

"Facing Our Fears"WHOM SHALL I FEAR?① Two Tensions: TOP 10! PSALM 27(1) Dying(2) Failure① Living with
② med. power
③ of action

THIS PSALM WAS THE BASIS FOR MY FIRST MESSAGE AT BCC IN 1968. HOWEVER, BEFORE THAT IT WAS USED FOR THE SENIOR CLASS SERMON IN SEMINARY WHERE ALONG WITH THE STUDENT BODY, GUESTS SAT ALL OF MY SEMINARY PROFESSORS NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS DR. JOHN WHITCOMBE AND DR. ALVA J. MCCLAIN - THE TWO ~~SMALLEST~~ MEN I HAVE EVER KNOWN. I WAS SPEAKING ABOUT NOT BEING ~~ARMED~~ WHILE I WAS PARALYZED WITH FEAR! IN THE BACK OF MY MIND WAS THE HOPE THAT I DID NOT REPEAT WHAT A FELLOW SEMINARIAN HAD DONE IN CHAPEL WHEN HE SIMPLY FAINTED FROM FEAR! HOWEVER, I LEARNED A VALUABLE LESSON THAT DAY, NAMELY, THAT GREAT MEN ARE EASILY EDIFIED AND I REALLY HAD NOTHING TO FEAR! MY EXPERIENCE WAS NOT UNIQUE. BELA KAROLYI HAS WRITTEN A BOOK ENTITLED FEEL NO FEAR. IT EMBODIES HIS PHILOSOPHY GIVEN TO HIS GYMNASIAC STUDENTS. HOWEVER, IN THAT BOOK HE TALKS ABOUT MANY OF HIS GREATEST FEARS! HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, LONG BEFORE TERMS LIKE PSYCHOLOGY AND PHOBIAS WERE KNOWN TO MEN, DAVID DISCOVERED THE SECRET OF LIVING A LIFE FREE FROM FEAR. IN THIS PSALM, HE SHARES SOME OF THOSE SECRETS.

I
FoesI. ENEMIES - VERSES 1-3FoesWhat About
Fear of One's
Enemies?

DAVID'S LIFE WAS NOT FREE FROM TROUBLE BUT IN THE MIDST OF TROUBLE HE REMAINED TRANQUIL. EVIL DOGGED DAVID'S LIFE BUT IT DID NOT DEVOUR HIM. LET ME MENTION THREE OF DAVID'S BIG ENEMIES:

(1) GOLIATH - I SAMUEL 17

THE PHILISTINES WERE AN ANCIENT WAR-LIKE, WAR-LOVING PEOPLE WHO WERE SKILLFUL AND

SUCCESSFUL IN THE TACTIC OF GORILLA WARFARE, THEY WOULD SIEZE A FORTIFIED POSITION AND FROM THERE SEND OUT BANDS OF ROVING MARAUDERS TO PLUNDER, STEAL AND KILL UNSUSPECTING PEOPLE. GOLIATH WAS THE NO. 1 "WAR MACHINE" IN THE PHILISTINE ARSENAL AND AGAINST DAVID HE FELL NEVER TO RISE AGAIN. HUMANLY SPEAKING, THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO WAY A SLIGHT SHEPHERD BOY COULD PREVAIL OVER A PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER THE SIZE OF GOLIATH - BUT HE DID!

(2) SAUL - *David was never Saul's enemy*
(1 Sam. 19:17)

AFTER THE DEFEAT OF GOLIATH, SAUL WAS FRIENDLY TO DAVID BUT THAT FRIENDSHIP ENDED THE DAY SAUL AND DAVID RETURNED FROM BATTLE AND SAUL HEARD A VICTORY CHANT THE WOMEN SANG AS THE RETURNING TROOPS ENTERED THE GATES OF THE CITY. SAUL, A VERY SENSITIVE, SELFISH, SUSPICIOUS, SICK MAN NEVER RECOVERED. FROM THAT DAY FORWARD HE PLOTTED AND SCHEMED AND USED EVERY MEANS AT HIS DISPOSAL TO KILL DAVID BUT IN ALL OF IT, HE FAILED MISERABLY AND DIED THAT WAY. (1 Sam. 31:1-4)

