

## The Common Elite

Society tends to group itself into various categories of commonality. Educated people hang out with other intellectuals, wealthy people buddy with the rich, and people of power & influence click most with those of their kind. An old adage says it this way – “Birds of a feather flock together.” The prophet Jeremiah reveals another category where neither money, power, nor education defines its common ground. See if you fit, in today’s Templates of Truth.

Have you ever felt like you weren’t a part of the “clique?” People will express a certain politeness toward you, but they don’t necessarily embrace you in their circle of friends because you don’t possess the “qualifications” to be a part. You don’t make enough money, you don’t hold the right kind of degree, or you’re a common laborer and not an executive. This was an apparent element of Israel’s culture in the days of Jeremiah. In response to it, the Lord declared – *Let not a wise man boast in his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches* (Jeremiah 9:23). When you get right down to it, it really is quite foolish what we place our security in and how we define ourselves in terms of societal rank. We think that degree framed on the wall will assure us a position, or the vast experience we hold will advance us among the dignitaries, or that as long as we maintain a three-figure balance in the portfolio our stability is sound & solid. The shocker this verse implies is that God is just not impressed with our education, our position or our money, nor do any of those things get us anywhere with Him!

If you want to be among an elite group of people, God gives you an alternative – *let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord...* (Jeremiah 9:24). Folks, your money won’t buy you a place in this group. Your alumni status has absolutely nothing to do with affiliation. There is no special regard here for your place in society. The common element that defines membership qualification in this group is much more valuable, honorably respected and more highly esteemed. Unfortunately, not many are willing to qualify or distinguish themselves as eligible.

Knowing and understanding the Lord is the common factor among this elite group of people. That qualification distinguishes you above the intellectual community because knowing & understanding God requires you to be a diligent, passionate and ardent student of God’s Word. The Psalmist wrote – *O how I love Thy law! It is my meditation all the day. Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies...I have more insight than all my teachers...I understand more than the aged...for Thou Thyself hast taught me* (Psalm 119:97-102). No university degree (not even one from seminary) will give you this kind of wisdom. The most revered college professor in the land could not hold a candle to *Thou Thyself!* This Psalmist recognized that it was God Himself who opened his eyes to behold wonderful things in the Word of God (119:18). The result was a level of wisdom & understanding that far surpasses master degrees and PhDs.

This qualification also distinguishes you above the wealthiest people in the land. Solomon

revealed – *How blessed is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding. For its profit is better than the profit of silver, and its gain than fine gold. She is more precious than jewels; and nothing you desire compares with her* (Proverbs 3:13-15). Great news, folks! You can be a pauper and still gain entry into this elite group. The balance in your bank account has no bearing on your affiliation. In comparison, the knowledge & wisdom you gain from God’s Word makes you the “wealthiest” among the wealthiest. Nothing else that a person can aspire after compares to the value gained from God’s Word, whether it be power, influence, popularity or position.

There is an irony in all of this. Many people who are rich sense a void & emptiness in their life that wealth has failed to satisfy. Many intellectuals who hold multiple degrees exhibit a lack of understanding and insight that all their education has failed to provide. There are those whose lives are surrounded with luxury, prestige, and power who sense a loneliness and inability their influence has not been able to infiltrate. When they finally observe this common elite of which we speak, they realize it is what they truly need. They hold a respect for members of this group that is far more genuine & sincere than the superficial nuances of their societal ranks. They acknowledge that the perimeters around which they have defined their circle of friends & identity do not apply in this elite group. We are all on common ground. Our level of commonality is only limited by the amount of willingness we demonstrate to invest our lives in the priority of God’s Word, will and ways. Do you fit into this group? Are you among the common elite?

That’s today’s Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.

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