



THE TRUMPET

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Voice of the LORD
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BEHOLD HE COMETH

These are days of restoration,
As the glorious time draws nigh,
When, "Behold! Behold, He Cometh!"
Shall re-echo through the sky:
Now His herald is proclaiming
In prophetic tones and strong
"OH, prepare ye! Be ye ready!
For the King shall come 'ere long."
We have waited for the dawning,
Often peering through the gloom
Of this night of sin and darkness,
But 'tis breaking very soon,
And our hearts are taking courage
As His message now we hear,
"OH prepare ye! Room for Jesus!"
He, the King, shall soon appear."

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18



Build Wisely!

George Whitten

According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. 1 Corinthians 3:10

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. His contractor was sorry to see such a good employee go, and asked him if he would build just one last house as a personal favor. The carpenter agreed but his heart was not in it. He resorted to bad workmanship and using cheap materials. When the carpenter finished his work, the contractor came over and handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "I appreciate all the hard work you've done for me all these years and I'd like you to have this house as a token of my gratitude." The carpenter was shocked! If only he had only known he was building his own house, he would have worked much harder! Now he owned a house that wasn't built very well. We should think of ourselves as carpenters, and our lives here on earth, as our house. Each day we hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall, we must build with care! It is the only life we will ever build. And what we do here will count for eternity! Our lives today are the result of our attitudes and choices in the past. Our lives tomorrow will be the result of our attitudes and the choices we make today! Let's proceed with caution.

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For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Luke 14:28

**CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH** by Thom Tapp**Cousin Leroy**

Leroy and the misses had gotten into a little spat and had been giving each other the silent treatment all day. Later that night Leroy realized that he would need his wife to wake him at 5 AM for work the next morning. Not wanting to be the first to break the silence (AND LOSE), he wrote on a piece of paper, "Please wake me at 5 AM." The next morning Leroy woke up, only to discover it was 9 AM and that he was late for work. Furious, he was about to go and see why his wife hadn't awoken him when he noticed a piece of paper by the bed. The paper said, "Hey Leroy, It's 5 AM. Wake up."

A Man of Few Words

"Your Honour, I want to bring to your attention how unfair it is for my client to be accused of theft. He arrived in New York City a week ago and barely knows his way around. What's more, he only speaks a few words of English." The Judge looked at the defendant and asked, "How much English can you speak?" The defendant looked up and said, "Give me your wallet!"

Dream

The school of agriculture's dean of admissions was interviewing a prospective student, "Why have you chosen this career?" he asked. "I dream of making a million dollars in farming, like my father," the student replied. "Your father made a million dollars in farming?" echoed the dean much impressed. "No," replied the applicant. "But he always dreamed of it."

The Monkey's Disgrace

(Author Unknown)

Three monkeys sat in a coconut tree,
Discussing things that are said to be;
Said one to the others, "Now listen you two,
There's a certain rumor that can't be true:
That man descended from our noble race,

The very idea is a disgrace!

"No monkey ever deserted his wife,
Starved her babies, and ruined her life;
And you've never known a mother monk,
To leave her babies with others to bunk,
Or pass them on from one to the other,
Till they scarcely know who is their mother.

"And another thing you'll never see,
A monk build a fence round a coconut tree,

And let the coconuts go to waste,
Forbidding all other monks to taste;

Why, if I put a fence around a tree,
Starvation will force you to steal from me!

"Here's another thing a monk won't do:

Go out at night and get in a stew,

Or use a gun, a club or a knife,

To take some other dumb monkey's life!

Yes, they can theorize and they can discuss
but, brother, he didn't descend from us!"



VOTL
Voice of the LORD

From the Pastor's Desk

Pastor Billy R. Douglas

Except YOU Abide in THE Ship YOU Cannot Be Saved!

