

	<h1>THE TRUMPET</h1> <p>WWW.THETRUMPETONLINE.COM</p>	Voice of the LORD Ministries
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### Where Is Your House?

George Whitten

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. Matthew 7:24-27

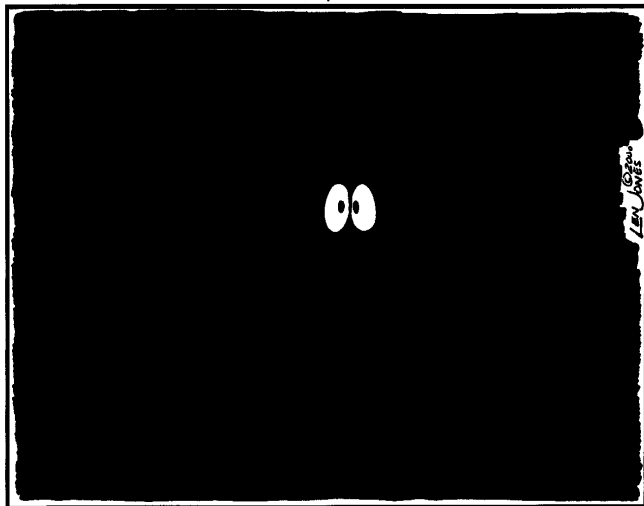
When we read in the Bible about the rainy season, there are two references mentioned, the "Yoreh", the early rain, and the "Malkosh", the latter rain. In this passage, Jesus is talking to Jews, of course. They were familiar with the rainy seasons and how vigorously it comes down these seasons. Since Israel receives little rain for most of the year, the ground becomes hard and unable to absorb the rains when they begin. As the storms begin, the downpours can quickly form "rivers in the desert" and can quickly destroy anything in their path. Jews understood this concept and they understood the dangers of building their houses on the sand -- otherwise, they faced calamity when the rainy season came! The Lord is warning us about building our houses on an unstable foundation. He knew that stormy seasons would come and He wants us to be prepared! We don't want to be one of the many of whose lives will collapse because they were built on fame, fortune and other things of this world. We must be careful to build our lives only upon Him. Even building our lives upon seemingly innocent things like family, tradition and good works can be dangerous. We want to be of those who've established our foundation upon the ROCK of the truth of His Word and who will be able to weather the coming storms because of it! Are there storms raging about you today? Let's hurry and examine whether our lives are completely built upon the Rock.

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### THE TRUMPET 2020 RENEWAL

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**ALTAR EGO** by Len Jones

"The church board would like to report that we are still just a bit short of our fund raising goal for new sanctuary lighting."

**Cousin Leroy**

Two of the elderly saints were sitting together in the front pew of the church one Sunday morning right in front of where Leroy was a sittin. Bertha Fay and Wanda Sue was listening to a fiery sermon by the visiting preacher. When the preacher condemned the sin of stealing, the two ladies cried out at the tops of their lungs, "Amen, Brother!" When the preacher condemned the sin of lust, they yelled again, "Preach it Reverend preach it!" And when the preacher condemned the sin of lying, they jumped to their feet and screamed, "Right on, Brother! Tell it like it is...Oh yes, Amen!" But when the preacher condemned the sin of gossip, the two got very quiet. About that time old Leroy saw one of the sisters turn to the other and say, "He aint preaching now...now he's just meddling!"

A visitor to town approached Bubba who was sitting on a park bench and asked, "What's the quickest way to the next town?" Bubba, scratched his head, "Are you walking or driving?" he asked the stranger. "I'm driving," said the stranger. "Well, that's the quickest way." replied Bubba

**Quick Jokes**

Employed by the human-development center of a corporation in the Midwest, Joan was hired to train employees in proper dress codes and etiquette. One day as she was stepping onto the elevator, a man casually dressed in jeans and a golf shirt got on with her. Thinking of her responsibilities, she scolded in a stern voice, "Dressed a little casually today, aren't we Mr.?!?" The man replied, "That's one benefit of owning the company...."