(3) ABSALOM

DURING THE YEARS OF DAVID'S WANDERING, HE BROUGHT BACK FROM HIS RAIDS THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF GESHUR. A WILD AND UNINHIBITED WOMAN, SHE BECAME THE MOTHER OF ABSALOM. BY THE TIME THIS BOY HAD GROWN, DAVID HAD GROWN OLD. MUCH OF THE EXCITEMENT AND COLOR OF DAVID'S EARLY LIFE HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN. THE ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS OF HIS KINGDOM WERE IN DISARRAY. HE BECAME MOODY AND DIS-INTERESTED IN PUBLIC AND POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY. ONE OF THE LEGAL ASPECTS OF HIS LIFE WAS TO HEAR THE COMPLAINTS OR APPEALS OF HIS SUBJECTS. WHEN DAVID FAILED TO DISCHARGE

(2 Sam. 18:14)

①

Blasting of Goliath
(thrust)

Goal

THIS RESPONSIBILITY, ABSALOM SIEZED THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE HIMSELF. HE WAS HANDSOME AND HAD A FLAIR FOR PUBLIC LIFE. HE PROMISED THE PEOPLE A MORE LIBERAL, CARING GOVERNMENT AND IN THAT ENVIRONMENT GENERATED A CONSPIRACY AGAINST HIS FATHER. ABSALOM'S DEMISE IS WELL KNOWN TO STUDENTS OF SCRIPTURE. WHETHER IT WAS THE JEALOUSY OF SAUL OR THE SELFISH AMBITION OF ABSALOM, GOD SAW FIT TO DELIVER DAVID FROM ALL OF HIS ENEMIES - ALL OF THEM. APPLICATION: IF YOU AND I COULD LIST THE "ENEMIES" THAT FACE US ARE THERE ANY BIGGER THAN GOD? IF SO WHY SHOULD WE WORRY AND LOSE SLEEP OVER EITHER PEOPLE OR CIRCUMSTANCES? WE WOULD DO WELL TO LEAVE OUR "WHAT" ~~STAYS~~ TO GOD BECAUSE MOST OF THEM WILL NEVER COME TO PASS.

APP'



what
IF?

II. EXALTATION - VERSES 4-6

VERSE 6 IN THE NIV READS: "THEN MY HEAD WILL BE EXALTED ABOVE THE ENEMIES WHO SURROUND ME." CONTRAST THE WORD ABOVE AND THE WORD ABOUT. IN THESE VERSES THERE ARE THREE MAJOR IDEAS:

How To Rise
Above our
Enemies & Foes
Thru Praise

(1) WHAT TO SEEK - VERSE 4

THE BELIEVER WOULD DO WELL TO BECOME A "ONE THING" PERSON. PAUL WAS A ONE THING PERSON. (PHIL. 3:13-14) BY CONTRAST, JESUS SAID TO MARTHA: "MARTHA, MARTHA, THOU ART CAREFUL AND TROUBLED ABOUT MANY THINGS; BUT ONE THING IS NEEDFUL AND MARY HATH CHOSEN THAT GOOD PART WHICH SHALL NOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM HER." (LUKE 10:41-42) AS IN MARTHA'S CASE, THE VERSE BEFORE US INVOLVES WORSHIP. WORSHIP SHOULD BE A PERSONAL PRIORITY. JUDAS, LIKE MANY OTHERS, LOOKED UPON WORSHIP AS WASTE.

Worship Before Work.

Matt.
6:33

(2) WHERE WE SIT - VERSE 5

THE HIDING TACTIC WAS VERY EFFECTIVE AGAINST SAUL. THAT IS, WHEN SAUL WOULD HAVE KILLED DAVID, HE SIMPLY COULDN'T FIGHT HIM. SAUL COULD NOT FIGHT WHAT HE COULD NOT FIND!

