLY CROSS TO DO ONE THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE? WHAT DO YOU THINK MY FIRST THOUGHT WAS? _____ NO, IT WAS NOT MONEY! IT WAS TITHING MONEY! BUT EVEN BEFORE THAT -- IF I COULD GET OUR PEOPLE TO DO JUST ONE THING IT WOULD BE TO PRAY AS JESUS PRAYED & TO METABOLIZE SCRIPTURE AS JESUS DID. ..... AND THEN COMES THE WHOLE POINT OF THIS MESSAGE. JESUS WAS RESURRECTED BY GIVING! GIVING WAS NOT SOMETHING JESUS DID / IT WAS SOMETHING HE WAS. THE REOCCURRING THEME OF HIS WHOLE MINISTRY WAS, IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR LIFE, DON'T HOLD ON TO IT --- THEN YOU WILL LOSE IT! IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR LIFE, GIVE IT AWAY. C. S. LEWIS SAID THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO LIVE --- NEED LOVE -- WHERE I AM EMPTY / NEED LOVE / GO & GET PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS, STUFF TO FILL THE EMPTINESS INSIDE. THAT IS NOT WHAT THE BIBLE MEANS WHEN IT SAYS, GOD IS LOVE! GOD'S LOVE IS GIFT LOVE! INSTEAD OF BEING EMPTY GOD'S LOVE IS FULL & HE POURS IT OUT ON US! GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE ---- WHAT? ---- "G A V E" .... GREAT PRESBYTERIAN PASTOR IN HOUSTON, TEXAS, WHO CHALLENGED HIS PEOPLE TO BECOME A DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR MISSION CHURCH. FOR EVERY DOLLAR THEY SPENT ON THEMSELVES, THEY GAVE A DOLLAR TO A MISSION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH. THEY STOOD THE TEST & ARE NOW ONE OF THE LARGEST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES IN THE WORLD.... WHAT A DREAM!.... KNOW WHY IT HAS BECOME SO QUIET? I'M MESSING WITH THE WRONG GOD! JESUS SAID, YOU CANNOT SERVE BOTH GOD & MAMMON. C.S. LEWIS GOES ON TO SAY: ALL DEAD THINGS CAN BE RESURRECTED BY GIVING --- A DEAD MARRIAGE / A DEAD CAREER. THE ONLY THING THAT HEALS HURTS IS TO START HELPING SOMEONE WHO IS HURTING. GIVING IS A WAY OUT OF DEPRESSION / OUT OF SUFFERING! IT IS THE ONLY WAY OUT -- RESURRECTED BY GIVING! IN MY OWN MIND & HEART I KEEP ASKING, DO I REALLY THINK I CAN PERSUADE HOLY CROSS TO BECOME A DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR MISSION CHURCH? THE ANSWER I KEEP GETTING BACK IS, N O. WRONG QUESTION! CAN GOD PERSUADE YOU & ME THAT IF YOU HOLD ON TO YOUR LIFE, YOU'LL LOSE IT. BUT IF YOU LOSE YOUR LIFE FOR XP'S SAKE, GOD WILL GIVE YOU HIS KIND OF LIFE -- DIRECTED BY PRAYER / PROTECTED BY SCRIPTURE / RESURRECTED BY GIVING! THAT IS WHAT GOD IS CALLING US TO BE! DO YOU CATCH?

Charlie Shedd