The little four-year-old daughter had just learned to dial the phone unassisted. To her delight, Mom gave her daddy's work number and told her to surprise Daddy. A few seconds later, she was back in the kitchen. "Did you talk to Daddy?" Mom asked. "He couldn't come to the phone," she said, "because he's in the bushes." Puzzled, Mom called the number. Her husband's voice mail greeting solved the mystery. "Hi, this is Dave. I'm out in the plant right now ..."

While at the mall, John saw an elderly couple holding hands while they were walking. As they approached, he commented on how romantic it was. The older gentlemen replied, "We have been holding hands when we go out in public for over thirty years. I have to. If I let go, she shops."

Yesterday I went to the optician's, walked up to the counter and said to the guy on duty, "I think my eyes are going." He said, "They've gone mate - this is Burger King."

It had been snowing for hours when an announcement came over the intercom: "Will the students who are parked on University Drive please move their cars so that we may begin plowing." Twenty minutes later there was another announcement: "Will the twelve hundred students who went to move 26 cars please return to class."

"I'm prescribing these pills for you," said the doctor to the overweight patient who wanted to lose weight without exercising. "I don't want you to swallow them. Just spill them on the floor two to three times a day and pick them up, one at a time."

*From the Pastor's Desk***The Little Snowflake**

Pastor Billy R Douglas

Faster and faster he fell to the ground, Not one little word not even a sound.  
And although he wondered where he'd come to rest, He knew in his heart The Maker knew best.

Then all of a sudden he came to a stop, In a small little town on a lonely hilltop.  
And there in the silence he still couldn't see, And thought to himself...why here? Why me?

Could this be a trial or maybe a test, Yet he knew in his heart The Maker knew best.  
And there on that hill on the snow covered ground, He could hear the wind whistling and blowing around.

Then off in the distance he thought he could see, A shadowy figure walk...no limp past a tree.  
A small little boy so lowly and meek, He wore not a smile but a tear on his cheek.

His hair was a mess his clothes were not much, And under his arm he carried a crutch.  
And there in the silence the little boy sat, No mittens no coat not even a hat.

The snowflake then wondered but what can I do, He had no idea not even a clue.  
LORD I wish I could help to make the boy glad, He seems so distraught so lonely so sad.

When all of a sudden a wind gust appeared, And tossed the little snowflake back up in the air.  
Just for a moment then back to the ground, But just long enough that the boy looked around.

As he looked around he started to move, Making big snow balls first one and then two.  
And when he had finished he had three in all, And stacked them together so round and so tall.

He then looked around for some sticks and some rocks, Then what did appear on that lonely hilltop?  
The best looking snowman you ever did see, The little snowflake thought...THE MAKER USED ME!

As on the boys face he now saw a smile, He knew that the journey was worth every mile.  
No matter the journey, the trial, or the test, He was right all along The Maker knew best.

*(written by Billy R Douglas, 12-07-19)*

As I wrote this poem under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit I couldn't help but think *what a wonderful truth*. There are many times in our lives that we may have thought as the little snowflake did..."Why here? Why me?". But what a comfort to know that no matter where we are, no matter what we are going through He has promised us in His Word in Romans 8:28 "that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." What a MIGHTY GOD WE SERVE! To know that the God of the universe is mindful of us! So mindful that He even knows the very number of the hairs on our head!! Jeremiah 29:11 says "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." No matter what you are going through today take comfort in these promises. Knowing that He has a plan for you, knowing and trusting that *The Maker does indeed know best!*

Until next time may the LORD Bless and keep you is our prayer. Pastor Billy R Douglas



## **Spiritual Burnout - part 01**

By Evangelist Mike Heltsley

Luke 5:1-11 - And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. 3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. 4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. 6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: 10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. 11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

