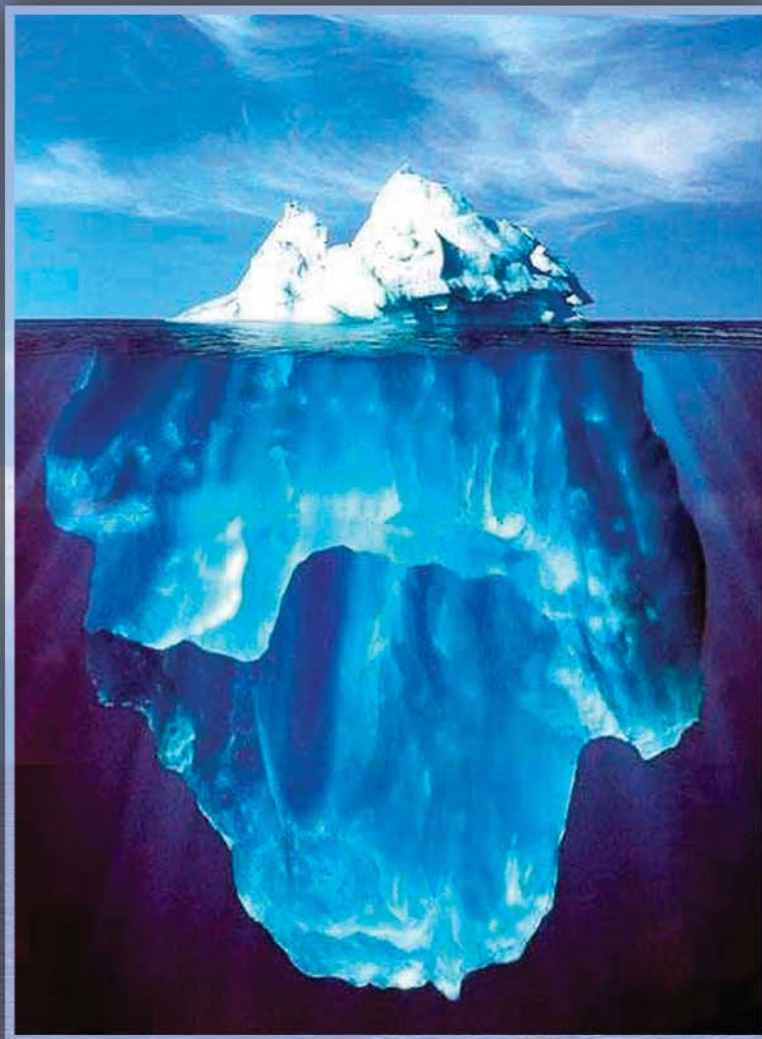


The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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... is Sober Reality

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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The **Deadly Devices** of a **Sleeping Prophet**

Originally "The Peril of Spiritual Maturity"
by George B. Duncan
Printed in 1947

Will you turn with me to 1 Kings 13—a passage of Scripture that may not be very well-known; for I want to consider with you some aspects of failure in Christian living which are peculiarly the peril of those who have grown older in Christian experience, and to do so against the background of this story. And if we want a text to focus our thought at the beginning, we shall take it from verse 11, "Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel...."

May I begin by saying that I know perfectly well that age

has its prerogatives. There are some things that age has that youth can never have. I think, for instance, of the wealth of experience that age alone can enjoy. I suppose that most of us know what it is to meet older Christians who are rich in experience, who have a wealth of memory that makes them seem rich indeed; veterans of many battlefields and conquests; men and women who have walked a long way with God. They have a maturity of judgment, a knowledge of life and of the Bible, a knowledge of God, that seem to make the

problems that baffle and perplex us quite simple, and enable them to avoid the mistakes that those of us who are younger so easily make. In this wealth of experience they have a prerogative over youth: and also, I believe, in *the work of encouragement*. Many of us can recall meeting Christians the wealth of whose experience has humbled us, for those same men and women have accomplished a work of encouragement which has helped us along. And how humbly grateful we shall ever be for that ministry and that

memory, that set our feet steadfastly on the way.

But while age and experience have their prerogatives, they also have their *perils*: and it is to these that I want to turn your thought. Years ago I heard a Christian say, "Few Christians end well." You

The Lethargy That Marked His Service

Here was a man who had spiritually very nearly come to a standstill. Note the inaction into which he had settled

In your consecration you were once fastidiously careful: your standards were high, almost intolerably so, in your separation to Christ from the world...but it cost so much to maintain that standard, and you grew so weary, and so wise, that slowly and almost imperceptibly the world has encroached...

know, if that is true, then it is more than ever vital that the experienced Christian who so rightly thinks "he standeth," should "take heed lest he fall." May I add very humbly that I address these words as much to myself as to anyone who has been a servant of Jesus Christ for more than a few years, for it is more than twenty-one years since I led my first evangelistic mission, and I am beginning now to think of some of the perils that the passing of the years can bring.

Let us turn, then, and look into the mirror of God's Word and see there ourselves: and as we read I want to remind you that age is a relative term, and God's Word may come to those who are not so very old, but older than others. So let us look at this old prophet who dwelt in Bethel. And first I want to note with you what I call—

down. Bethel, where he lived, was the scene of Jeroboam's sin—the setting up of false religion, served by false priests. The details are found in the closing verses of the previous chapter. The action of the king was to become proverbial and legendary in the history of Israel: for Jeroboam was the king "who made Israel to sin." The motive of Jeroboam's sin was political expediency; the action, one of spiritual apostasy. And in the face of this challenge, the old prophet was silent. He had nothing to say, and said nothing. Why was this? Why had this lethargy settled down across his service for God? Was it because of weariness? He had fought through many battles in the past: he just could not rouse himself for yet another battle: this time he would leave it to others to fight. Or perhaps it

was worldly wisdom for he had a family to look after, and it would not do to incur disfavour in high places. Would it matter if he compromised just this once, and let this thing pass unrebuked? Well, whatever the reasons, the silence remained unbroken, the message unspoken, and the servant of God remained at home.

I want to ask, is this, perchance, true of you? Is your pace slowing down? Spiritually, vitally, you have very nearly come to a halt and a standstill? There was a time when no one was keener than you in the ministry of prayer. In your own prayer-life you prayed with some purpose. In the prayer life of your church, you could always be relied upon: Your prayer meant so much to the church, to God, to the minister, to yourself. But in your praying you have slowed down; and for weeks, for months, it may be for years, "the old prophet" has come almost to a halt in his prayer-life.

In your consecration you were once fastidiously careful: your standards were high, almost intolerably so, in your separation to Christ from the world...but it cost so much to maintain that standard, and you grew so weary, and so wise, that slowly and almost imperceptibly the world has encroached, and as far as consecration is concerned, you have almost forgotten the meaning of the word.

What about your service? How desperately keen you were; how unashamedly you used to go out for the conver-

sion of others—and you saw them converted. But that has all stopped now: you are not interested in that; you do not toil for that; you do not labour for that; you do not preach for that; you do not suffer for that as once you did. You are a Christian still; you are a prophet still; you still hold office—you are a deacon; you are an elder; you are a Sunday-school teacher, you are a member of a committee, a chairman of a committee, you are a minister, you are a bishop, a missionary, a Christian parent: you are holding office. Listen, all the spiritual vitality has been drained out of it, and there is a lethargy upon your service, and you have come to a halt, and you are at a standstill. Your testimony? You have none. Your usefulness has practically gone. You are holding on to a position; you have a rank to which you have ceased to have the spiritual right.

The Inaction Into Which He Had Settled

And then I want you to notice the intrusion by which he was startled. The lethargy which was upon the life of this old prophet was suddenly, rudely startled; the silence which he had been careful to maintain was suddenly, sharply broken. His sons rushed in to tell him of the dramatic event; that the king himself had been officiating at the high place that very day, and

the man of God, a young man of Judah, had dramatically interrupted the service. The curse of God had been pronounced against the altar; and the king, violently angry, had caused the instant arrest of the man of God and he had been struck immediately by the hand of God in judgment. Then a cowed and frightened king had pleaded for mercy, before a rent altar, amid the smoke of the scattered ashes. A cringing and conciliatory monarch had offered hospitality and rewards—to find his offer treated with contempt. What had been the words of the man of God from Judah, to the king? “If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for so was it charged me by the word of the Lord.” The long silence had been broken, and like a sudden peal of thunder out of a leaden and sullen sky, the voice of God had spoken; and with glowing faces the sons of the old prophet ended their breathless story, while the old man watched and listened

What was it that turned their glowing faces into puzzled wonderment? Was it the sudden, stabbing realization that what had just happened should have happened long ago? And that the man who should have done it was not the man of God from Judah, but the old prophet, their father, to whom they now told their story—across whose face consternation and anger now chased each other, until finally a burning sullen anger settled

there, and the man who had been inactive so long, stung into action, demanded, “Where did that man of God go?”

The Intrusion by Which He Was Startled

All I know is this, that again and again, where the lethargy of our service has slowed down to inaction, when an intrusion comes to startle us into amazement and into anger—when a minister comes to the church with a flaming heart; a son or a daughter is converted in their Christian home to God, and with passionate devotion they give their all to Christ; when a man or a girl joins the fellowship of the church with heart afire for God; a Christian comes into the office, a new nurse starts her training in the hospital, a new curate joins the staff—and the silence is broken. The lethargy is startled into alarm. God begins to speak directly; where there was a comfortable security and quietness. All is disturbed and confused. And the “old prophet,” amazed, alarmed, angry, is stirred to action at last. Is there an old prophet listening to me now? Spiritually you have come to a halt. Has somebody come into your life? Has the voice of God spoken? Worse followed, for the lethargy that marked the service of the old prophet was replaced by what I call—

The Animosity That Seared His Spirit

Here we face the tragic fact that the man who took no action at all against the deeds of Jeroboam, became passionately and angrily active against the man of God. One of the things that appals me, that shames me, is just this very thing: the ceaseless animosity of Christian against Christian. You find it in churches, you find it in fellowships, you find it on mission stations, you find it in societies, you find it wherever you find Christians: and the tragedy is that those involved are very, very seldom youngsters in the faith. Children do not normally kill children. Men kill men. You do not find it in the Sunday-school, you do not find it among the young people in the Youth Fellowship. You do not find it among the confirmation candidates. You find it at a higher level. You find it among the older Christians, in your deacons' court, among your elders, in your kirk session; you find it among you clergy and ministers, in your committees, among your Sunday-school teachers, in Christian parents; you find it in the "old prophet." This is where you find it: the animosity that sears the spirit.

Then you find that those who have ceased to be active in the vital things of God against the enemy of souls are tirelessly active against the "men of God." Why? Why was this old prophet roused to action—not against the false worship of

Jeroboam: he did not do a thing about that. Why was he roused to action against the faithful servant of Jehovah? I think, first of all, because of a pride that would not be humbled. The man's pride was hurt to the quick. The man who remained unmoved when Gods' name was dishonoured, was stung to the quick when his own actions were condemned. The security and comfort he had gained by compromising his loyalty had been treated with contempt by another. The standards that he had lowered by his slackness had been raised again to the mast by the zealotry of the man of God. The silence he had so carefully maintained had been broken. The message he had ceased to declare had been declared by another. Everything he knew he should have been, and had failed to be, the man of God from Judah had been. And as his own sons told the story of it all, they told the story of his own condemnation; and his pride hated it. A man in his position, a man of his age, a man of his experience, being condemned, being judged! He had been weighed in the balances, and found wanting. Not explicitly, for the man of God from Judah had not said a word about him: but he had been condemned implicitly. He sensed it as he listened to the story told by his own sons. He saw it in the glow that had been kindled, and still shone, on their faces. His imagination ran riot as he followed the telling of the story in a thousand homes in Bethel that day; and with the telling he would have been called "the

old prophet, the man who had done nothing, the man who had lowered his standards, the man who had compromised..." Condemned! Condemned... and he hated it.

