



Light of Messiah Ministries

...Bringing Jesus to the Jewish People

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One Special Jewish Lady

Before I reveal the identity of the person of whom I am going to write, I want to tell you a little about her. She is one of the most beautiful women I have met. She is a very young 82. I have known her for a few years and thoroughly enjoy our sometimes crazy conversations. She is energetic, intelligent, and cultured in every way. She can address just about any topic. She is well dressed and versed in opera, classical music, plays, and the music scene. She is an accomplished speaker, has run for political office, and can intellectually run circles around most anyone. **She is my father's girlfriend, and her name is Phyllis.**

I bring Phyllis to your attention (by the way, I told her I was going to write this letter and she gave her approval) because she is a very interesting Jewish person who actually represents a much larger segment of the Jewish community than one would expect. **I want you to know how she thinks so that you might not only understand the Jewish community we are trying to reach, but also so that you might pray for us, and for her.**

Phyllis is a traditional, Jewish, liberal, secular, humanist, socialist, atheist. Yes, you heard me correctly. She is a traditional, Jewish, liberal, secular, humanist, socialist, atheist. And, she is not alone. Most in the Jewish community are liberal and secular. Phyllis just adds a twist to her liberal secularism.

I first met Phyllis at our family Passover table a few years ago. We were sitting across from each at a cousin's house. Over twenty people had gath-



ered together to celebrate Passover and most are not believers in Jesus. Most are secular Jewish people who come together for Passover because it is tradition and it is fun to be with family (a lot like Thanksgiving). During the dinner Phyllis said to me, *"Murray you know you can't be Jewish and believe in Jesus."* *"You are not really Jewish anymore."*

A "lively", but respectful, conversation ensued as I communicated to her my faith in Jesus, how it in no way changes my Jewish identity. And, moreover, she does not believe in God, let alone Jesus, and still considers herself Jewish. **We left that night at a somewhat respectful impasse.**

Since that time several years ago, we have gained a deeper respect and love for one another. She and my father have actually come to hear me speak. **We have had many conversations about spiritual issues. I have talked to her about "the One in whom she does not believe" and I continue to share my faith with her even though she does not believe in God.** My father has also chimed in.

My father, you see, believes in God.

Now let me make myself clear, he does not know God, because one cannot know God and reject Jesus. **My father rejects Jesus but believes in God.** In fact, the only group of people who believe in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are Jewish people who accept the God of the Old Testament. Every other religion follows false gods. Allah is not the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is a false god, made up by a false prophet, Mohammed. Buddhist gods and Hindu gods, are all false gods.

My father believes in God, he just doesn't know Him, has no relationship with Him, and will not be in heaven with Him, unless he comes to know Jesus (not an easy truth to ponder, but true none the less). Jesus is the only way to the Father, and if one, Jewish or Gentile, rejects Jesus, they are rejecting God and His provision for salvation. There is only one way to the Father and only one way to know the Father. The Way is Jesus.

That being said, my father and Phyllis go to synagogue on a regular basis, sometimes three times a week. They attend a Bible study, a study of the Talmud (rabbinical commentary on the Bible), and Sabbath services. They both know the prayers, can chant them beautifully, and are engaged in the study of the Bible, and in the worship service.

When they are in synagogue, interesting conversations ensue. Let me tell you about one of them. **Envision my dad and Phyllis standing in the synagogue.** They are chanting the most important and well known prayer to any Jewish person; the scripture verse from Deuteronomy 6:4 called the "Shema". *"Hear oh Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one"*. As they are chanting

the prayer my dad looks at Phyllis and the conversation begins:

Dad: "Who are you talking to?"

Phyllis: "No one."

Dad: "So why are you doing it?"

Phyllis: "Because it feels good."

Phyllis goes to synagogue because she is Jewish and connected to the Jewish people through her tradition and culture. Her Jewish identity is defined by her feelings of being Jewish, her celebration of the Jewish holidays, her love for Jewish culture, and her identification with the Jewish people. **Her Jewish identity has absolutely nothing to do with her belief in God or her adherence to the religion of the Jewish rabbis.** I know this may sound strange to some, but Phyllis is not alone. What can we learn from Phyllis?

We All Need to Understand
Others Better

Before making any judgment calls we all need to understand that most people are not religious and do not follow the "rules" of their professed religion very well. Many who call themselves Christian do not know or follow Jesus. The same is true for those who profess to be Muslim following the Koran and the teachings of Mohammed or Hindus living according to the religion of Hinduism. The list of religions could go on. **Most people are liberal in their views, even within their own religion.**

In order for us to make progress in sharing our faith, we need to relate to those of different religions and/or philosophies in relevant ways. The best way to accomplish this goal is to talk to others, get their ideas, ask questions of them, and read about the current state of people of other faiths.

Jewish People Are Just Like
Everyone Else

You see, many, if not most, Jewish people are just like Phyllis, and like those who profess to be Christian who are in



church on Easter and Christmas because "it feels good".

Last month churches were filled with people singing, "Hark the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King"... many of whom do not know the King. They may not have a relationship with the King. They may not think about the King or even believe in Him. Why were they in church? Because it felt good. **Jewish people are no different than anyone else. Culturally connected, but lost and in search of meaning.** Jesus is the only answer.

Jewish People Need Jesus

Like everyone else, Jewish people need Jesus. I have talked to Phyllis extensively about her relationship with God. Of course she does not believe in Him and is fascinated that I do, but I still talk to her.

Perhaps one day she will see. Perhaps God will open her eyes. Perhaps. Until that day, I will keep talking to her, loving her, and showing her Messiah through my life. **My people, like all people, need Jesus. Let's get Him to them!**

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Passover 2013

We will again be hosting our two ministry Passover events at Fellowship Bible Church in Roswell, GA on Tuesday and Friday night, March 19th and 22nd respectively. This is one week before Easter and Passover. Reservations for these two seders can be made through our ministry. We will have special music and Messianic dancing, a wonderful Passover meal, and go through the order of service around beautifully set tables at the church. Seating at the Fellowship seders will be limited to 200 per night. **Last year we sold out early and had a waiting list for both nights.**

Please invite your friends, Sunday school classes, small groups, and Jewish friends who do not yet know the Lord. **Reservations are necessary. Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.** If you are unable to attend one of those events, we are hosting several other Passover services in churches around metro Atlanta.

Other than the two services which our ministry is hosting at Fellowship Bible Church, each Passover seder is being organized by the individual churches. **A full list of Passover seders can be found on our web site.**

THANK YOU!

Thank you for helping us take Jesus back to the Jewish people. They have given us so much. They need Him.

Thank you, as well, for sending us out to the Jewish community with that message of peace and salvation in Jesus. May the Lord richly bless you!

In His service,

Murray Tilles...for the staff
Light of Messiah Ministries