Pastor Billy R Douglas

And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

Acts 27:30-32

This is the same scripture that we looked at last month. We talked of how the shipmen in fear and desperation in the midst of the storm were going to try and flee for their lives! And we talked about how this story shows us a great example of how it is in our life. More times than not when we find ourselves in the midst of a storm, in the heat of the fire we begin to try and figure out a way to deliver or save ourselves! The same can be seen when it comes to salvation as well. Simple faith does not make a lot of sense to the mind of man so what do we do? We begin to grab hold of things like religion, works, good deeds, the law! Thinking, surely these things can save. But in reality just as with the shipmen who were about to jump ship and get on the lifeboat...the lifeboat would not save them but rather would seal their doom! *"Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."* The same can be said today of our salvation...we were saved when we knelt in faith believing in what Jesus did on the old rugged cross AND we will stay saved the same way!! Except we abide in the cross we cannot be saved!! Our faith must remain constant and steadfast in what Jesus Christ did for us on the cross of Calvary! The moment we begin to look at others ways...OUR WAYS...our self help for salvation we will begin a journey that will lead us to destruction and loss! The mind of man works this way..."If I can be good enough", "If I can do enough works", or "If I can keep the law" surely that will make me good enough to be saved! To sum that up in 4 words my friend NO IT WILL NOT! If keeping the law was enough...if being good was enough...if it was possible for us to save ourselves than there would have been no reason for Calvary! Religion cannot save, good works cannot save, keeping the law cannot save! We must abide in the ship! We must ABIDE IN THE CROSS! Faith in the finished work that Jesus accomplished there! How do we do that? The same way that these shipmen would be saved. Faith in God's Word that had been given to Paul that the LORD was going to spare all of them that were with him but they had to abide in the ship! God's Word has promised us that if we will keep our faith in HIM we will survive the journey and cross over to the other side victorious over death and the grave! Philippians 3:9 "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is **through the faith of Christ**, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" We can look at the night the death angel came through Egypt. The LORD told Moses to tell the people to take the blood of a spotless lamb and apply it to the door posts of their homes. And that when He saw the blood He would pass over them and they would be spared! This promise did not work for anyone who went outside the house...they had to abide in the house where the blood had been applied! What if one of them thought "I am a really good person, I do not need that blood on my door posts"? Very simple...death would have paid them a visit! I am sure that there were some Egyptian people who were as "good" as some of the Israelites...especially after we see how Israel acted in the Wilderness. But their protection that night did not depend upon their goodness or their self righteousness it depended upon their faith and trust in what the LORD had told them...abide in the house where the blood has been applied and live! We could also look at Rahab when Joshua and Israel were about to take Jericho. She was told by the two spies to leave the scarlet thread hanging from her window. AND that when they took the city when they saw the scarlet thread all those IN her house would be spared. Joshua 2:19 "And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him." Suppose one of them thought "Scarlet thread? That's silly...I am a good person I am going to try something else. I am sure I will be fine" What would have happened? DEATH! And whose fault would it have been? "his blood shall be upon his own head"! My friend if we neglect the way of salvation that the LORD has already prepared we will have no one to blame but ourselves! If we trust in RELIGION, if we trust in WORKS, if we trust in the LAW, if we trust in SELF we will seal our own doom! Except we abide in the ship...except we abide IN THE CROSS we can not and will not be saved! Faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work not only saves us BUT keeps us saved...abide in the ship...keep your eyes and your faith upon Jesus! Until next time, Pastor Billy R Douglas



And His Name Shall Be Called...conclusion

Evangelist Mike Heltsley

Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations. 2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. 3 Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. 4 For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. 5 For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. Isaiah 9:1-7