Have you got a pride that will not be humbled? Oh, his wounded, resentful pride writhed and twisted with the pain of it all, until the focus of all the hate and all the hurt was found in a purpose that would not be halted—to find the man, and somehow to bring him down; to bring him down to his own level, and to make him swallow those words of contempt, "Neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place," making himself out to be better than the old prophet—for he had been eating bread and drinking water there for these years and months past. So the purpose was formulated and pursued until he found the man of God.

Tell me, are you more active against the people of God than against the enemies of God? Are you? Is it possible? Do you write more, do you talk more, do you think more, do you plan more, against the servants of God, than His enemies? Do you? I'll tell you why. Because the life of somebody has condemned you. Not verbally, but implicitly. Am I speaking to some parents and your child's love for Jesus Christ condemns your lack of love? Am I speaking to some minister, and the zeal of someone in your church condemns you lack of it? Am I speaking to some Christian worker, and your compromising with the world is condemned by the

consecration of your colleague; some clerk or typist, some nurse, and you silence is condemned by the witness of that new girl; some missionary, and the standard of your devotion to Jesus Christ—or lack of it—is condemned by another? Tell me, have you got a pride that will not be humbled? You have come to Keswick, but in your heart you are pursuing some devilish purpose to bring that one down by fair means or foul, that they too may come under condemnation, for having dared to suggest that you, with your position, with all your experience, and at your age, that you were wrong?

Listen, dear brother, very briefly as I close. You and I have been looking into the mirror of God's truth in the light of this "old prophet." We have seen the lethargy that marked his service, the animosity that seared his spirit; note finally—

The Tragedy That Crowned His Success

For the old prophet succeeded. And listen: you too can succeed. Parent, you can take the love of your child for Christ, that love, that burden for souls, and you can kill that. Brother minister, you can temper all the burning zeal of that young fellow, and quench it. Christian worker, you can lower the standards of that other young person, you can silence that fresh and artless testimony. You can. The old prophet did. And to do

it, you will use the weapon of the tongue. And with a blend of friendliness, a touch of authority, a suggestion of divine guidance, with his tongue the old prophet—are you listening?—*he lied*. And as he spoke, he knew he lied. You, too, can use your tongue—one of the most powerful and deadly things we possess. That is why it is one of the touchstones of Christian maturity: "if any man offend not in word (in tongue), the same is a perfect man." You can

used. It was the weapon the devil used when he said to our first parents, "Ye shall not surely die!"

The weapon he used: and the wreckage he saw...for he brought the young man to the path of disobedience. He brought him into the path of danger. He brought him to the place of death. For suddenly, a leap from the lion, a moment of agony, and a life of usefulness was over—the tragedy that crowned his success.

Tell me, are you more active against the people of God than against the enemies of God? Is it possible? Do you write more, do you talk more, do you think more, do you plan more, against the servants of God, than His enemies? I'll tell you why. Because the life of somebody has condemned you.

go on talking persistently: you can speak authoritatively, you can even use the language of spirituality; and in the use of your tongue you can lie. And even as you are claiming that what you say is right, you know in your heart that you are lying.

The old prophet knew that he lied. Is there some older Christian here, and you are—am I being hard?—in your dealings with the young, whoever it is, with that other servant of God, whether flagrantly, whether obviously, or whether rather cleverly and with just a tinge of suggestion, you are a liar, and you know it. The weapon you used was the weapon the old prophet

You see, he did succeed. And one of the supreme tragedies of age is that when we succeed, we kill somebody's devotion and surrender. We succeed, and we slay. Old prophet, how many lives of usefulness have you ended? The life of one of your children? A member of your church? Somebody on the mission station? Somebody who came under you authority? You lied, and you slew. Old prophet, is there somebody you have not killed yet, but are planning to? Come, stand for just one moment as we close, by the wreckage of the life you led to destroy. Can you see the face, as

continued on page 11



Abiding in the Vine

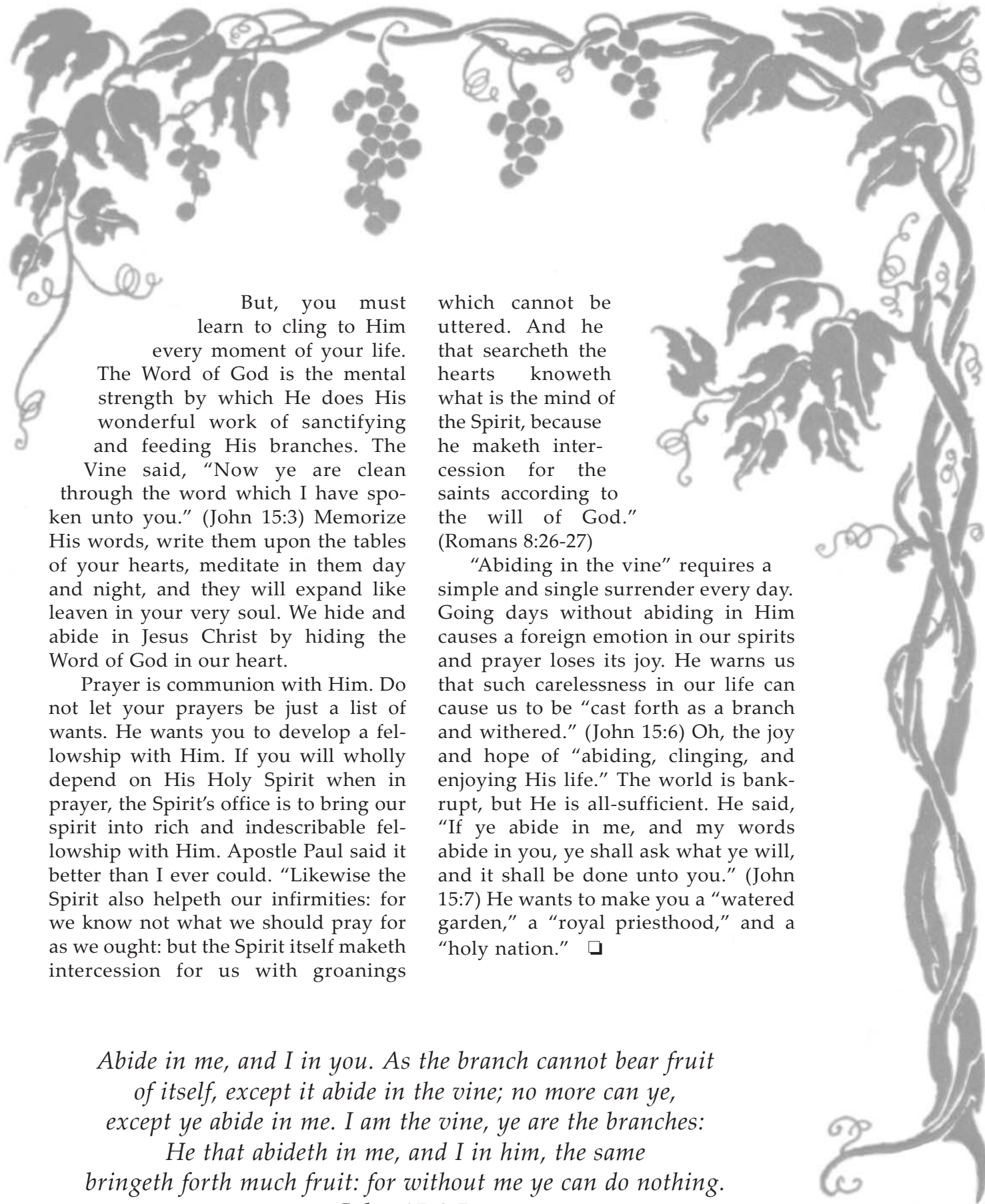
by Joseph Chambers

TTrue Christianity is the “Christ-filled life.” We are not redeemed because we know He is the Son of God; the devil knows that. Receiving His life supernaturally into our very person and spirit redeems us. It all begins when we are “born again.” It’s the greatest miracle in all of human experiences. The unsaved individual is dead in trespasses and sins and totally incapable of redeeming his or herself. There must be an act of God’s Spirit fully outside of the individual and completely beyond human powers. The Gospel of John said it best in these following words, “But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” (John 1:12)

If you will simply surrender all you are to Him and a completely rest with faith in Him, He will come to cleanse and abide by His Spirit. Now, you are His disciple and friend and He wants to infuse you with Himself every moment of your life. Listen as He explains what He wants to do in your life. “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) He said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” It is the branches that are so beautiful on a vine. His beauty is hidden from the naked eye, but His branches manifest forth that beauty. The fruit that flows from the vine and is revealed on the branches is love, joy, and peace, etc. It is a beauty the branch can never know of itself.

The enemy wants to make your Christian life an external list of endless rules with no compulsion from within. Jesus Christ is the Vine and he wants to so flood you with His righteousness that purity and separation of lifestyle flows from the transformed center of your heart. The enemy’s fruit is self-righteousness, but Jesus’ fruit is Holiness. The enemy’s fruit creates a hard face, but His fruit “beautifies the meek with salvation.” (Psalms 149:4) The enemy’s fruit is repulsive, but His fruit is contagious.



But, you must learn to cling to Him every moment of your life. The Word of God is the mental strength by which He does His wonderful work of sanctifying and feeding His branches. The Vine said, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3) Memorize His words, write them upon the tables of your hearts, meditate in them day and night, and they will expand like leaven in your very soul. We hide and abide in Jesus Christ by hiding the Word of God in our heart.

Prayer is communion with Him. Do not let your prayers be just a list of wants. He wants you to develop a fellowship with Him. If you will wholly depend on His Holy Spirit when in prayer, the Spirit's office is to bring our spirit into rich and indescribable fellowship with Him. Apostle Paul said it better than I ever could. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings

which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26-27)

"Abiding in the vine" requires a simple and single surrender every day. Going days without abiding in Him causes a foreign emotion in our spirits and prayer loses its joy. He warns us that such carelessness in our life can cause us to be "cast forth as a branch and withered." (John 15:6) Oh, the joy and hope of "abiding, clinging, and enjoying His life." The world is bankrupt, but He is all-sufficient. He said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) He wants to make you a "watered garden," a "royal priesthood," and a "holy nation." □

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



Miracles from the Martyrs Mirror

*“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings:
and grant unto thy servants,
that with all boldness they may speak thy word,
By stretching forth thine hand to heal;
and that signs and wonders may be done
by the name of thy holy child Jesus.
And when they had prayed,
the place was shaken where they were
assembled together;
and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,
and they spake the word of God with boldness.”*

Acts 4:29-31

Leonhard Keyeser, 1527

When the believers greatly increased under persecution and the cross (Ex. 1:12), there was, in Bavaria, a learned priest of the mass, named Leonhard Keyeser, who examined the writings of Zwingli and Luther, and also went to Wittenberg, where he conferred with the doctors and commemorated the Supper with them.

Having returned to Bavaria, he examined the fruits and doctrine of the Anabaptists, as well as of Zwingli and Luther, and joined himself under the cross to the separated cross-bearing church of the Anabaptists, in the year 1525, and forthwith continued in his ministry, with great power and zeal, undaunted by all the tyranny which arose over the believers, in the way of drowning, burning and putting to death. (Acts 9:20)

In the second year of his ministry, Leonhard Keyeser was apprehended at Scharding, in Bavaria, and condemned by the bishop of Passau and other priests and capitulars, to be burned on Friday before St. Lawrence day, in August of the same year. Having bound him on a cart, they took him to the fire, the priests going alongside, and speaking Latin to him, but he, on account of the people, answered them in German; even as they had refused to speak to him in German before the court, which he had frequently requested.