Stress and burnout can often happen to Christians in their service to the Lord way to often. Paul encouraged the believers in the churches of Galatia to 'be not weary in well-doing'. There is a reason that our service to the Lord is called 'work'! Jesus reminded us of the priority of doing the 'work' of God in John 9:4 - I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. So I want to talk to you about how to avoid spiritual burnout and how to work for the Lord without growing weary of the Lord's work. Believe me it can and does happen to each and every one of us at times but we can prevent it. Here's a few things I want to share with you to-day...I. Indicators of Spiritual Burnout A. Lack of Enthusiasm Anytime we become very familiar with something, there is a danger of losing interest. (Consider various ministries we have seen come and go over the years.) We see that even new things are exciting...new clothes...new cars...and even new ministries but we can all grow complacent about them...when we grow complacent about reaching people with the Gospel message...then there are eternal consequences! B. Lack of Activity I am talking about the temptation of quitting... Ask yourself this, "Am I doing less for the Lord than I used to do?" If so, why is that? For some it might be physical limitation but for others...it may be that you are just growing weary...Perhaps you need to refocus and take a look at what needs to be done for The Lord. (Remember the priority of God's work!) Lack of enthusiasm results in a lack of activity...then it is but a short time before there is the...C. Presence of Stagnation What am I talking about? A beautiful mountain stream or the stagnate sludge pit; both are water, H<sub>2</sub>O, but there is a vast difference! This can happen to a believer...so excited about their new life in Christ...but that enthusiasm begins to wane then they quit witnessing...quit reading their Bible...quit praying...quit coming to church! Did they lose their salvation? NO...they simply allowed themselves to burnout spiritually and are on the backslidden road! This is very dangerous for any child of God that's why it's so important to rely on other brothers and sisters in Christ. Let's look at another help....II. Partnership to Avoid Burnout Luke 5:1-11 - And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. 3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. 4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. 6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: 10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. 11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him. The word 'partners' is found twice in this passage. This word speaks of fellowship. It also speaks of being fellow laborers. Being a partner means being associated one with the other, a partaker, and companion one with the other. These men were partners in fishing, and now God is going to cause them to be partners in ministry as well.

Until next time, let your light shine for Jesus! Evangelist Mike Heltsley

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## **Battle For The First-Born**

Pastor Steven Huston

Luke 2:23, 25-26 “(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.”