2.COUNSELOR – to give advice, to purpose, to devise or plan, to conspire, to manage causes in court. He counsels me when my heart is troubled. He counsels me when my faith is tried. He counsels me when my integrity is tempted. He has the remedy for all my problems! He knows all because He is the COUNSELOR! His advice is always good, His counsel is always right, and His path is always safe. He makes no mistake nor does He turn from His divine purpose. Ask and ye shall receive! Do you know my Counselor? 3.THE MIGHTY GOD – strong, valiant, excelling, powerful, great, prevailing, authoritative, accomplished, extraordinary degree or quality in respect to size, character, importance, and consequences! That's my God! That's my Lord! He is mighty when I am weak. He is mighty when my enemy is strong! He is mighty when the winds and waves roll over my soul! He is mighty when the impossible becomes the probable. He is the Resource of my power! He can do anything at anytime, anywhere! When I have to "withstand in the evil day," He stands with me. When I have done all and must continue to stand, He stands with and for me. That's my MIGHTY GOD! With Him, I can fear no evil. With Him, I can face tomorrow. Do you know my Mighty God? 4.THE EVERLASTING FATHER – eternal in duration, never coming to an end, a beggetter, a parent, the founder of a family, the head of the home, important, distinguished! As a Father, He loves me. As a Father, He has pity upon me. As a Father, He directs me. As a Father, He corrects me. As a Father, He protects me. As a Father, He provides for me. As a Father, He will never leave nor forsake me! Do you know my Father? 5.THE PRINCE OF PEACE – of the highest rank, in the highest place, of the highest authority, He is the Sovereign, He is the Monarch, He is the Authority, He is the Son of a King, He is of royal blood, He is of great ancestry, there is no one like Him, He is of highest rank, He is the Head of the Church, He is preeminent, He is predominant. He brings stillness to my troubled soul. He brings rest in restlessness. He brings hope in hopelessness. He brings victory out of defeat. He is the Fairest of Ten Thousand to my soul! There were none before Him. There will be none after Him. He is the Manifestation of Peace. He is the Minister of Peace. He is the Master of Peace. Do you know Prince of Peace? He truly is indescribable! He is the "I AM THAT I AM!" TO THE ARCHITECT HE IS THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE. TO THE ASTRONOMER HE IS THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR. TO THE BUTCHER HE IS THE LAMB OF GOD WHO WAS SLAIN BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THIS WORLD. TO THE BAKER HE IS THE LIVING BREAD. TO THE CARPENTER HE IS THE MASTER BUILDER. TO THE DIPLOMAT HE IS THE PRINCE OF PEACE. TO THE DOCTOR HE IS THE GREAT PHYSICIAN. TO THE EDUCATOR HE IS THE MASTER TEACHER. TO THE ELECTRICIAN HE IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. TO THE FARMER HE IS THE LORD OF THE HARVEST. TO THE FLORIST HE IS THE LILY OF THE VALLEY AND THE ROSE OF SHARON. TO THE GEOLOGIST HE IS THE ROCK OF AGES. TO THE HORTICULTURIST HE IS THE TRUE VINE. TO THE JEWELER HE IS THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. TO THE JUDGE HE IS THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE. TO THE LAWYER HE IS THE CHIEF ADVOCATE. TO THE PHILOSOPHER HE IS THE WISDOM OF GOD. TO THE PUBLISHER HE IS GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY. TO THE SCULPTOR HE IS THE LIVING STONE. TO THE THEOLOGIAN HE IS AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH. TO THE ZOOLOGIST HE IS THE LION OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH. IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, HE'S THE BREAD OF LIFE. IF YOU'RE THIRSTY, HE'S THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATER. IF YOU'RE BLIND, HE'S THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. IF YOU'RE LOST, HE'S THE WAY. IF YOU'RE CONFUSED, HE'S THE TRUTH. IF YOU'RE DYING, HE'S THE LIFE. He is WONDERFUL - He is my DELIGHT He is THE COUNSELLOR - He is my DIRECTION He is THE MIGHTY GOD - He is my DEITY He is THE EVERLASTING FATHER - He is my DEFENDER He is THE PRINCE OF PEACE- He is my DIFFERENCE