When he came out into the field, and was approaching the fire, he, bound, as he was, leaned down at the side of the cart, and plucked a flower with his hand, saying to the judge, who rode on horseback along side of the cart, "Lord judge, here I pluck a flower; if you can burn this flower and me, you have justly condemned me; but, on the other hand, if you cannot burn me and this flower in my hand, consider what you have done and repent,"

Thereupon the judge and the three executioners threw an extraordinary quantity of wood into the fire, in order to burn him immediately to ashes by the great fire. But when the wood was entirely burned up, his body was taken from the fire uninjured. Then the three executioners

and their assistants built another great fire of wood, which when it was consumed, his body still remained uninjured!!! Only his hair and his nails were somewhat burnt brown, and, the ashes having been removed from his body, the latter was found smooth and clear, and the flower in his hand, not withered, or burnt in the least, the executioners then cut his body into pieces, which they threw into a new fire. When the wood was burned up, the pieces lay

unconsumed in the fire. Finally they took the pieces and threw them into the river.

The judge was so terrified by this occurrence that he resigned his office, and moved to another place. His chief servant, who was with the judge, and saw and heard all this, came to us in Moravia, became our brother and lived and died piously. So that it might not be forgotten, our teachers have recorded this as it came from his own lips, and now cause it to be promulgated and made known. □

*But when the wood was entirely burned up,
his body was taken from the fire uninjured.
Then the three executioners and their
assistants built another great fire of wood,
which when it was consumed,
his body still remained uninjured!!!*



continued from page 7, The Deadly Devices of a Sleeping Prophet by George B. Duncan

the old prophet looked on the face of the man of God on the road that day? The love you killed, the devotion you slew, the testimony you silenced, the consecration you destroyed, the usefulness you ended?

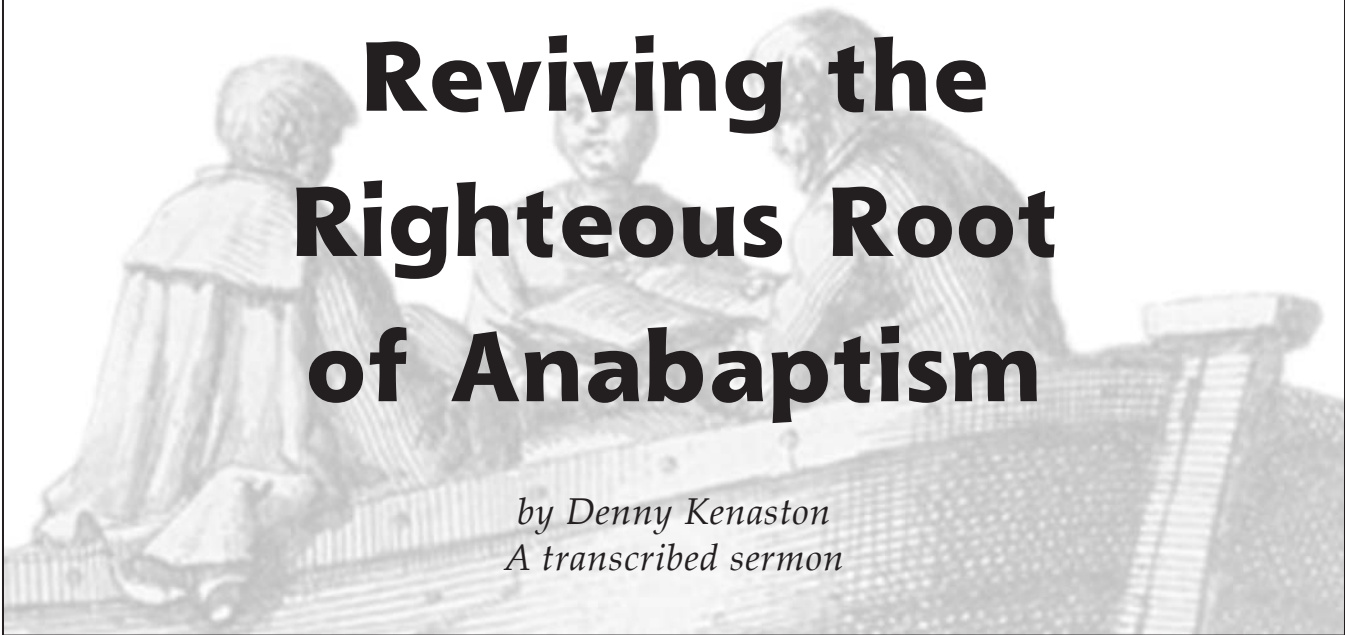
Come, stand by the old prophet. I wonder if you have one thing more in common with him? Listen. The lethargy that marred his service; the animosity that seared his spirit; the tragedy that crowned his success; can you share this—the agony that broke his heart? "And the old prophet came to the city, to mourn..." Thank God for his tears that flowed! Do you know anything of tears like these? If you don't

know what it is to weep here, I only hope that God will give you a place in heaven where you can weep, and weep, and weep...for the child of God whose usefulness you killed, whose love you extinguished. Ah, there are those alive today, but all the testimony, all the usefulness, everything worthwhile is dead. And it was an old prophet that did it.

If we share the agony that broke the heart of the old prophet, and know something of the tears that flowed, then possibly we too may share one other thing in the agony that he knew, for we read in the story, not only of the tears that flowed, but of the testimony

that fell from his lips. For at last the old prophet would seem to have been brought back to God, and the lips that had been sealed and silent for so long without any real testimony bore this testimony: "The saying which he cried by the word of the Lord shall surely come to pass." And if you know that your experience of the past months, or even years, has been that of the old prophet that dwelt at Bethel, then may God grant that your lips, too, may be unsealed, and that once again a testimony of the word of the Lord may fall from your lips, bringing grace and mercy and salvation to others. □

*...as we behold the peoples of the Anabaptist heritage, and their sincere desire to do right, and their tenacity to hold on to their history and study their history, and we see what a powerful people they were, our hearts cannot but rise up and cry to God, and say,
“God, do it again! Do it again, Lord!”*



Reviving the Righteous Root of Anabaptism

*by Denny Kenaston
A transcribed sermon*

The burden of my heart this morning has been on my heart for a long, long time. I'm not sure if I can say how long. And it may surprise you when I give you the title of this message but I just plead with you to stay with me. It is fitting with all that God has been doing in our hearts and our lives through this week.

It's always very interesting to me to go to the prayer meeting in the morning—I'm amazed how many times the message is prayed in the prayer meeting. This morning, blessed be God, there were so many prayer warriors in the prayer meeting that we had two prayer meetings this morning—it overflowed into the next room and then that one was full. It was interesting to hear the burden of prayer in both places speaking about the same thing this morning—that God would inflame our hearts with a vision of what He has for us, a vision of the future, a vision of souls gone astray, that God would do that.

This morning I'd like to speak on the subject: *Reviving the Righteous Root of Anabaptism*. Those words—"reviving the righteous root of Anabaptism"—come from a prayer meeting. We're going to walk around Zion again this morning. We've walked around Zion before, we've walked around Zion with the Moravians and the way that they've lived, and we've been challenged by the way that they lived. We walked around Zion with the Chinese house churches and the way that they've lived and we were challenged by their lives. God wants us to walk around Zion so that we can be challenged by a Zion that lived before us. We want to walk about Zion this morning, looking at another righteous root that grew out of that fruit that grew out of the dry ground. Hallelujah! The root is Christ.

In the beginning of this week of meetings we considered the great value of seeking God through the good times and that was our motivation. That's why we've set aside eight days to

Reviving the Righteous Root of Anabaptism

seek God, it was because we felt it was right to seek God in the good times, not to wait until we're falling apart to then get serious and desperate with God. And so in a sense this whole week of set-apartness has been preventative maintenance. But I want to be a bit visionary here this morning at this last meeting.

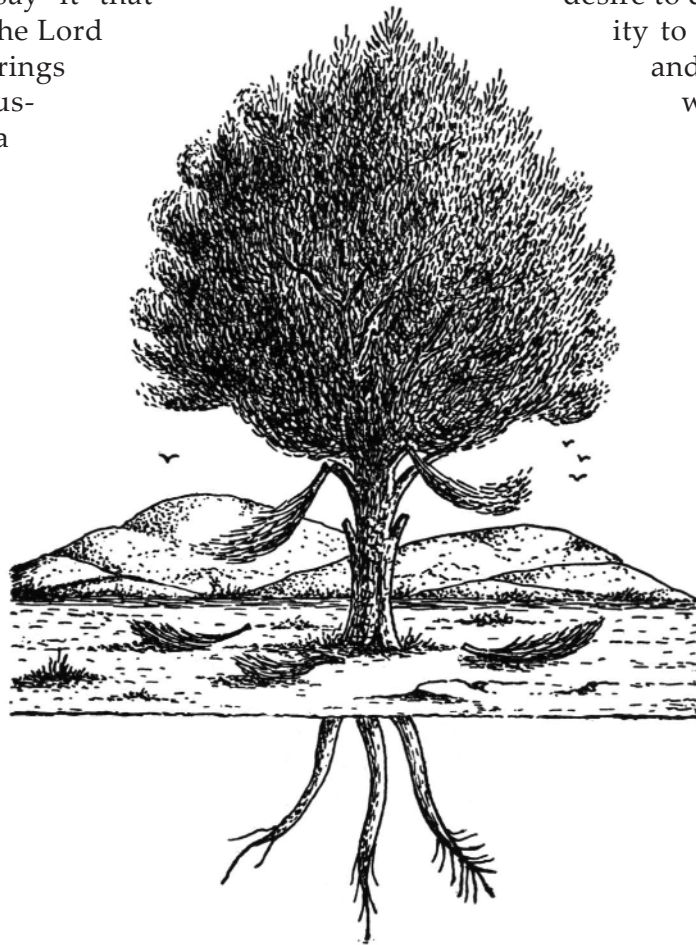
It is still time to seek the Lord until He comes and rains righteousness upon us, righteousness like the righteous root of Anabaptism. May I say it that way? It's time to seek the Lord until He comes and brings that kind of righteousness upon us. Thus a visionary message that we don't just say, "Okay, you know, the meetings are over and we can settle down and we go back to the status quo." No, God forbid!

As I said already, the title of the message comes from a prayer meeting. I don't remember when it was, but I remember being in a prayer meeting and these words rose up in the prayer meeting, that God would revive the righteous root of Anabaptism, that God would restore that people to their pristine beauty, their strength, their power, their ability, their light, their shining light that they were—that God

would revive that righteous root, that came by the inspiration and burden of the Holy Ghost—and since I first heard it, I've heard it dozens and dozens of times—"Lord, revive the righteous root of Anabaptism!" Oh, I could just as easily pray that God would revive the righteous root of Methodism this morning, by the way, if you've read what the early Methodists were like. But as we behold the peoples of the

Anabaptist heritage, and their sincere desire to do right, and their tenacity to hold on to their history and study their history and we see what a powerful people they were, our hearts cannot but rise up and cry to God, and say, "God, do it again! Do it again, Lord!" Oh, that God would raise up tens of thousands of Anabaptists that were crying from the depths of their heart and crying out in their poverty, Lord revive the righteous root of Anabaptism! Restore us as it was in the beginning!