When I was a child my dad would read the “Christmas story” from Luke 2:1-20 before we could open any presents. As we got older and heard this blessed account year after year, he would stop on occasion and we would “fill in the blanks.” It’s one of the Christmas traditions that my family has adopted. Often, they will fill in lengthier sections. This year, while I was reading the account and my own family was “filling in the blanks,” I felt led to read a bit further. I am really glad that I did. When I got to the verse at the top of this article, one of my family members asked me to read that verse again and questioned, “every first born male is called holy to the Lord?” I was able to explain that “holy” means “set apart for God.” God, by divine right, has laid claim to every first born male. Satan, God’s self-proclaimed enemy, wants your first-born, and particularly battles for your first-born male (Exodus 13:2, 12), because he sets out to steal all that belongs to God. I was able to explain to my son and his siblings how the devil uses various means to attract and distract, the importance of keeping our sights set on the Lord and walking in holiness, and the keeping power of God. He leads; will we follow? Look at just and devout Simeon in verses 25-35. The Holy Spirit was upon him; he was given a revelation that he wouldn’t die until he saw the Messiah; he was led by the Spirit to come to the temple at the time when Joseph and Mary brought the Christ-child; and he was given a blessing and a prophecy to share with this holy trio. Talk about the joys of obedience to the Spirit, can you imagine the emotion Simeon must’ve felt? Do you see how people can miss out on blessings by not following the leading of the Spirit. We closed out our “Christmas story” time with a word of prayer. I prayed for all who were there; but I prayed a special blessing of protection and purity over my son, asking the Lord to keep him from the evil one and his ways. Young men need to be prayed for; and just importantly, they need to hear our prayers for them. (This is true for ALL our children, grandchildren, godchildren, spouses, etc.) We had a good day with family and friends. As the day came to a close, after family devotions and the kids went to bed, the Spirit impressed something upon me. It’s a good thing to have family devotions and to share the Word with my children throughout the day as opportunity arises; but, the Bible calls men and women to TRAIN and INSTRUCT younger men and women in the ways of righteousness, godliness, and correct relationship. That means that I should be taking time to speak with my son specifically about the topics that Paul exhorted Titus to do. Titus is a short book of three chapters; you need to read it and take it to heart. I’m just going to share a few verses of it with you here—verses that relate to how I should specifically train my son, and those things that other Christian men should be training younger men to do and be. 2:1—sound doctrine—it’s not about what makes earthly sense or feels right; it’s about soundness according to the Word of God! 2:2—we are called to be “sober, grave, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience.” We can’t train others to something that we won’t live out in front of them. Some people think that to be sober means to avoid laughter or light-heartedness; but it actually means to “think clearly and live carefully. It means to keep a rein on our emotions in the midst of various circumstances. We must be serious-minded; yet, still show the joy of the Lord in our lives. As we train younger men, we must do so in love (charity) and in patience. 2:6-9 explains what we are to train these young men to be. (verses 3-5 deal with the fairer sex). I don’t have room to go into detail here; but let me focus on one phrase in verse 7, “In ALL things...” All means ALL! We don’t compartmentalize our lives. Men, more than most, need to realize and learn this. Our family relationships, the friends we choose, our work, entertainment, hobbies, ALL of our life needs to show a pattern of good works and in the following phrases as well. 2:9-10 explains to our sons and other young men what our relationship to our employers should look like. In today’s world our young men need to know that we are to be good and faithful workers. There is a lot to unpack in even these two verses; help him to understand. The end of verse 10 helps us to understand why all these things are important: “that [we] may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in ALL things.” Sound doctrine is to be lived out before all people and in all relationships like a crown humbly and boldly displayed for all to see—pointing to God. We wear and display this doctrine like a badge of honor. It’s our lives; but it’s all about God. This is the life of a true Christian. It’s no surprise that this section is introduced by a description of false witnesses: Titus 1:16 “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.” Let me close with an encouraging word. The remaining verses of Titus 2 explain that Jesus is the one who makes living out a life of sound doctrine possible. Go read it, live it, experience it, and give God glory in it.

Pastor Steven Huston - 103 N. Division Ave. Fremont, Michigan 49412



### Cookie Salad

- 4 to 6 large red apples
- 1 pound red grapes
- 1 (10oz) bag mini marshmallows
- 2 (16oz) tubs whipped topping
- 1 small package of cookies (oreos, chips ahoy, teddy grahams, etc.)
- 1 lemon

Slice apples into small cubes and place in bowl of lemon water to keep from going brown. Put grapes into large bowl (slice of leave whole which ever you prefer). Drain apples and add them to the grapes. Add whipping topping to the fruit. Add marshmallows to mixture and mix well. Crumble cookies on top of mixture and stir them in.

### Cheesy Potatoes

- 6 medium potatoes, cooked, peeled and sliced
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1 cup sour cream

Preheat oven to 350. Grease casserole dish. Toss all ingredients together until well incorporated. Bake for 1 hour or until potatoes are tender and golden brown on top.

Have a recipe you would like to share with our readers? Send it in using the contact information on the last page of this newsletter!

### Broccoli Cornbread Bake

- 2 boxes jiffy cornbread mix
  - 5 eggs
  - 2 cups cottage cheese
  - 1 cup onion, chopped
  - 1 1/2 cup butter, melted
  - 10 oz. broccoli, frozen or fresh steamed
- Preheat oven to 300. In medium bowl combine melted butter, cottage cheese, onion, and eggs. Stir in cornbread mix and broccoli. Put in lightly greased 9x13 baking dish. Bake for one hour.

### Stuffed Tomatoes

- 6 medium tomatoes

#### Stuffing

- 1 cup garlic/cheese croutons, crushed
- 2 Tbsp. parmesan cheese, grated
- 2 Tbsp. American or cheddar cheese, shredded
- 4 Tbsp. butter, melted
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- Fresh parsley, chopped

Preheat oven to 350. Hollow out a tunnel shaped hole in each tomato to make room for stuffing. In a medium bowl mix all stuffing ingredients together except parsley. Place tomatoes in baking dish. Spoon stuffing into tomatoes and sprinkle with parsley. Cover dish with aluminum foil to prevent over browning of the stuffing. Bake for 30 minutes.