IN A DAY OF TROUBLE AND TROUBLEMAKERS, GOD SAVED DAVID WHEN HIS ENEMIES SOUGHT HIM. DURING THOSE DAYS OF OBSCURITY, DAVID TURNED THEM INTO OPPORTUNITY FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. WHERE WE SIT OFTEN DEPENDS ON WHERE WE STAND.

Determining

(3) WHAT WE SING - VERSE 6

Rise above your foes!

DAVID LEARNED TO SING IN THE FACE OF DANGER. (ACTS 16:25) WHEN ONE LOOKS AT THIS ACTS PASSAGE EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE WRONG ABOUT THE PRAISE INVOLVED. IT WAS THE WRONG TIME - MIDNIGHT. IT WAS THE WRONG PEOPLE - PRISONERS. IT WAS THE WRONG PLACE - JAIL. IT WAS THE WRONG THEME - THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN SINGING A SONG DEALING WITH PRISON BLUES. THE EXALTED BELIEVER IS ONE WHO RECOGNIZES HIS POSITION AND FOCUSES HIS ATTENTION ON THE LORD OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND NOT THE CIRCUMSTANCE. THE MODERN EQUIVALENT OF WHAT THESE VERSES SAY IS THAT YOUR ATTITUDE DETERMINES YOUR ALTITUDE.

III. ENTREATY - VERSES 7-12

THE VERY WORDS ANSWER ME SUGGEST THAT THIS IS A KIND OF SPIRITUAL 911 OR PRAYER-O-GRAM. THE WORD CRY IN THE TEXT IS NOT REFERRING TO JUST TEARS BUT RATHER A CRYING OUT OR CALLING UPON GOD. IT IS THE PICTURE OF SOMEONE WHO IS SUDDENLY VERY SERIOUS ABOUT PRAYER! GONE IS THE HALF-HEARTED, CASUAL

Spontaneous accident

Rev. Perle

11. Forsake v.9-12

Kate crying

III. Faint
u13-14

the Secret of Waiting on God
(A) An Ant. to Fear

IV. EXPECTATION - VERSES 13-14 Fainted

THE WORD FAINED IS IN ITALICS BUT THE IDEA IS CERTAINLY THERE. HAVE YOU EVER FAINTED? IT IS A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE. WE SHARED (1) THAT EXPERIENCE HERE IN THE LATE 1980'S ONE SUNDAY MORNING - EXPLAIN. WHEN YOU FAINT, SOMEONE ELSE MUST CARE FOR YOU. THE ANTIDOTE IN THIS PASSAGE TO FAINTING IS TO WAIT ON THE LORD. WAITING UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES IS NOT EASY. THIS IS NOT THE WAITING OF A PRISONER OR A PATIENT BUT A PILGRIM. THIS WAITING IS NOT WASTED TIME. ISAIAH 40:28-31 IN THESE PASSAGES WE LEARN THAT GOD NEVER GETS TIRED BUT MEN TIRE EASILY. EVEN THE YOUNG GIVE UP AND QUIT. THE WAITING PROCESS ENABLES THE CHRISTIAN TO GAIN AFRESH OR RENEW HIS STRENGTH. THE WORD RENEW MEANS TO EXCHANGE SOMETHING FOR SOMETHING ELSE. IT IS USED TO DESCRIBE A PERSON CHANGING CLOTHES. WE MAY EXCHANGE OUR FATIGUE FOR HIS STRENGTH. THE WORD WAIT IN PSALM 27:14 CARRIES THE IDEA "TO LOOK AWAY IN HOPE OR EXPECTATION." (2) IT IS SO TRANSLATED IN THE N.I.V. DON'T QUIT, DON'T GIVE UP, WAIT. IN THE HEBREW, THE WORD KAW-VAW IS USED IN DIFFERENT WAYS. IT SUGGESTS TO WAIT IN AMBUSH OR IN SERVICE. IT DEFINES THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOUL TOWARD GOD. IT IMPLIES A LISTENING EAR AND A RESPONSIVE HEART TO GOD'S DIRECTION. IT IS THE CONCENTRATION OF OUR SPIRITUAL FACULTIES ON HEAVENLY THINGS AND TO WAIT FOR HIM TO DIRECT. THERE HAVE BEEN OCCASIONS THROUGH THE YEARS WHEN I HAVE ASKED THE LORD TO RESCUE ME - AGAIN! (COMMENT REGARDING BUILDING PROGRAM AND WAITING ON HIM.) (3) THE TEXT REMINDS US NOT TO BE IMPATIENT EVEN IN ADVERSITY BECAUSE GOD IS NEVER LATE. BE COURAGEOUS AND CONFIDENT, DON'T FAINT. GOD'S DELAYS ARE NOT HIS DENIALS. THEY ARE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCIPLINE. RELATE STORY OF "I'M NOT AFRAID." Lk. 18:1