However, I want to quickly say that the Anabaptists can claim no beginning. I feel like we can easily get off on these things and start focusing on a movement instead of the God who created the movement. I'm telling you, that never comes out



...their righteous root stems back to the book of Acts and the early church in the days of Christ and the root of Jesse. Only Christ, He is the Righteous Root springing up out of a very dry ground!

Hallelujah!

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right. The Anabaptists had no beginning, for their righteous root stems back to the book of Acts and the early church in the days of Christ and the root of Jesse. That's where their roots go back to! Christ! Only Christ—be honored, loved, exalted among the people of God! Only Christ, He is the Righteous Root springing up out of a very dry ground! Hallelujah! That's who He is! When I think of reviving the righteous root of Anabaptism, my mind goes back to some verses in a Psalm that we read some months ago, and I want to read them again this morning and just consider them in the light of this subject and this people, this part of Zion that God may challenge us with this morning. Reading in Psalm 80:7-16: This is speaking about Israel, but I believe the verses may relate to many of the movements of God in history as surely as they relate to the movement of God among the Anabaptists. The cry of the Psalmist says:

Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

It's a good prayer for us to pray.

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars. She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river. Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it. Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself. It is burned with fire, it is cut down: they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

Awesome words! Oh, what a beautiful picture of early Anabaptism, reaching its boughs out across all of Europe! Think of the power of a people who connected so vitally with Christ back in the 1500's. These words stir my heart this morning as we look back on a movement of God, as we look around us and see where we are in light of where they were. These words come as a deep challenge to us this morning.

I wonder how far we have truly fallen, yet may not even know it! We may not even know it. I'd like you to turn now to Ezekiel 37:1, if we can just read there for a moment. These verses also touch my heart as I can consider this subject, and I want you to consider before we read that it's 450 years since David and Solomon walked upon the earth. It's 450 years since Israel was the glorious testimony that God wanted her to be. It's 450 years later, and brothers and sisters, its over 450 years since God moved in the hearts of a few men who connected with Christ and said, "We'll die before we compromise our Christ, our Deliverer, our Savior and our Lord. We'll die before we compromise!" It's over 450 years. That's nothing for God. God can raise something out of the rubble that's been laying in the rubble for hundreds of years! God can do it! It's nothing for God.

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

I like that. Make it real hard, Lord! Very dead, very many, and very dry bones.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.

That was a good answer, Ezekiel, that was a good answer.

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Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

By the way, that's the reason God does anything, anytime!—*“And ye shall know that I am the Lord, and I will be glorified!”*

So, I prophesied...

That seems a bit odd, you know, if somebody was looking on, I wonder if he thought some of those same things that we struggle with, you know, “Lord, what will everybody think if anybody sees me preaching to these dry bones in the middle of a valley? But, he knew the voice of God and he knew that if God told him to prophesy to these bones he had a good reason for it!

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

Glory! He even knew what bone to fit into which bone!

And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he [God!] unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

That's far enough to read for this morning's illustration. I know it's talking about Israel; you even wonder what it all means in the end, you know. It's prophetic, and you look out, and you can get something for your own heart. And you know that Ezekiel got something for the people in his day, but yet, you look ahead, and you say, “God, what does all that mean?” But we can still apply it to our own situation, Amen?

Days and years are nothing to God and He can raise up a glorious plant out of a very dry root in a very dry ground. Hallelujah! You know, as I was meditating upon this analogy, which came as inspiration in a prayer meeting (it's always a joy to do that, you know, you get an inspiration from the Lord, and then you go to the Bible to search, and you find these golden nuggets hidden in there. And you realize—yes, it was the voice of God, because you see the voice of God's Spirit and the voice of God's Word, they are the same thing and they mesh together so beautifully) but as I was meditating upon this I realized the Bible uses two analogies that relate to this righteous root.

Number one, is the great vine we read about it in Psalm 80, and the other analogy is the analogy of the olive plant. Both of these two analogies have some interesting things in common. Consider them in light of the subject this morning. *Number one*, they both have deep root systems. A grape vine and an olive plant, they have deep root systems. Very deep!

Number two, they both live for many generations. I like that. In fact, as I studied it, there's a little picture in the book I was studying. There was a picture of a grape vine—ten feet long, and ten inches thick. I wonder how long it took to grow that big! They both live for many generations.

Number three, they both have tremendous usefulness. If you've got a vineyard, if you've got an olive yard, you have a very valuable thing!

Number four, they both can die in outward appearance and revive again when proper care is given to them. In fact, you can set a forest

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fire, and that fire can go down through that olive yard, or that go down through that vineyard, and burn all the branches, and burn all the vine right off, flat to the ground! You go in there after that fire's over and everything is burned up, and you start nurturing that root. That root will begin to grow again and push up branches in a vine and leaves and bear fruit and the same thing with an olive tree! They say there are olive trees that are alive that were alive in the days of Christ when he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane! That's a many-generational root. Then I found these precious verses and these precious little nuggets in Job. Turn with me to Job 14:7-9.

For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

Isn't that beautiful? Oh my, yes, it can be dead; you can look at it and say, "It's dead!" It's there, but there are no leaves on it. There's no fruit on it! It's just an old, dead, stump—it's just lying there. There's not even a stump there anymore! But oh, notice the scent of water coming down into those roots, all of a sudden, that thing starts growing again.

What a beautiful picture of God's people, and the history of his pilgrim church down through the centuries. You see, the righteous root is not the righteous root of Anabaptism, it's that righteous root which is Christ! In essence, the whole history of the pilgrim church down through the centuries is a history of people that are returning to that righteous root which is Christ, and his anointed body, which was the early church. Down through history, you see it again, and again, and again. One movement after another movement, then another movement, then another one in another part of the earth, returning, looking back to the righteous root, which root is Jesus Christ,

Himself. Looking back to the beautiful plant, which grew from that righteous root and that plant, the early church, which is recorded in the book of Acts. Down through church history, they look back again and again. Every movement of God, they're always aiming back there. Praise God that we have the opportunity to do the same in our day!

Think about the Waldensians in the 1300's and 1400's. They were an example of that, as were the Anabaptists in the 1500's. Another example of it: the beautiful Moravians in the 1700's and their 100-year-long prayer meeting, and all the things that they did; and the Methodists in the 1700's and the 1800's. I just recently got a little book that was sent to me about the early Methodism, and you'd be shocked at what radicals they were! The Brethren movement in England in the 1800's was another example. The Holiness movement in the 1900's, and we could go on and on. There are many others that are not mentioned, but all of them are seeking the spirit of primitive Christianity! That's what it was!

In the days of Anabaptism those first few men there gave their lives in short order of time. It was those men who rose up and said, "Let's return to the root! Let's go all the way back! Let's do it the way Jesus did it, let's go back to Christ! We don't want a new religion!" It wasn't enough to know about justification by faith. They set their sights on everything that Jesus bought and paid for! A return to the spirit of primitive Christianity! Brothers and sisters, now it's our turn! It's 2004. It's not 1300, it's not 1400, it's not 1500, it's 2004, and you and me are alive and well on planet Earth. How far will we return? That's the question.

You know, we're pretty hard on the Protestants sometimes, you know, we're pretty critical of them, they didn't go far enough, they didn't go as far as the Anabaptists did, they decided to compromise, they weren't willing to pay the price, they didn't go as far as the Anabaptists did, we're pretty hard on them, aren't we? How far will we return? Let's not throw any stones at them. How far will we

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return? What are we willing to face? What will we go through to return to the spirit of primitive Christianity? That's a good question, isn't it? Let's look at that righteous root a bit here this morning.

The Anabaptist movement was in its prime for thirty years. If you study the history, it's kind of sad from 1555 on. But for thirty years, I don't know if there have ever been a people like them, besides the early church! For thirty years, from 1525 from 1555, and during that time, God planted a vine whose branches reached all over Europe. Tens of thousands of converts were baptized upon their confession of the true faith that was in Jesus Christ. Tens of thousands of them! That makes what's happening

around here look pretty small doesn't it? We get a convert every now and then. Tens of thousands were baptized upon their c o n f e s s i o n . Thousands of them were martyred for their uncompromising stand for Christ and the truth. Total commitment was clear—be baptized, and die! Be baptized, and go to prison! Be baptized, and lose all you have! Be baptized in the name of Christ, and lose all your living! Be baptized in the name of Christ, and lose your home, and live in the forests and in caves for the rest of your days. Who wants to be baptized like that this morning? Be baptized, and go baptize others, and risk your life doing it!



They died—they were martyred in six months! And if one died, another one picked up the mantle and kept right on going, and churches popped up spontaneously like mushrooms all over the place. Hallelujah!
Do it again, Lord!

It's very interesting to me, you know, it was a people movement. The early Anabaptist movement was a people movement. It was the fullness of time. Europe was ripe. Europe was ready, those people had been sitting there in darkness long enough, and all of a sudden, they got a Bible. The printing press was invented, and they got Bibles in their hands, and they were so sick and tired of being sick and tired, and they were so sick and tired of being empty, and having nothing on the inside, and all of a sudden, here comes somebody, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of the grace of God, and the people just started responding en masse.

Some of these men baptized two to three thousand converts in a year, many of them!

This thing was happening so fast; the records state that churches sprung up spontaneously like mushrooms everywhere. Have you ever seen mushrooms? I mean, try to get this one, and this one pops up, and get this one out of the way, and another one pops up, and that's exactly the way that it was! It was the focus of time. It was beautiful! That holy olive plant prospered exceedingly from her holy anointing oil that flowed out to inflame lights that shined all over

Europe for 30 years! Europe never saw anything like these people! They never heard anybody speak like these people! They never saw such simplicity like these people and they

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never saw courage like these people. Nothing would stop them.

Young men were commissioned to go and preach the gospel everywhere. You get born again, changed by the power of God, baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and you're five months in a little congregation and the preacher calls you forward and commissions you along with one other young man and says, Go! We've got to wait twenty years to say go, or ten! But for these men it was six months and, "Go!" You know why? Because the fields were white already unto harvest and we can't wait ten years to grow up! And they went. And many of those young men were unmarried! I don't think they should have been married for the situation they were in. Many of them only lasted six months! They died—they were martyred in six months! Six months! And if one died, another one picked up the mantle and kept right on going, and churches popped up spontaneously like mushrooms all over the place. Hallelujah! Do it again, Lord! Some lived only six months, others rotted for years and finally died in a prison somewhere, worshipping God. With joy they did this.

Oh, this root, it was a righteous root; it was a powerful root, this root of Anabaptism. Every man and woman was an evangelist and a prophet. They spoke forth the mind and the will of God in the power of the Spirit of God, and people were touched and challenged and stirred and converted everywhere! Think about it! In the hardest circumstances that you could imagine, people were getting born again everywhere—you couldn't keep up with them!

Think about it—maybe you're one of those seekers, you know—and you're hiding in the shadows at an early Anabaptist baptism. You're hiding in the shadows and you're watching it and you see the baptism, and that's beautiful, and all that's great, and you heard the sermon, and you saw the people getting baptized, and right in the middle of a baptism, the authorities bust in the middle of the place and grab the one that was just baptized and beat him over the head until their head swells up and drag him

off into a wagon and throw him in prison! Now that's quite an invitation to Christianity!

You would think they would have a hard time finding a convert after that! But the Spirit of God was so mighty upon those people and the Spirit of God was moving in such a mighty way that it didn't matter if he saw that. In fact, that just made the seeker clearly know that it's all or nothing. Oh, we could use some of that again, brethren! All or nothing! The commitment was clear, praise God! They went everywhere proclaiming the kingdom of God is at hand. The persecutors called them Anabaptists, or "re-baptizers," because they baptized upon true confession of faith in Christ. That's where they got their name, "re-baptizers." The authorities said, "What's wrong with your other baptism?" And of course, they were offended that these fiery Anabaptists were not satisfied with the other baptism! But they said, "We believe in believer's baptism!" And infant baptism was the issue in that day. It is other issues in our day.