### Party Cheese Ball

- 1 (8oz.) block cream cheese
  - 1/4 cup cheddar cheese, grated or fancy shredded
  - 1/4 cup Velveeta Mexican cheese shreds
  - 1/8 tsp onion, finely chopped
  - Pecans, finely chopped
- Mix together by hand cream cheese, cheddar cheese, Mexican cheese and onion. Form into a ball and roll in pecans. Chill and serve with crackers.



## **The Just For The Unjust**

Pastor Mike Vaughn

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: 1 Peter 3:18

A Roman soldier walked down a narrow corridor in a Roman prison. He held the torch up, and back in the shadows was a man. The guard opened the door and said, "Barabbas, get up and come with me." Barabbas began to plead, "No, wait, don't take me!! Have mercy!!" The Roman soldier said, "You're not going to die; there's some body else who's going to die in your place. Come here. Look over on that hill. That's the cross we made for you. But there's someone else on it. He has taken your place." Can you see in this story of Barabbas how God arranged a perfect picture of substitution? The just, dying for the unjust that He might bring us to Himself. We deserved judgment but He took it instead. We deserved to suffer grief, pain and death but He took our place. Isaac's substitute was the lamb caught in the thicket. Our substitute was the lamb of God on the cross, who came to take away the sin of the world. Let's rejoice that He was obedient unto death for your sake and mine.

You are loved with an everlasting Love, Mike

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## **A New Year's Plan**

I tried to think of a clever new phrase—

A slogan to inspire the next 365 days,

A motto to live by this coming New Year,

But the catchy words fell flat to my ear.

And then I heard His still small voice

Saying, "Consider this simple, daily choice:

With each new dawn and close of day

Make new your resolve to trust and obey."

"Don't look back, caught in regret

Or dwell on the sorrow of dreams unmet;

Don't stare forward anchored by fear,

No, live in this moment, for I Am here."

"I am all you need. Everything. I Am.

You are held secure by my strong hand.

Give me this one thing—your all in all;

Into my grace, let yourself fall."

So, at last, I'm ready; I see the way.

It's to daily follow, trust, and obey.

I enter the New Year armed with a plan,

To give Him my everything—all that I am.