GRS
Dr. Ann

Wait
Dear Son
Don't Give Up
Toward God

*"Warriors OF THE War"*THESE ARE THEY

I CHRONICLES 12:1

DAVID WAS ISRAEL'S GREATEST KING. SIXTY TWO CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE ARE DEVOTED TO HIS LIFE. (COMPARE 14 TO ABRAHAM, 14 FOR JOSEPH.) HE WAS COLORFUL, CHARMING AND COURAGEOUS. A LEADER MEN LOVED TO FOLLOW. (1 CHRON. 11:15-19 RECORDS THE STORY OF RISKS DAVID'S MEN WERE WILLING TO TAKE FOR HIM. DAVID WAS RESTRICTED BECAUSE OF SAUL'S PURSUIT. ONE DAY HE STOOD LOOKING BACK TOWARD HIS BOYHOOD HOME AND REMEMBERED HOW REFRESHING THE WATER FROM A FAVORITE WELL NEAR BETHLEHEM. THREE OF HIS MIGHTIEST SOLDIERS OVERHEARD HIS SENTIMENTAL SIGH AND UNDERTOOK A SECRET MISSION THAT NIGHT, BEHIND PHILISTINE LINES, TO SECURE A VESSEL FULL OF WATER FOR DAVID'S PLEASURE. THE KING WAS SO TOUCHED AND MOVED BY THIS DEMONSTRATION OF LOVE AND LOYALTY THAT HE WOULD NOT DRINK THE WATER. THE COST WAS TOO HIGH, THE RISK TOO GREAT. IN DEMONSTRATION OF TRUE KINGLY CHARACTER, SELF-RESTRAINT AND SACRIFICE DAVID OFFERED THE WATER TO GOD AS AN OFFERING FIT ONLY FOR GOD AND NO MERE MORTAL. NO WONDER HIS MEN WERE WILLING TO FOLLOW HIM. LET US EXAMINE THOSE MEN WHO CAME TO DAVID AT ZIKLAG AND HEBRON TO BE PART OF HIS ARMY. IN OTHER WORDS, WE WILL REVIEW THE TROOPS. BEGINNING WITH 600 IN THE WILDERNESS, THAT NUMBER SWELLED TO 339,600 WHEN DAVID WAS NOT YET 38 YEARS OLD. NEVER IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY HAD THERE BEEN A DISPLAY OF SO MUCH MILITARY MANPOWER AND SUCH NATIONAL UNITY.

566X
T.M.S.62
to 339,600

*archi
Cham*

I. THEY WERE AVAILABLE - VERSE 1

"THAT CAME TO DAVID." THESE MEN BELIEVED THAT THE FUTURE OF THE NATION RESTED NOT WITH SAUL BUT WITH DAVID. DAVID DID NOT RECRUIT THEM, THEY VOLUNTEERED, THEY WERE SIMPLY "AN ARMY OF AVAILABLES." DAVID DID NOT GO INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE BEGGING, EXPLAINING, RECRUITING, OFFERING INCENTIVES, OR DOING A SALES JOB ON THE MEN OF ISRAEL TELLING THEM WHY THEY OUGHT TO ENLIST IN HIS PROGRAM. THEY SIGNED UP WITHOUT

SOLICITATION, NO PUSH FROM DAVID. (RELATE STORY OF PASTOR - TRAIN - DEPOT - PUSH)