This righteous root—consider their theology: Their theology was very simple. In the first thirty years of Anabaptism, they hardly had time to sit down and figure out, "What is theology?" Their theology was simple—you live for Christ, you suffer for Christ, you die for Christ—no matter what! That's the kind of theology they had. Oh, how different the Protestant Reformers had it in those days—they could sit in the comfort of their homes on a nice padded chair with the light shining over their Bible and sit around and discuss and hash theologies and, "What do you think it means?" and, "What do you say it means?" And back and forth they went—but Anabaptists were running like dogs in the forest! No time to sit down and figure out theology, but yet they had such a beautiful, simple theology—their theology was survival. "Theology" was lambs in the midst of wolves! Be wise as serpents and harmless as doves—very simple theology. Obey the Word and the Christ of the Word at any cost. That was their theology. They took an uncompromising stand for truth.

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The issues of the day were infant baptism and the mix of church and state. But I want to suggest to you this morning, that there were deeper issues than that. Those just happened to be the issues of that day. You see, God didn't just raise up somebody to take a stand against infant baptism. God raised up a people who were willing to stand for Christ and whatever the issues were in their day. The issues are different in our day but just because the issue is not infant baptism anymore, that doesn't mean there are no issues. The issues have changed. Its 2004, will we be the kind of a people who will be uncompromising in the midst of a compromising world? That's a question. Their commitment was to Christ, and that caused them to face the issues of their day, no matter what. They believed in an aggressive evangelism. They were not the "quiet in the land." Amen? They were not the "quiet in the land." They were not baking pies in 1525 to 1555. They were aggressive evangelists. This brought great persecution upon them.

Many were told (and the devil's methods have never changed), but many of them were told by the smiling face of a persecutor, "Oh, my friend, I'm sorry that you're here in this prison. I don't want you to stay here. You can go home, if you'll just be the quiet in the land. We'll let you go home, with your family! Just go home and bake pies and plant corn, and you can do your thing as long as you want!" Boy, his methods sure haven't changed, have they? But they were aggressive evangelists. They knew the purpose that God had them upon the earth. They knew what it was, "We are here to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. We are here to win a lost soul to Christ.

We are here to live for the Lord Jesus in an uncompromising way. That's why we're here!" And so, all the other appeals to a better life, a nicer home, a little bit better place to sleep, a soft pillow underneath your head were all looked at with disdain. All they knew was that Jesus said to go and make disciples—radical followers of Jesus Christ, everywhere you can. And they did, didn't they?

This righteous root of Anabaptism, they were anointed with the power of God. The Spirit of God attended their labors, inspired their hearts, inflamed their message, and comforted them in prison—filled with zeal as they sang in the fires of their martyrdom. The Spirit of God was upon them. But it's very interesting to me, again, they had no theology about the Spirit of God! They didn't need a theology about the Spirit of God, they had *Him!* So there were no big, long discussions about the Spirit, about how He comes, who He is, and whether He's come, and what it will be like when He comes—they didn't need to have conversations like that. He was there! They were anointed with the Holy Ghost! The combination of

evangelism, their commitment to Christ, and the persecution that came because of their evangelism kept the Holy Ghost fresh and lively in every one of their hearts. This is the Anabaptists.

Consider their views on materialism and poverty this morning. They had a high view of poverty. I mean, it was honorable if you chose to be poor. Not so anymore, is it? But it was honorable if you chose to be poor. And they had a guarded view of materialism. They looked at it like this: to be rich was to be worldly! To those early Anabaptists, 1525 to 1555, to

...they were aggressive evangelists. They knew the purpose that God had them upon the earth. They knew what it was, "We are here to preach the Gospel of the kingdom. We are here to win a lost soul to Christ. We are here to live for the Lord Jesus in an uncompromising way. That's why we're here!"

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be rich was to be worldly! They cared for each other out of the necessity that demanded it in their day. Yes, some of them lived in community, but most of them, listen, they were in such straits, that it would be a joke to try to figure out how to live in a community, like we would think of a colony today. Yeah, they lived in community—"you'll live in this cave, and I'll live in this cave! And we'll break our bread together in humility in the middle of the night when nobody else is around and worship God together." Yeah, they lived in community.

Number six, they were fearless. They were fearless. You know, like it says in Revelation, chapter 12, they "loved not their lives unto the death." That means they didn't care about dying. When you don't care about dying, nobody can stop you. Nothing can stop you, if you don't care about dying. And they were fearless, because they were not afraid to die. They had no fear of death—and because of that, no fear of man. There was no fear of man in the midst of them. They faced their persecutors, they faced the Sanhedrin, they faced the councils, they faced the Inquisitions, and they faced them with boldness. Kind of like these Chinese Christians are, you know. They didn't just humbly hang their head, they looked right boldly into the face of their persecutors and they said, "Thus saith the Lord, my friend, God is going to judge you for what you're going to do to me when you cut off my head." And they smiled at him.

Can you imagine what that would do to a persecutor? Instead of him being in charge, you just look him right in the eye and say, "Let me tell you something, friend"—just like Jesus did to Pilate—oh, Pilate squirmed when Jesus did that to him. "You don't have any power, Pilate, none at all—if you have any power, it's been given to you by God. I can lay down my life and I can take it again." That kind of courage is what the Anabaptists had—they were not afraid to die.

We're afraid to die! We need to be honest—we don't want to die! We're afraid to die! You know, I thought about the last few days—I

wonder what would happen if somebody walked in the back door of this place, pointed a gun up here. I wonder what would happen to us; I wonder what we would do? I don't know. I don't know what I'd do. I know what I'd want to do, but I don't know what I'd do. I'm trusting God for that. One magistrate said it this way, "The more I kill them, the more they multiply—I don't know what to do. I've got more dead bodies that I know what to do with!"

And lastly (and there are many, many more points, I just wanted to lift up a few of them to help us to realize where we are in relation to where they were), they believed in suffering love. They would not fight back. They loved the souls of their persecutors so much—they suffered the spoiling of their goods, they suffered the loss of their property, they suffered starvation and poverty, they suffered the loss of their families, and they suffered the loss of their lives because they loved their persecutors and wanted to see their souls saved and they would not fight back. And the brokenness, and the humility, and the extremities fueled the fire of God in their hearts even more! See, they found the key to ministry: "Death worketh in us that life might work in others." They knew it—they tasted it!

This account of these righteous Anabaptists reminds of the Chinese house churches. That's the way they are! That's the kind of commitment they have—that's the kind of suffering that they are going through—that's the kind of courage they have, to this day. Right now they're there, going through all these things that we've been looking at and listening to this morning—they're there today, going through those very things! And it's 2004. Are we going to be prepared? That's a good question!

Beloved brothers and sisters, this righteous root is worth reviving. It's worth patterning our lives after. It must be revived, and I believe it will be revived. But it may take persecution to do it. I don't know, I'm not a prophet, but we must know that God will revive it in the last days. I believe that. But must we wait for persecution? Must we stand and watch our babies'

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heads smashed with a sledgehammer, to rise up then and revive? Must we do that? It can happen, brothers and sisters. Must we stand and watch our virgin daughters raped before our very eyes, and then rise up and get desperate? I think we should rise up and get desperate now, before that day comes, because it's coming. Why must we wait for that? God is calling us to better things this morning, brothers and sisters.

You know, I think the devil looks at the Anabaptists like Napoleon looked at China. Napoleon, in the 1800's, said of China, "SHHH-HHH! China is a sleeping giant, let her alone, or she will destroy us all!" I wonder if the devil doesn't look at the Anabaptists in the same way. The devil watches her. "SHHHHHH! Go to sleep; go to sleep; go to sleep O little children! Let her sleep!" He says, "If she ever wakes up to her heritage, look out, the kingdom of darkness shall be shaken once again!" He keeps lulling them to sleep, generation after generation. How many generations have they been sleeping? "Have your own religion! Wear your clothes! Live your simple life! Bake your pies! Be a tourist attraction, no problem! Sleep on now, mighty giant of Anabaptism, sleep on, sleep on. Don't wake up and win the world and shake my kingdom again!" says the devil.

In closing, how do we revive it? Can we even do it? That's a good question! With our present circumstances, our present practices, and our present theology, can we even do it? Our view of suffering is very different than theirs—our view of evangelism is very different than theirs. And our view of materialism is very different from theirs. Can we even do it?

How do we revive it? Number one, we must begin with an honest acknowledgment of where it really is. We must begin with an honest acknowledgement, and acknowledge that our fathers have sinned and our fathers' fathers have sinned grievously before God. An honest acknowledgement of where we are compared to where they were would be a good start.

Owning up to some of the recent articles in the newspaper would be a start. They're rather

embarrassing, those articles about the plain people, all the problems they're having—the youth, drugs, drinking, and incest, all those kind of things, they're embarrassing! You know, you just wish you could just get rid of those papers, and don't let anybody read them! But you know what? It could lead to some humility in those people called the plain people. We could do it that way. We could let it do that in our hearts, and cause some self-examination and maybe some desperation to rise up in the heart. That would be a right response to those embarrassing articles in the newspaper, wouldn't it?

You know, I was in an Anabaptist church some years ago, and the minister got up in the middle of his sermon and he said something that I never forgot—he said these words: "We hear a lot of talk about revival these days. We don't need revival, we are revival!" These were the words that came out of his mouth. And it was toward the end of his sermon, toward the end of the service, and I'd sat through the whole thing (and it was a pretty dry piece of bread that evening.) "We are revival!" What was he saying? You know what he was saying? He was saying, "We believe the doctrines of the early Anabaptist church, we believe in non-resistance, we believe in separation from the world, we don't vote"—you know, and down the list he could go. Because we believe these things, we are revival. That's an utter deception. Those are good things, and we believe them, but that is not the spirit of early Anabaptism. They were a power for God! Let us be honest. We have the theology of Anabaptism, but we don't have much of the reality of Anabaptism, and let's be honest about it. Then let that honesty lead to some open dialogue.

First, it's got to take place in our hearts! Just a good old-fashioned honesty meeting just between God and me! Get on my knees and say, "Okay, God, that's right, we have fallen!" That's the first step! But then, let that honesty lead to open dialogue, where we can begin to talk, "What is wrong?" Dialogue! Back and forth.

Reviving the Righteous Root of Anabaptism

What do you think is wrong? What do you think is wrong? I need help! We need help! Open dialogue. And then open our heart to the voice of his prophets, instead of stoning them, every time some guy comes along and says there's something wrong. If we pick up a stone, and let him have it, we'll never find out how far we've fallen. It just won't happen. So don't stone the prophets. Listen to them. Despise not prophesying, Thessalonians says, but rather listen to it, and prove it, whether it be true or whether it be false!

Number three, on how to revive this righteous root—a cry for restoration. First, we get honest. Then, we are willing to dialogue. Now we're ready to cry—to cry for restoration. Persistent prayer. Desperate prayer. Remember the judges, brothers and sisters here locally? Emanuel read us those accounts and went through the book of Judges here the other evening and that message of compromise? It wasn't until the people got honest enough to cry to God! Then God came through and delivered them. Until then—no deliverance. Though they probably wanted it, though they were weary of the situation they were in, though they were probably wringing their hands and saying, "What shall we do? What shall we do?" I tell you, there are Anabaptists today that are wringing their hands and saying, "What shall we do? What shall we do?" It wasn't until they got to the place where their stewing became a desperate cry to God from a sincere, humble heart that God came through and delivered them—a persistent cry for restoration!