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**Awake! AWAKE!! Pt. 3**

Pastor Steven Huston

“Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.” Psalms 57:8

Are you awake or are you asleep? I'm not talking about you sitting here with your eyes wide open and reading this article; I mean, are you really spiritually awake or are you asleep regarding your soul? J.C. Ryle once said that “Conversion is not putting a man in an arm-chair and taking him easily to heaven. It is the beginning of a mighty conflict in which it costs much to win the victory.” The one sitting in an easy chair is often either asleep or sleepy; the concern for his soul, or the souls of others, is minimal at best. So, are you awake or are you asleep? Do you recognize your need of a vital and active relationship with mankind's only Saviour, Jesus the Messiah? Do you understand and strive for holy and faithful living? Do you feel the sinfulness of sin, no matter how “small”? Are you awake to how these things affect your soul or are you asleep to the condition of your soul? In January we discussed the fact that if self-professed believers were not asleep they would feel for the unsaved. However, they would not merely feel for them but be burdened enough to act on their behalf—praying diligently and fervently for them, actually warning them of the divine and righteous judgment of God which will eternally torment them, and urgently share the gospel truth with them, that they might escape such everlasting damnation as awaits those who refuse the grace and sacrifice of Jesus. Last month we learned that those professing Christians who are not asleep are more awake and alive to sense and see the dangers lurking to attack their own soul. One needs only look at the parable of the four soils (Matt. 13), the letters of Jesus to the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3, or a host of other Scriptures which warn the church of the many pitfalls that Satan lays out for the unsuspecting, sleepy believer. Remember Jesus' advice to His disciples, “Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation.” (Matt. 26:41) Here we are in March, where eventually spring begins to open her sleepy eyes and awake to warmer days, becoming sensible to the thawing sun, the stirring of animals and insects, and farmers getting ready to begin their crops. As the earth begins to awake from her cold hibernation, I pray that you, dear Reader, will begin to awake more fully to the eternal plight of others, your own soul's dangers, and, in line with spring thinking, becoming more fruitful in good works. Please understand two things from the start: 1) If professing Christians were awake they would be more fruitful in good works. And 2) These works are not to earn salvation, they are an evidence of salvation already obtained by our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. We don't do good works because we hope to garner better favor with God; we do them out of obedience and because we love our Divine Bridegroom and desire to present them in loving adoration to Him. Throughout Scripture the believer is compelled to do good works. James tells us that without works our faith (alone) is dead—those works are an evidence of our faith (2:14-26). In Titus 2 we read that true believers are redeemed from all iniquity, purified, and zealous of good works (11-15). Paul taught the Ephesians that we are saved by grace through faith, but that we are also called to walk in good works in Christ (Eph. 2:8-10). Actually, God has foreordained that we would walk in them. Again, these works do not save you; your desire for them—loving to serve the Saviour—is an evidence of your salvation. Instead of hoarding up “treasure” here on earth that will pass away, we should be awake, availing ourselves to the many opportunities to store up and increase our wealth in the heavenly realm. Are you awake to your eternal realities? If you are a slumbering Reader, AWAKE! You cannot afford to sleep even one more hour! The longer we ignore the nudging of the Spirit to come out of our slumber, the more it becomes all but impossible to stir you. As one whom the cold has overtaken loses his sensibility, falling into a deadly sleep; so also, those who will not awake will certainly fall into an eternal damnation. As you sleep, you may be dreaming of heaven, but is Christ in you? If not, then you haven't the sense of sound judgment; you are reprobate! “You may have many natural virtues that secure you commendation from men; but if you are lukewarm in your affections, you are miserable though you know it not.” (B.T. Roberts If you are unconverted, AWAKE! If you've felt the working of God within your heart, but remain insensible to the eternal plight of the wicked, the dangers of your own soul, or have no zeal to good works in Christ, AWAKE, AWAKE! Listen to and respond with repentance to the voice of God:

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” (Isaiah 55:7)

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



Reesie's Recipes



Pineapple Fluff

- 1 (3.4 oz.) vanilla instant pudding mix
- 1 (20 oz.) can crushed pineapple (do not drain)
- 1 (8 oz.) container COOL WHIP, thawed
- 2 cups mini marshmallows
- 1 cup shredded sweetened coconut, optional
- ½ cup chopped pecans

In a large bowl, stir together pudding mix and the entire can of crushed pineapple. Gently stir in COOL WHIP, marshmallows, coconut and nuts. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Chill for a couple of hours before serving.

Sausage & Cream Cheese Quiche

- 1 (9-inch) frozen deep dish pie crust
- 8-oz sausage (Jimmy Dean or Tennessee Pride)
- 4-oz cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup heavy cream or milk
- dash black pepper
- 2 Tbsp sour cream
- Preheat oven to 350.

In a skillet, cook sausage until no longer pink. Drain fat. Combine cooked sausage and cream cheese. Drop crumbles of sausage mixture in bottom of pie crust. Top with shredded cheddar cheese. Whisk together eggs, pepper, sour cream, pepper and cream. Pour egg mixture over sausage and cheese mixture in pie crust. Bake 1 hour. Allow quiche to rest for 5-10 minutes before serving.

Millionaire Bars

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoon corn starch
- 1 cup salted butter 2 sticks, room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg room temperature
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 cup toffee bits I used Heath
- 3/4 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans optional
- 1 14 ounce can sweetened condensed milk

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9" square pan with foil and spray with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and cornstarch. Set aside. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar together until light and fluffy, about 2-3 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla and beat until combined. On low speed, gradually add the flour mixture and mix until combined. Scoop the dough into prepared pan, and using a layer of plastic wrap, press the dough evenly into the pan. Lift and move the plastic wrap around as necessary to get the dough evenly pressed into the pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool for about 5 minutes. Layer the toffee chips, then chocolate chips evenly over the crust. Top with pecans, if using. Drizzle the sweetened condensed milk evenly over the entire surface. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until top is bubbly and deep golden brown over the entire surface. You want to insure the milk has had time to really caramelize, but you don't want to over bake your shortbread. Allow to cool completely in pan for cleanest cuts. Remove from pan using foil liner. Peel off foil and cut into squares.