*written by Mary Fairchild*



## **Greater Love Hath No Man Than This...**

*Author unknown*

John Harper was born to solid Christian parents on May 29th, 1872. It was on the last Sunday of March 1886, when he was thirteen years old that he confessed The Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of his life. He never knew what it was to "sow his wild oats." He began to preach about four years later at the ripe old age of 17 years old by going down to the streets of his village and pouring out his soul in earnest entreaty for men to be reconciled to God. As John Harper's life unfolded, one thing was apparent... he was consumed by the word of God. When asked by various ministers what his doctrine consisted of, he was known to reply "The Word of God!" After five or six years of toiling on street corners preaching the gospel and working in the mill during the day, Harper was taken in by Rev. E. A. Carter of Baptist Pioneer Mission in London, England. This set Harper free to devote his whole time of energy to the work so dear to his heart. Soon, John Harper started his own church in September of 1896. (Now known as the Harper Memorial Church.) During this time he had gotten married, but was shortly thereafter widowed. However brief the marriage, God did bless John Harper with a beautiful little girl named Nana. Ironically, John Harper almost drowned several times during his life. When he was two and a half years of age, he almost drowned when he fell into a well but was resuscitated by his mother. At the age of twenty-six, he was swept out to sea by a reverse current and barely survived, and at thirty-two he faced death on a leaking ship in the Mediterranean. Perhaps, God used these experiences to prepare this servant for what he faced next...It was the night of April 14, 1912. The RMS Titanic sailed swiftly on the bitterly cold ocean waters heading unknowingly into the pages of history. On board this luxurious ocean liner were many rich and famous people. At the time of the ship's launch, it was the world's largest man-made moveable object. At 11:40 p.m. on that fateful night, an iceberg scraped the ship's starboard side, showering the decks with ice and ripping open six watertight compartments. The sea poured in. On board the ship that night was John Harper, his sister and his much-beloved six-year-old daughter Nana. He was on his way to Chicago to preach a revival. According to documented reports, as soon as it was apparent that the ship was going to sink, John Harper immediately took his daughter and sister to a lifeboat. It is reasonable to assume that this widowed preacher could have easily gotten on board this boat to safety; however, it never seems to have crossed his mind. He bent down and kissed his precious little girl; looking into her eyes he told her that she would see him again someday. The flares going off in the dark sky above reflected the tears on his face as he turned and headed towards the crowd of desperate humanity on the sinking ocean liner. As the rear of the huge ship began to lurch upwards, it was reported that Harper was seen making his way up the deck yelling, "Women, children and unsaved into the lifeboats!" It was only minutes later that the Titanic began to rumble deep within. Most people thought it was an explosion; actually the gargantuan ship was literally breaking in half. At this point, many people jumped off the decks and into the icy, dark waters below. John Harper was one of these people. That night 1528 people went into the frigid waters. John Harper was seen swimming frantically to people in the water leading them to Jesus before the hypothermia became fatal. Mr. Harper swam up to one young man who had climbed up on a piece of debris. He asked him between breaths, "Are you saved?" The young man replied that he was not. Harper then tried to lead him to Christ only to have the young man who was near shock, reply no. John Harper then took off his life jacket and threw it to the man and said, "Here then, you need this more than I do..." and swam away to other people. A few minutes later Harper swam back to the young man and succeeded in leading him to salvation. Of the people that survived that night one of them was this young man on the debris. Four years later, at a survivors meeting, this young man stood up and in tears recounted how that after John Harper had led him to Christ. Pastor Harper had tried to swim back to help other people, yet because of the intense cold, had grown too weak to swim. His last words before going under in the frigid dark waters were, "Believe on the Name of the Lord Jesus and you will be saved." Does Hollywood remember this man? No. Oh well, no matter. This servant of God did what he had to do. While other people were trying to buy their way onto the lifeboats and selfishly trying to save their own lives, John Harper gave up his life so that others could be saved. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends..." John Harper was truly the hero of the Titanic!

*Author Unknown. Sources for this article: "The Titanic's Last Hero" by Moody Press 1997," John Climie, George Harper, & Bill Guthrie from "Jesus Our Jubilee Ministries" in Dallas, Oregon*