Number four, we must repent of our fear of man. The fearlessness of the early Anabaptists

was the strength of their lives. It was the strongest character in them. But today, we are afraid of man. We must repent of our fear of man. We won't talk to our neighbors because we are afraid of what they might think, or we're afraid of what they might say! We must repent of our fear of man. I believe it is a spirit of fear that has the plain people gripped and held in bondage, and every time somebody pops up their head a little bit and starts to think, "Maybe

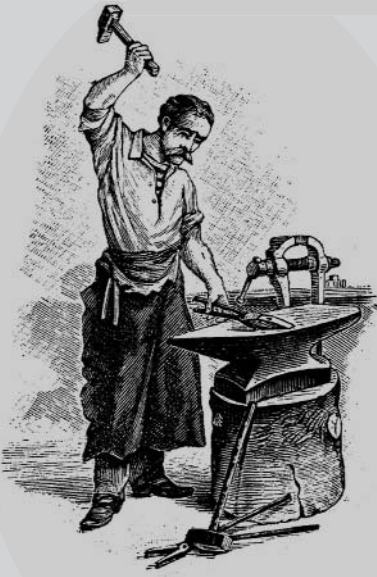
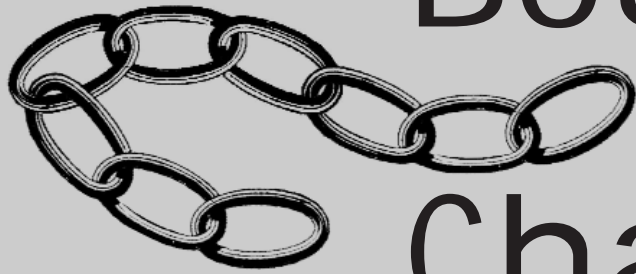
there's something wrong, maybe we should change this or that." You know, "GRRRR!"—some growling spirit chases them back down again and they sit down in their pew and be quiet for another generation. We need to repent of our fear of man!

And lastly, don't focus on the movement. Focus on the Christ of the movement. And I feel this is one place where things have gone awry many times. I mean, we have garnished the sepulchers of those early Anabaptist leaders and we have lifted up that movement and we have made it so much more than it is—It's only one movement where the Spirit of Christ was mightily moving! Don't focus on the movement! Focus on the Christ of the

Don't focus on the movement! Focus on the Christ of the movement! And yeah, look and see how God worked in the lives of those men and women and say, "God, make us like that through Jesus Christ our Lord!" We must return further than 1525, brothers and sisters. We must return to the early church, and the Acts, and the Christ of the early church, if God is ever going to revive the righteous root of Anabaptism.

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Bound by Chains



It is told of a famous blacksmith of mediaeval times, that having been taken prisoner and immured in a dungeon, he conceived the idea of escaping, and began to examine the chain that bound him, with a view to discover some flaw that might make it easier to be broken. His hope was vain, for he found, from marks upon it, that it was one of his own workmanship, and it had always been his boast that none could ever break a chain that he had forged. And now it was his own chain that bound him!

It is thus with the sinner. His own hands have forged the chain that binds him—a chain that no human hand can break. There is only one way of deliverance. Jesus can break the chains—Jesus alone! Seek His help in your need.

*He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood avails for me.*

If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. John 8:36

Our Comforter

by Mollie Jo Cassidy

...I (will) never believe or tolerate the lie that “God doesn’t understand our human grief.” No, after I got that picture of God, standing by, LETTING His Son struggle through His last breath, I knew that truly my Father was acquainted with all my grief...

Greetings in Jesus’ Name from Oklahoma! This past week I encountered a very frightful experience. I was sitting on the steps on our back porch with my brother Colin and my grandmother who was visiting at the time. My other brothers were attempting to chase down the goat escapees. Little Noah (4) decided to join in the fun and ran off with everyone else. I started calling to him to come back, because I knew it could be a dangerous situation with animals and big brothers running around the yard.

As little Noah started to come back in the direction of the house, I saw another potential disaster in the making. Our male Great Pyrenees dog (Huge variety!) was tied to a nearby tree and was getting excited about the commotion with

the loose goats; he was right in Noah’s pathway back to me. As Noah made his way to me, Gabriel went running and his long chain flew across the yard hitting Noah in the lower legs, picking him up and causing him to land on his face on the ground.

I immediately went and picked Noah up from the ground. (Which I shouldn’t have done, in case his neck had broken.) As I was carrying him toward the house, I asked my brother to get my dad. At this point, I looked down at Noah and realized that this was far more serious than I thought. His body was stiff and changing colors. I saw no signs of breathing or life at all. As I reflected later at what happened during this time, I can best describe it as hanging on a thread between



life and death. I became very emotionally upset as the reality of what was happening hit me. I didn't know if Noah would die or not, and the pain of that realization was crushing. I began to plead "JESUS," but I don't remember what else I said. At a moment like that, you suddenly realize how depraved man really is. God is the one who is in control, and when someone is dying, you can really feel your dependence on the Almighty, and you know you're at His mercy.

When my dad came out, he took Noah's stiff body and laid it on the ground. He began doing CPR, while my mom called the ambulance. After just a couple times, Noah began breathing! Then, he went limp and proper color returned. When Noah started crying, I think I was no longer fearful of him dying, but the moments when that question of death had hung over me had left my heart so grieved.

My parents, Noah, and I rushed to the ER, after canceling the ambulance. The people were so kind there. Since he had a head injury, they wanted to give Noah a CAT scan. The scan did not show a major problem in the brain or c-spine, for which we are so grateful. They showed us what to watch for since he had such trauma to his head. Noah's nose was broken and swelling up badly to where he could only breathe out of one nostril. We were able to bring him home and care for him here.

As I waited outside the radiology room during the CT scan, my mind began to rehearse all that had happened. I began to ask myself: "Could anyone else know how I felt at that time when my heart was breaking? Would anyone else know the pain and helplessness you feel when you have a lifeless body in your arms?" (Let me add here that there are many who would know my grief; yea, and more grief than I felt: those who have experienced the death of a loved one. I would not want to appear insensitive to the lasting grief of the many who have

lost a child or loved one, and never regained that life, like I did Noah's.)

As I pondered these thoughts within myself, I realized that God was close to me at that time when I was grieving, because He promises to be near to the broken in heart. And then, God began speaking to my heart in a special way. I know God felt my grief because He watched His own beloved Son die. He saw Him struggling to breathe and enduring the excruciating pain as His battered body hung on the rugged cross. Yes, He knew the agony of watching someone you love die.

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But, I realized, that the difference between God's grief and mine was that God had all power to save His Son's life and I had none to save Noah. (—None in my own strength and abilities.) I was helpless, God was (and is) all-powerful. "If I was in God's 'shoes,' would I allow Noah to die in order to save the souls of others?" I couldn't answer my own question. But this one thing I knew, I would never believe or tolerate the lie that "God doesn't understand our human grief."

No, after I got that picture of God, standing by, LETTING His Son struggle through His last breath, I knew that truly my Father was acquainted with all my grief, and with everybody's grief, for that matter. No one would be able to convince me otherwise. My heart was so filled with gratefulness to God, not only for hearing my cries for my brother and sparing his life, but more importantly, for letting Jesus Christ DIE for my sins and the sins of the whole world. How much I owe Him!

When I got home late that night, I wrote these things down in my journal. I wanted to remember; I wanted to never forget the special way God spoke to me and the mercy He showed in hearing my cries for Noah. As I sat at my desk, I turned to the Psalm for the day (July 23),

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The Hovering Blessing

by T. De Witt Talmage, 1877

"And there was a great rain." 1 Kings 18:45

A long, fierce, consuming drought had come upon the land. The leaves crumpled, the earth brake open, the buckets came down on the stony bottom of the well, and found no water; the cattle bellowed with thirst on the banks of the ravine, that was once all a rush with liquid brightness. Alas! Must the nation die?

Up the side of Mount Carmel go Elijah, his servant, and King Ahab. There is a magnificent prospect from the top of Mount Carmel. You can look off upon the Mediterranean and see ships moving up and down, carrying the commerce of great nations. It is a very conspicuous point. The sailor to this day calls it Cape Carmel. But Elijah did not go to the top of the mountain for the fine prospect. He went up there to pray for rain, and the Bible says he cast himself down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, and cried mightily unto the Lord, that

the land might not perish, but the showers might come.

As soon as he had finished the first prayer, he sent his servant to the outlook of the mountain to see if there were any signs of rain. The servant came back and said, "No signs of rain." Again Elijah prayed, and again the servant went to the outlook, and came back with the same information; and the third time and the fourth time, and no rain; and the fifth time, and no rain; and the sixth time, and no signs of rain. And then Elijah threw himself into a more importunate position, and for the seventh time he cried unto the Lord, and for the seventh time he sent his servant to the outlook. "Lo!" The young man came back saying, "I see a little cloud five or six inches long, about the size of a man's hand." Elijah leaped from his knees, and said to the

servant, "Run and tell King Ahab to get down out of the mountain; the freshets will come, and unless he flies now, he will never get home."

The servant starts for King Ahab. Ahab gets into the chariot and speeds down the mountain, and Elijah, more swift-footed than the horses, leads the chariot down the hill. The cloud that was only five or six inches long, expands, until the whole heaven is filled with gloom, and the wind blows up from the sea to the mountain, and from the mountain to the sea, and the thunders boom, and there is a wild, overwhelming dash as the clouds burst, and the forests are drenched, and the earth sings—*"and there was a great rain."* "Well," you say, "What is that to us? It is an incident of long ago past. The last drop of that shower is exhaled, the very last leaf that was washed by it has gone into dust, and why do you present it this morning?" For a most practical purpose; I want to send this whole church to its knees. I



want to have you understand that if you will only go up to the Carmel of prayerful expectation and look off,

you can behold already vapours gathering into a cloud of mercy, which will burst in torrents of salvation upon the people. I have to tell you three or four things about that wonderful prayer of Elijah, which resulted so marvelously: First, it was **an humble prayer.**

Mark the language of the Bible: "He cast himself on the earth, and put his face between his knees." "Oh," you say, "the posture of the body doesn't decide the earnestness of the soul." I know that; but the feeling of the soul very often indicates what shall be the position of the body. There was sorrow in your house. Clouds of bereavement hovered. You were afraid you would lose that loved one. You went to your room. You locked the door. You prayed for the recovery of that sick one. What position did you take? Did you sit upright? Did you stand? No, you either knelt, or you threw yourself on your face before God. You had no idea position would have any effect with God, but the position you took was the result of your feeling. No wonder then that Elijah, with his own sins to confess, and the sins of a nation, took that humble posture, and it is most appropriate today for us. How are we living? Within a few years—yes, perhaps within a few hours—of our last account, yet cold and worldly, and selfish and proud. Where is the mercy seat? How little we pray.

Where is Jesus? How little we seek His kingdom. Where are the impenitent? How little we do for their rescue. Where is heaven? How little its raptures kindle our soul. Cold and

Almighty? Are we the souls that have been ransomed? Was that cross of inexpressible pain the price that was paid for our rescue? Look over the past five, ten, fifteen years of our life—how much wasted opportunity! Professing to live for God and eternity, has not our profession sometimes been a lie, and our position a byword? Oh, my brethren and sisters, we must come down out of this pride. We must humble ourselves before God as Elijah did. Church of God, repent! Repent! To the dust! Put on sackcloth! Weep aloud for thy sin! Wail for the dead!