Stuffed Pepper Casserole

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 2 green peppers, coarsely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups cooked long-grain white rice
- 1 jar (24 oz.) OLIVO by CLASSICO Traditional Pasta Sauce
- 1-1/2 cups KRAFT Shredded Italian* Five Cheese with a TOUCH OF PHILADELPHIA, divided
- Heat oven to 350°F. Brown meat with peppers and garlic in large skillet; drain. Return meat mixture to skillet; stir in rice, pasta sauce and 3/4 cup cheese. Spoon into 2-qt. casserole sprayed with cooking spray; top with remaining cheese. Bake 25 min. or until heated through.



Abide In The Vine

Pastor Mike Vaughn

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing" John 15:4-5

Consider this fact, You will never see a fruit factory. You will see factories that makes clothing, cars, and electronics, but not fruit. Fruit is grown in an orchard. It is dependent upon life. There is no fruit without life. Fruit must have the proper climate and nutrients to grow and ripen. Just like we can't grow bananas in Alaska, we can't grow and produce the fruit of the Spirit unless we're in the place where the Spirit can produce fruit in us. And that place is abiding In Christ. " He that abideth In me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit:..John 15:5 Our life is In Christ. He is the vine and we are the branches. We we're created to bear fruit.

Galatians 5:22-25 shows us the fruit that Christ desires to grow and develop in our lives.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

You are loved with an everlasting Love.

Good News Fellowship Tickfaw, LA - www.mvmgoodnews.com

Stay in the Race

Pastor Don Ragsdale

2 Tim. 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

Thayers says perilous means hard to do, to take, to approach hard to bear, troublesome, dangerous harsh, fierce, savage Which originates from the idea of reducing the strength. Strong's Definition: Perhaps from G5465 through the idea of reducing the strength; difficult, that is, dangerous, or (by implication) furious: - fierce, perilous.

The signs of the times is those who once believed but began to grow weary or faint because of the intense opposition and rejection of acceptance over the truth. These will begin to bow for unity, love and peace but will forsake truth to avoid persecution. Yet resistance can either cause us to quit or cause us to fight the good fight of Faith, fighting to stay in the Faith rather than departing from it, however the choice is ours as to where we keep our Faith for from there will determine whether we'll be still standing, or falling away because every house will either be built upon the Rock Christ Jesus or Sinking sand. Hard times are just before us here in America like we've never seen before and the powers of darkness are on the rise attempting to get believers to quit believing or to move their Faith to something else. But now is not the time to quit believing, no now is the time to be more Determined than ever to keep your Faith in the Cross, for perilous times are near. Hebrews 12:1-3 1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Word of the Cross Ministries 7134 Church Road West Walls, Mississippi 38680

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7



Occupy Til I Come

Pastor Oswald Smith

Luke 19:12-13 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them,
Occupy till I come.

Jesus had been to Jerusalem a number of times, beginning when He was a child. But, this time was different. He would be mocked and rejected, then suffer and die for our sins, the Lamb of God taking away the sins of the world. Because some of His listeners thought the kingdom of God would soon appear, Jesus spoke this parable to them. The meaning is clear. He would soon be leaving for a "far country" and would one day "return." As He departed, He would disperse His resources to His "servants" with a simple command: "Occupy till I come." Thank God for the incarnation, sinless life, vicarious death, and bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is salvation in none other. Today our Lord is seated in Heaven, but one day He will return. The return of Jesus Christ is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith. Christians in the first century looked for the return of Christ. For two thousand years, believers have anticipated our Lord's return. Paul wrote to Timothy that there was a crown of righteousness laid up for those who "love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:8). Jesus is coming back. All indications show that He could come at any moment. We look forward to our being united with our Lord and loved ones who have gone before. We look forward to being free from this world of sin and our sinful flesh. In the meantime, what should we be doing? The Lord's Word is clear: we are to occupy until He comes. To occupy means "to be busy, to busy ourselves with the responsibilities given to us." Until the Lord Jesus Christ returns, we are to continue to be busy about the business He entrusted to us. He has given each of us gifts and abilities to use for His work. We all do not have the same gifts or assignments, but all of us are equipped to serve Him. All are to be busy until He comes. There are many who talk, with apparent interest, in matters concerning the return of Christ; and yet they are not busy serving Him. There are others who served Him at one time, but have ceased to do so, for one reason or another. By the grace of God, we are to obey His command and occupy until He comes.

