

The Store Loaf – consecration for Beginners. By Colin Thompson, Gateshead, England.

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 days sales, in '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.

Jesus gave many stories to illustrate this in the Kingdom of Heaven.

One example is in Matthew chapter 20:

Mat 20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

Mat 20:2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Mat 20:3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,

Mat 20:4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

Mat 20:5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

Mat 20:6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

Mat 20:7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

Mat 20:8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

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 similarly;

Luk 1:80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto 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? Reveling 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.

Exo 30:30 And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that *they* may minister unto me in the priest's office.

To be consecrated is to be set apart, made exclusively available for a specific purpose.

We have been anointed so that we 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.

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.

Colin Thompson. Gateshead. England. (Nobody important.)

Comments welcome by email to colin@cthompson.org.uk

Other material on site at <http://www.cthompson.org.uk/writings/>