Again I remark, in regard to this prayer of Elijah, it was a **persistent prayer**. He prayed once—no answer. Five times—no answer. Six times—no answer. And the seventh time, when the blessing came, and if it had not come the seventh time, in his earnestness of spirit he would have kept on to the one-hundredth time. An occasional petition for a blessing upon us, and our families, and our churches does not amount to much. It wants persistent unrelenting implo-ration. Prayer after prayer.



No wonder then that Elijah, with his own sins to confess, and the sins of a nation, took that humble posture...Cold and hard, ought we not today—you in the pew, and I on the platform—take before God the same posture that Elijah took?

hard, ought we not today—you in the pew, and I on the platform—take before God the same posture that Elijah took? Tell me, are we all sons and daughters of the Lord

Besiegement after besiegement. Prostration after prostration. A sobbing. A groaning of earnestness. If the prayer is not answered the first time, keeping on to the thousandth time, keeping on though we die on our knees. A story is told of the Apostle James, that after he was dead they examined his body, and they found that his knees were calloused from much kneeling. Oh, that we had some such persistence before God. Is not the object for which we struggle worth a struggle? It is your own heaven, and beside that, it is the question of the snatching back of your own loved ones from eternal disaster. Plead before God and plead again. Do not give it up. Day in and day out, night in and night out, rising and retiring, in store, in street, in car, everywhere; by the throne of judgment, by the joys of heaven, by the horrors of hell; plead, plead, until God shall come, and the Church shall be moved, and the impenitent shall fly for mercy, and there shall be "a great rain." Do not wait for others. Christians are very apt to wait for somebody else to do their

duty. When God's spirit was so mightily poured out in 1837 all over this land, do you know where the influence started? It was from a blacksmith's shop, where a consecrated man stood

spark from that one forge which set the whole land on fire with Christian awakening and illumination. Oh, pray! Pray! Pray!

I remark again in regard to the petition of Elijah, it was a **definite prayer**. There were fifty things that Elijah would have liked to have had for himself. There were fifty things he would have liked to have had for the people; but he goes there, and asks for just one thing, and that is rain. My friends, there are too many glittering generalities in our prayers. I think that is the reason they do not amount to much. We must go before God with some specific errand and say, "Here are my children, strangers to the covenant of grace, having no part or lot in the matter; oh Lord, save my children, and just call them by name!" You have been asking that the commercial world be consecrated to Christ, and that was a glittering generality. Why do you not say, "Here is my partner in business, all absorbed in the



...this prayer of Elijah was a confident prayer. Why was it that when he was praying, he sent his servant to the outlook? ...he knew rain was going to come, and he wanted to know the first moment of its arrival, so that he could get down the mountain

day after day pounding the iron, and at the same time importuning God for the redemption of all the village where he lived, and it was the

world. Oh Lord, convert him by Thy grace, and show him that there is something better for his soul than this world." I wish I could make you feel that

you are responsible for some one soul. Do you not suppose that when you come before God in judgment, He will ask you about those over whom you had an influence? Will He not ask you about your own children? Will He not say, "Where is John, or George, or Mary, or Hannah? Where are they? And if in that hour you say, "I don't know, I don't know!" Perhaps God will point and say, "There, do you see that? Do you know what that is? Why that is the blood of their souls on your garment!"

I remark again that this prayer of Elijah was a **confident prayer**. There were no "maybes" about it. Why was it that when he was praying, he sent his servant to the outlook? It was because he knew rain was going to come, and he wanted to know the first moment of its arrival, so that he could get down the mountain. He knew that the rain would come just as certainly as Carmel rose above him, and the Mediterranean lay beneath him. Have you the same positiveness of expectation? Do you believe God really means it when He says: "*Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you?*" Or is your imploration a mere matter of indefinite "perhaps?" Then, away with your prayers! They would die on your lips. Coming to God with such an insulting unbelief, He will spurn you away from Him. Oh, my dear brethren and sisters in Christ, how can we halt and stagger and doubt, with Bible full of promises, and

heaven full of glories, and God full of mercy and salvation for all the people?

Some years ago a vessel went out from a port on Lake Erie. It was just as the ice was going out of the lake, and when it starts to go out, it hardly ever returns. The vessel put out, but strange to say the ice returned and surrounded the vessel, and the captain saw they must go down unless some wonderful relief came from some source that he knew not. So he gathered the passengers in the cabin and said, "I will tell you the whole truth. I have done all I can to deliver this vessel and we must go down unless more than human means are brought to our aid. Is there anyone here that can pray?" It was all still for minute. Then the first mate or the second mate said with a good deal of tremor and modesty, "Let us pray." So he knelt down before God in the cabin and told of their perils, and of the loved ones at home, and how they would like to get home again, and asked God to spare their lives and save the ship. They arose, and lo!—the ice had parted and the vessel floated through the channel way. One of the sailors said to the captain, "Shall we put on more sail?" He said, "No, there is a hand guiding this vessel not seen of us. Let her alone." The vessel floated out into safe waters. And there comes a time—and that time is now—when the Church of God is surrounded by a fierce worldliness. It is ice on the north, and ice on the south, and ice on the east, and ice on the

west. Oh, let us implore God for the rescue that the vessel of the Church may ride out into calm, bright, beautiful waters. "*Before they call, I will answer. While they are yet speaking will I hear.*" Oh, pray, pray, pray.

I remark again, in regard to that prayer of Elijah, that it was a **successful prayer**—that is, he got what he wanted, which was rain. Not rain only for the trough of the camel, not rain just enough to settle the dust, not rain enough to wet the corn-field, but enough to drench the forests, and soak the fields, and slake the thirst of a whole nation. Rain for the mountains. Rain for the valleys. Rain for the trees. Rain for the cattle. It was a *great* rain. Now, are we making the prayer that will bring the same success? We do not want rain so much on the fields, but it is rain on the tender heart of childhood, and the weary spirit of the old man that we need; it is rain on the heart, hard with the drought of sin, or wilted under the sunstroke of worldliness; it is spiritual rain that we need. How do we get it? The way Elijah got it. All our preaching about it and talking about it will not bring it. We must pray and pray. We must go on the Carmel of Christian expectation, bow ourselves before the Lord, and then it will come. It always has come when the right kind of prayer went up. It *will* come as certain as there is a God, and you have a soul immortal to be set on trial on the last day. Prayer in private. Prayer in public. Prayer now. Prayer perpetually.

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What is Holiness?

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)

This is the law of the house; Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house.
Ezekiel 43:12



What is holiness? I know what it is, and yet I cannot in a few words define it. I will bring out its meaning by degrees, but I shall not do better than the poor Irish lad who had been converted to the faith. When he was asked by the missionary, "Patrick, what is holiness?" "Sir," said he, "it is having a *clane* inside." Just so—morality is a clean outside, but holiness is being clean within. Morality is a dead body washed and laid in clean white linen: holiness is the living form in perfect purity. To be just to man is morality, to be hallowed unto God is holiness. The church of God must not be reputedly good, but really pure; she must not have a name for virtue, but her heart must be right before God, she must have a clean inside. Our lives must be such that observers may peep within doors and may see nothing

for which to blame us. Our moral cleanliness must not be like that of a bad housewife, who sweeps the dirt under the mats, and puts away rags and rottenness in the corner cupboards. We must be so clear of the accursed thing that even if they dig in the earth they will not find an Achan's treasure hidden there. God desireth truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part he would make us to know wisdom.

We might instructively divide holiness into four things, and first would be its negative side, *separation* from the world. There may be morality, but there can be no holiness in a worldling. The man who is as other men are, having experienced no change of nature and knowing no change of life, is not yet acquainted with Scriptural holiness. The word to every true saint is, "Come ye out from among them. Be ye sepa-

rate: touch not the unclean thing." If we are conformed to the world we cannot be holy. Jesus said of all His saints, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." We are redeemed from among men that we may be like our Redeemer, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." We are not to be separate as to place, avoiding men with monkish fanaticism, for nobody mixed more with sinners than did our Lord. "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them" is the old reproach, but yet our Lord was not one of them, as everybody could see: nothing could be more clear than the difference between the lost sheep and the Shepherd who came among them seeking out His own. Every action, every word, every movement betokened that He was another man from the sinner whom He sought to bless.

So must it be with us. As the lily among thorns so must we be among the mass of men. My fellow-professors, are you different from those among whom you dwell? Are you as different from them as a Jew is from a Gentile? Now, a Jew may do what he likes, he may live in the same style as an

Holiness next consists very largely in *consecration*. The holy things of the sanctuary were holy because they were dedicated to God. No one drank out of the sacred vessels except God's servants the priests; no victims were killed by the sacrificial knife, or laid upon the altar except such as

man rob God? Will he rob Jesus of the purchase of His blood? Can we consent that the world, the flesh, the devil should use the vessels which are dedicated to God? Shall such sacrilege be tolerated? No, let us feel that we are the Lord's, and that His vows are upon us, binding us to lay ourselves out for him alone.

The title "the Peculiar People," belongs to all the followers of Jesus. They are strangers and sojourners, aliens and foreigners in this world for they have come out at the divine call to be separated unto the Lord forever. There is no holiness without separateness from the world.

This is an essential ingredient of holiness: the cleanest bowl in the sanctuary was not holy because it was clean; it became holy when, in addition to being cleansed, it was also hallowed unto the Lord. This is more than morality, decency, honesty, and virtue. You tell me of your generosity, your goodness, and your pious intentions—what of these? Are you consecrated, for if you are not consecrated to God you know nothing of holiness. This is the law of the house, that the church is consecrated to Christ, and that every man that comes into her midst must be the same. We must live for God and for His glorious kingdom, or we are not holy. Oh to make a dedication of ourselves to God without reserve, and then to stand to it forever: this is the way of holiness.

Englishman, a Pole, or a German, and he may in garb, in business, in speech be like the people among whom he dwells, but the image of father Jacob is upon him, and he cannot disguise the fact that he is an Israelite. If he is converted to Christianity, still he does not lose his nationality; you can still perceive that he is of the seed of Abraham. So ought it to be with the real Christian; wherever he is, and whatever he does, men ought to spy out that he is of the sect that is everywhere spoken against, and not an ordinary man. The title "the Peculiar People," belongs to all the followers of Jesus. They are strangers and sojourners, aliens and foreigners in this world for they have come out at the divine call to be separated unto the Lord forever. There is no holiness without separateness from the world.

were consecrated to Jehovah, for the altar was holy, and the fire thereof was holy. So must it be with us if we are to be holy: we must belong to Jehovah, we must be consecrated to Him, and be used for His own purposes. Not nominally only, but really, and as a matter of fact, we must live for God, and labor for God. That is our reason for existence, and if we answer not this end, we have no excuse for living; we are blots upon the face of nature, waste places, and barren trees that cumber the ground. Only so far as we are bringing glory to God are we answering the end and design of our creation. We are the Lord's priests, and if we do not serve Him we are base pretenders. As Christians we are not our own, but bought with a price, and if we live as if we were our own we offend our Redeemer. Will a

But this does not complete the idea of holiness unless you add to it *conformity* to the will and character of God. If we are God's servants, we must follow God's commands: we must be ready to do as our Master bids us because He is the Lord, and must be obeyed. We must make the Lord Jesus our example, and as Ezekiel says, "we must measure the pattern." It must be our meat

and drink to do the will of Him that sent us. Our rule is not our judgment, much less our fancy, but the word of God is our statute book. We are to obey God that we may grow like God. The question to be asked is, 'What would the Lord have me do?' or, 'What would Christ Himself have done under the circumstances?' Not, what is my wish, but what will please Him. Having been begotten again by God into the image of Christ, and so having become His true children we are to grow up into Him in all things who is the head, being imitators of God as dear children, for so, and so only, shall we be holy. Do understand, then, that with regard to the whole range of the church, however wide her action, conformity to the character of God is law of the house.