# A Word for TODAY!



**By Sister Michelle Deuling**

**Verse for Today:** John 14:1-4 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

**Additional passage for Today:** John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

**Thought for Today:** What are you doing today to prepare for eternity?

**Story for Today:** Marcy stretched out across her bed; her pillow under her while she clicked away at the keyboard of her laptop. She was making a list. Her youth group at church was preparing for a big fund raiser. This fund raiser would determine if they were going on an Holy Land Tour or just having a game night and pot luck! She really had her heart set on the tour. Maggie, Marcy and Senida had stayed up half the night coming up with a plan and it was Marcy's job to get it all recorded on spread sheets and to do lists. Earlier in the year, Caleb, the youth group president and Ben the Vice-President had mentioned the trip and some ideas for fund raisers but then had went on to sports events and the current youth activities. Ben had mentioned that they had at least 9 months before the deadline so there were more important things to do. As Secretary, Marcy had mentioned it at several of the following meetings but to no avail and now they were down to 6 weeks and lots of money to raise! Pastor Sam had preached a message from the passage in John 14:1-4 and while Marcy listened, her heart kept beating faster as she felt, more than heard, that God was addressing her problem, not only the Holy Land Tour, but the trip she, like all of us, would be making one day. She couldn't help shuddering as she realized how much work they needed to do quickly if they were going to make their deadline. She was getting the fund raisers organized and plans were falling in place. But, the spiritual battle seemed even more daunting. She knew that Christ had died for her to cleanse her from her sins. She knew that the cleansing was supposed to free her from the bondage of sin. She also knew that a changed heart would produce a changed life. Desires to please self would die and the desire to be about Her Father's business finishing the work He had prepared for her would be all consuming. Marcy quickly hit the buttons to open a blank page. She began organizing her thoughts as she wrote down things that she knew but had ignored before. She knew that reading her Bible was as important to her soul as eating food was to keeping her body healthy. She normally read her Bible. But, it seemed different today. Today it wasn't thought of as an obligation, something that she had to do, but rather an opportunity to learn a little more about her God and Saviour. She thought about her prayer life. Having been raised to thank God for her meals, she didn't often pray less than 3 times a day. Again though, she felt like prayer was something more than that. It was an opportunity to Focus on Christ and what He had accomplished. A time to express her love for her Creator and take the needs of family and friends to the one that could do something about them. It was an opportunity to ask God all the things she didn't understand about our crazy world and know that He would guide her to the answer that she needed. Marcy realized how little she had done to spread the good news and how she needed to come up with some creative ways to keep that mission at the front of her mind. Sharing the way to Jesus was much more important than a trip to Israel. This realization that she had made lists and plans of what to do down to the last detail for that trip to Israel, but had not prepared for the trip to Heaven or tried to help anyone else was suddenly very troubling. Looking over her list, Pastor Sam had a huge smile on his face. He couldn't wait to see her implement these plans.

**Questions for Today:** How about you, are you preparing for the day that you enter into the presence of God? Many of us make lists and organize agendas as we plan for a vacation or special outing, yet do we prepare as well in our daily walk as we journey to our eternal destination?

**Prayer for Today:** Heavenly Father, Please show us what we need to do to be prepared and help us to finish the work you have for us. In Jesus' Name we pray, AMEN



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### **The Cross Alone**

Evangelist Jimmy Swaggart

For the time is come that judgment must begin at the House of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them who obey not the Gospel of God? And if the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Pet. 4:17-18).

After the horror of 9/11/01, when the lives of some 4,000 Americans were snuffed out due to Muslim terrorism, two Preachers of my acquaintance were interviewed over Network Television. They were asked why the Lord allowed this to happen to America. Their answer was most interesting! Both agreed, "It is because of the homosexuals and the abortionists in this nation!" That is basely incorrect! While the two sins mentioned definitely are abominable, as should be overly obvious, that is not the problem in this country. According to the Word of God, the problem is the "House of God." The Church in America has failed, and failed miserably! The Gospel is little preached from behind fashionable pulpits. The Cross of Christ, the very heartbeat of Christianity, has been relegated to the dustbin of antiquated doctrines, no longer applicable, or so it is said, for this modern age. What I have just said is, in effect, the same as what Jesus said: "Verily I say unto you, that the Publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you" (Mat. 21:31). Jesus certainly wasn't condoning the sins of thievery and harlotry. What He was saying was that while the publicans and the harlots would repent, or at least some of them would, the religious leaders of Israel would not repent (Mat. 21:32). Judgment always begins with Believers, and pertains to their Faith, whether in the Cross or otherwise; the Cross alone is spared judgment, for there Jesus was judged in our place. If God will judge His Own, how much more will He judge the unredeemed? The Cross alone stays the Judgment of God. That must ever be understood. The modern Church in this country is little preaching the Gospel. If it was preaching the Gospel, i.e., "the Cross," which, as stated, alone stays the Judgment of God, then this nation would escape much punishment, and could very well have escaped the horror of 9/11/01. Because it is so important, let us say it again: If the Church faithfully preaches the Cross, most Judgment can be spared, for there Jesus was judged in our place. If the Cross is little preached, the nation is opened up for Judgment, and that's exactly what is happening! The Cross of Christ alone stands between man and eternal Hell. We must never forget that

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Ephesians 2:13-18

But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Galatians 6:14

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