On the Wings of a Prayer

By Helen Steiner Rice

Just close your eyes and open your heart,
And feel your worries and cares depart.
Just yield yourself to the Father above,
And let Him hold you secure in His love.

So when you are tired, discouraged and blue,
There is always one door that is open to you.
And that is the door to The House of Prayer,
And you'll find God waiting to meet you there.

And The House of Prayer is no further away,
Than the quiet spot where you kneel and pray.
For the heart is a temple when God is there,
As we place ourselves in His loving care.

And He hears every prayer and answers each one,
When we Pray in His name - Thy will be done.
The burdens that seemed too heavy to bear,
Are lifted away on the wings of a prayer.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matthew 11:28-30



A Word for TODAY!



By Sister Michelle Deuling

Verse for Today: Romans 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

Additional passages for Today: Colossians 3

Thought for Today: To Live or to Die

Story for Today: Gabe blew out the candles and opened his eyes. He looked out into the happy eyes of all the smiling well wishers. Everyone seemed to be full of joy and happiness. Today he was celebrating his golden birthday. Today it hit him that he wasn't immortal. For 20 years he had lived his life to please himself and he hadn't cared what anyone else thought. It wasn't until just recently that his conscience had begun to trouble him. He realized that no matter how crazy he got, or how much fun he tried to buy, nothing ever seemed to satisfy. He was never happy beyond the moment and sometimes even during the "fun" he wasn't enjoying himself. He tried doing crazier and crazier things; extreme sports and dare-devil adventures, but he only found himself in danger while never feeling fulfilled. Gabe had heard about God while growing up but lived in a family that didn't give religion much thought. He went to Sunday School as a child and he knew his Grandma Jenkins never missed a Sunday. But, as he got older at first watching sports on TV and playing video games had taken precedence and then high school sports seemed to keep him too busy to think about God or anything religious. He knew a few kids from school that were "churchy" kids, but often they seemed to be stuck up or bent on never having any fun. Reflecting on his life as he ate his cake and ice cream, Gabe thought it rather depressing to think that this was all there was to life. He wanted something more! Surprisingly, Abbey Thomas came to mind; Now she was one girl that he knew who liked to have fun, as long as it was clean fun, but seemed to be more than just happy. She seemed to know the secret to real fulfillment. Later that day, Gabe gave Abbey a call. She agreed to meet him for coffee and answer as many of his questions as she could. By the end of the first hour, Gabe understood that Abbey's happiness was not dependent on her circumstances. She had dedicated her life to God and the joy of knowing that Jesus loved her and had willingly sacrificed His life so that she wouldn't have to suffer the wrath of God; that he had taken her punishment for the wickedness that she had been born with and now she was considered righteous and that her love for God made her want to do good and please Him rather than herself. She explained that doing righteous things as God gave her opportunity, she was blessed and had such joy and an overwhelming sense of fulfillment and purpose that no matter what was going on in her life, she remained happy and joyful. She told him that no matter how many reckless things he did, he would never find the joy that she experienced just from having a personal relationship with God. Her walk of faith wasn't something available to only a few, it was available to all that would confess that Jesus was the son of God and chose to repent of their sins and let Him be Lord of their life. She explained that living after the flesh would lead to destruction. Many people that put sports, education, work and relationships before God found that they never found true joy; they ended up hurt with injuries from the very things they thought they loved. The fame only lasted a short time and knowledge didn't fill up the lonely hours, many even ended friendship or suffered the loss of children when their marriages ended in divorce. Abbey was able to show many examples of people that didn't let the flesh control them and how that made it where they had truly wonderful lives that pleased God and brought fulfillment to them. She even showed how many of them were able to use their gifts and abilities for God allowing them to live righteously with complete contentment. Gabe had a lot to think about...

Questions for Today: How about you? Have you been pleasing your flesh rather than living righteously? Many of us forget that we are to crucify the flesh daily. Don't allow it to control us, be controlled by God. Let him have your heart, mind, body and soul. Live this day and each day to come to please Him. Choose LIFE!



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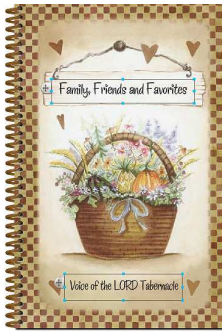
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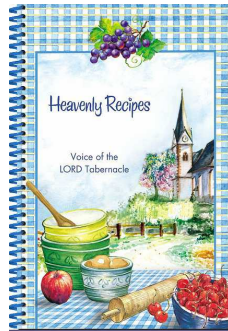
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