I must add, however, to make up the idea of holiness, that there must be a close communion between the soul and God; and consecrated to God, yet if he never had any communication with God, the idea of holiness would not be complete. The temple becomes holy because God dwells in it. He came into the most holy place in a most especial manner, and this accounted for its being the holy of holies; even so special communion with the Lord special holiness. God's presence demands and creates holiness. And so, brothers and sisters, if we would be holy we must dwell in God, and God must dwell in us. We cannot be holy at a distance from God. How is it with

you? How is it with this church? Is God with us in all our services? Is He recognized in all our efforts? Does He reign in all our hearts? Does Jesus abide with us, for this is according to the law of the house that God should be everywhere recognized, that we should in all things conform to His will, in all things be consecrated to His purposes, and for His sake in all things be separated from the rest of mankind. This is the law of the house.

Now, secondly, I want you help while I say *let us examine ourselves by this law*. Let each man question himself as to whether he has carefully observed the law of the house. Brethren, the church of God is holy. It is founded by a holy God upon holy principles and for holy purposes. She has been redeemed by a holy Savior, with a holy sacrifice, and dedicated to holy service. Her great glory is the Holy Spirit, whose influences and operations are all holy. Her law-book is the Holy Bible, her armory is the holy covenant, her comfort is holy prayer. Her convocations are holy assemblies; her citizens are holy men and women; she exists for holy ends, and follows after holy examples. Dear hearer, are you then as part of her "holiness to the Lord?" Ask yourself questions, founded on what I have already said. Do I so live as to be *separated*? Is there in my business a difference between me and those and those with whom I trade? Are my thoughts different? Does the current of my desire run in a

different direction? Am I at home with the ungodly, or does their sin vex me? Am I one of them, or am I as a speckled bird among them? Search, brethren; search and see whether ye be holy in that sense or no.

Next, let each one ask, "Am I *consecrated*? Am I living to God with my body, with my soul, with my spirit? Am I using my substance, my talents, my time, my voice, my thoughts for God's glory? What am I living for? Am I making pretence to live to God, and am I after all really living to self? Am I like Ananias and Sapphira, pretending to give all, and yet keeping back a part of the price?" The preacher would search his own heart, and he begs you all to search yours.

Next ask the question, am I living in *conformity* to the mind of the holy God? Am I living as Christ would have lived in my place? Do I as a master, as a servant, as a husband, as a wife, or as a child, act as God Himself would have me act so that He could say to me, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant?" He is a jealous God: am I obeying Him with care? If I am not walking in obedience to God I am behaving disorderly, I am breaking the law of the house, and that house the house of the living God. Ought we not to take heed lest we insult the king in His own palace, and perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little.

Then again, do I live in *communion* with God? I cannot be holy and yet have a wall of

division between God and me. Is there a great gulf of separation between the Lord and me? Then I am a stranger to holiness. I must have fellowship with Him, or else I am living in a manner that is sinful, dangerous, grievous, and injurious. Brother, sister, let me put this pressing question: Do you walk with God? Do you abide in fellowship with Jesus? I know there are some who would rather not give an answer to that question. I have met with believers who have said, "If you asked me whether I was drunken or dishonest, I should say 'No,' at once. If you asked me whether I have been upright and moral, I could say 'Yes,' most certainly. But when you say, 'Are you walking in communion with

the Lord? Are you enjoying habitual fellowship with God?' I am not prepared to give you an answer, for I am weak upon this point."

Are there not some professors among you who do not see the face of God by the month together, and seldom enjoy the presence of God at all? Their nearness to God is a thing of rare occasions, and not of everyday consciousness. At a meeting, when religious excitement stirs them they are little warmed up, but their general temperature suits the North Pole rather than the Equator. But, oh dear friends, this will not do. We want you to dwell near to God always: to wake up in the morning with His light saluting the eyes of your soul; and

to be with Him while you are engaged in domestic concerns or out in the busy world. We want you often to have a secret word with the Well-beloved during the day, and to go to bed at night feeling how sweet it is to fall asleep upon the Saviour's bosom. Brother, how sweet to say, "When I awake I am still with thee." Jealous hearts count it a sorrow when even their dreams disorder their minds, and prevent their thinking of the Lord in their first conscious moment. I would to God we were so encompassed with divine love, so completely sanctified, so thoroughly holy, that we never lost for an instant a sense of the immediate presence of the Most High. □

continued from page 29, The Hovering Blessing by T. De Witt Talmage

But when did the rain come? The same day. When will our prayer be answered? Today, if it be the right kind of prayer. We cannot wait until tomorrow. Some of these who are out of Christ, by tomorrow may be lifting up their eyes in a land far beyond the reach of mercy and hope and salvation, and it will be too late for them. For how much would I give up my hope in Christ for two hours? Not for all the wealth of the world at my feet. And if we cannot afford to give up our hope for two hours, can we afford to wait for the conversion of our friends until tomorrow, when this night their souls may be required of them? Oh, it is rain today that we want, we must have, and

we *will* have it, if, with all the concentrated passions and emotions and energies of our soul, we struggle for it.

Do not your hearts already begin to kindle? Do you not see the prayers like vapors are ascending from the sea into a cloud a good deal larger than a man's hand? Holy Spirit, speak now with Thy omnipotent voice! Lord, help us! King of glory, come to the temple. I feel overwhelmed with anxiety for the redemption of your soul. I feel that the eternity of many is at stake. I feel that between rousing up from our lethargy as Christians, and sleeping on in that lethargy, is the alternative between the happiness and the wretchedness of some who sat with you

this morning at the breakfast table, and who will sit with you again at noon. What shall I say to rouse up my church to its work? I will make a bargain with you. I ask that today, so far as your Sabbath-school duties and other duties will not interfere with it, that you spend the afternoon in your rooms imploring the blessing of God on yourselves, your families, and the Church. I will do the same. God is not far off that He should not hear us. Oh, let us come before Him feeling our feebleness, but laying hold of the promises of a faithful God, as though this were the last day of our lives, and in the next few hours stupendous destinies were to be decided. □

Charity Gospel Tape Ministry & The Heartbeat of The Remnant

April-June 2004 Financial Report



Greetings of love in Jesus' name to all our faithful supporters. So many of you have sent us letters of encouragement, prayed for us continually, and given to keep this ministry going. I wish I could share with you all the stories I receive as I travel across the country.

I think of the man who came up to me after a meeting to share how he was introduced to the tape ministry. He was doing his laundry at a local Laundromat, and noticed a Charity Gospel Tape lying in the trashcan. It was a low time for him, and his heart was searching the Lord for answers, and direction. He reached in through the rubble, and picked up the tape, listened to it, and his life has never been the same.

Then there was the dear sister who found a set of Godly Home tapes at the local Salvation Army thrift store for one dollar. She and her husband had been searching for answers to some of the problems in their home. God opened their eyes and the home was transformed in a matter of months.

I will share one more with you. We received a letter from a man who was so encouraged about the tape ministry. He sent his wife to a curriculum fair for some needed books for the next school year. They had very little money but bought what they could with their small income. His wife came upon John &

Anna Weaver's tape ministry table and they encouraged her to take what she thought they could use and not to worry about the cost. When she arrived home with more than expected, they sat down to listen to these free tapes. As they listened, they both began to weep. The messages bore witness in their hearts to the truths that God had been showing them. But everyone was telling them they were getting too extreme.

04/01/04 Beginning Balance	\$1,597.24
Receipts	
Tape Ministry Donations	\$39,465.98
Remnant Subscription Donations	\$4,159.00
Total Receipts	\$43,624.98
Disbursements	
UPS & Postage	\$5,601.33
Tapes, Albums, CD's & Labels	\$12,059.13
Equipment & Software Purchases	\$1,667.80
Equipment Maint & Repairs	\$577.67
Mailing & Office Supplies	\$1,828.12
Rent	\$1,800.00
Telephone	\$1,150.61
Website Development & Maintenance	\$557.01
Miscellaneous	\$393.87
Payroll Expense	\$13,400.01
Books & Catalogs	\$0.00
Remnant Publishing & Mailing	\$5,517.46
Total Disbursements	\$44,553.01
06/30/04 Ending Balance	\$669.21
Difference	-\$928.03

Space will not allow me to tell of the countless fathers who testify of the impact the tapes have on them as they listen on the way to work. Many men have said, "I just had to stop the car, and weep for a while as God convicted me of my needy heart."

I share these testimonies with you to bless you and assure you of a sound investment in the Kingdom of God. Your prayers

and financial support are having a tremendous influence in this world. As I read the many letters, I realize again, "This ministry is one of the most effective ones dollar-per-dollar that I have ever seen."

Once again, thank you for all your help and support. We could not do it without your help.

New Tape Set!

Set 140 : The Church—God's Holy Witness on Earth, by Denny Kenaston

This is a new series of tapes preached at two different locations. Bro Denny was asked to preach on the Biblical doctrine of the church. These twelve sermons cover many aspects of the New Testament Church. They will be especially helpful to new groups who are trying to come together with a unified vision. There is a nice balance of instruction, challenge, vision, and practical church life. The titles are listed below. Enjoy.

The Rise and Fall of God's House (#3368)
Four Men With a Vision (#3369)
Vital Signs in a New Church (#3370)
God's Holy People (#3371)
The Beauty and Power of Unity (#3372)
My Place in God's Eternal Purpose (#3373)

How to Build a Church (#3374)
Prophetic Prayers of the Master Builder (#3375)
The Church Beautiful (#3376)
The Church at Ephesus (#3377)
The Anointed Body of Christ in China (#3072)
The Church, A Habitation Of God (#1607)

continued from page 25, Our Comforter by Mollie Jo Cassidy

yes it was Psalm 23. My eyes fell upon these words: "...he restoreth my soul...yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for THOU ART WITH ME."

I went to my mother's room and she was reading the same words and shared "he restoreth my soul" with me. She also told me that when she told our pastor how Noah's accident was especially hard on me, he had prayed "Lord, restore her soul." I knew it was a three-fold confirmation. Yes, the Lord had and would restore my soul.

In the days following the accident, little Noah was extra precious to me. I wanted to kiss him and hold him and just rejoice over his little life. I am so blessed. This incident has left me changed. I know in a new way now that death can come when you're least expecting it. Are

you ready, my friend? Prepare to meet your God. You may not have the time or the mental capacity to repent when death comes for you. I urge you to be ready, and to urge others to be ready. He comes as a thief in the night, and we know not when it will be.

*Abiding in the Vine,
Mollie Jo Cassidy*

*Sister to Colin, Caleb, Micah,
Jared, Hannah, and dear little Noah*

PS: If any of you have lost a loved one, I do pray that this story does not hurt you. Your grief is lasting, but the Lord spared me that sorrow for now. I do not want to pretend to know how you feel; but rather, may this letter help you in knowing that God is your comforter. ☐

Let Others Boast

Let others boast how strong they be,
Nor death nor danger fear;
But we'll confess, O Lord, to thee,
What feeble things we are.

Fresh as the grass our bodies stand,
And flourish bright and gay;
A blasting wind sweeps o'er the land,
And fades the grass away.

Our life contains a thousand springs,
And dies if one be gone;
Strange! That a harp of a thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long!

But 'tis our God supports our frame,
The God who formed us first;
Praise be to His almighty Name,
That reared us from the dust.

Isaac Watts

The Heartbeat of
The Remnant

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