APPLICATION: FROM TIME TO TIME, BELIEVERS NEED TO CONSIDER THEIR AVAILABILITY TO AND FOR THE LORD. WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY WHERE GREAT LENGTHS ARE TAKEN TO BE UNAVAILABLE. FOR EXAMPLE, UNLISTED PHONE NUMBERS, SCREENED CALLS, SHUT OR CLOSED DOORS, RECORDED MESSAGES, DO NOT DISTURB SIGNS, ARE ALL WAYS OF SAYING TO ONE ANOTHER - I'M NOT AVAILABLE! IF WE ARE NOT CAREFUL, IT IS EASY TO DEVELOP THE SAME MENTALITY TOWARD

GOD. AFTER ALL, MOST OF US BELIEVE WE ARE EXTREMELY BUSY PEOPLE AND REALLY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR PERIPHERAL MATTERS AND SOMETIMES WE SAY IF NOT IN WORD BUT BY OUR "BODY LANGUAGE" WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR GOD!

I WONDER IF GOD CALLED OUR NUMBER IF HE WOULD GET A BUSY SIGNAL? WOULD YOUR SECRETARY SAY, "SORRY, HE ISN'T AVAILABLE TODAY."

SUPPOSE YOU AND I HAVE AN EMERGENCY THIS WEEK AND NEED TO GET THROUGH TO GOD IN A HURRY. HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU RECEIVED A RECORDED MESSAGE WHICH SAID: "THIS IS GOD, I'M NOT IN TODAY. LEAVE YOUR NAME AND NUMBER AND I'LL GET BACK TO YOU."

HE IS AVAILABLE - HEBREWS 4:15 HE CAN BE REACHED ANYTIME BECAUSE HE MAKES HIMSELF AVAILABLE TO US. IT WAS TRUE DURING HIS

*"Make
yourself
Available"*

① Doors
(2) Umbrella
(3) Flowers
(4) Look around...
Ask
God...
Pastor!

*James
Minton
Opal
Milton*

*Stay out
Private*

*Should
we...*

Key

Jesus ~~and~~ never:
 (1) Put people on "hold"
 (2) "I get back to you" Do it Now!!
Follow Me - Now!

EARTHLY MINISTRY, PEOPLE COULD BREAK THROUGH THE CROWD AND TOUCH HIM AND SOME DID. IN THE LORD'S WORK, MANY OF US WILL SERVE IF WE ARE SHAMED, EMBARRASSED, COERCED, FORCED, PESTERED OR BEGGED. THIS IS NOT GOD'S WAY. WHEN ISAIAH SAW THE NEED AND HEARD GOD'S CALL HE SAID, "HERE AM I, SEND ME," (ISAIAH 6:8) PLEASE NOTICE HE DIDN'T SAY "LORD, PLEASE SEND SOMEBODY ELSE," QUESTION: WHAT CAN I DO FOR THE LORD? THE FIRST THING IS MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE. TELL HIM THAT YOU ARE AVAILABLE FOR DUTY. ASK HIM FOR A TOUGH ASSIGNMENT, A JOB NOBODY ELSE WANTS. THIS IS TRUE CHALLENGE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. (COMMENT ON CARE GROUP - PEOPLE WHO ARE SAYING - WE ARE AVAILABLE FOR DUTY.) SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: SEE WILLIAM BARCLAY AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE LIFE OF C. I. SCOFIELD, PAGE 123) *I would be more available*

List:

Does

Flower

Look around

2nd

II. THEY WERE ABLE - VERSE 1, 8, 15

THESE MEN WERE SKILLFUL SOLDIERS:

(1) MIGHTY - VERSE 1

THIS WORD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS THE SAME USED REGARDING THE NETHILIM OF GENESIS 6:4, NIMROD - GENESIS 10:8-9, GOLIATH WHO IS CALLED A CHAMPION IN I SAMUEL 17:51, SAUL IN II SAMUEL 1:19 AND IT IS ALSO USED TO DESCRIBE ANGELS WHO "EXCEL IN STRENGTH" - PSALM 103:20. THE ANGELS EXCEL IN WHAT THEY DO AND SO DID THESE MEN - THEY WERE GOOD AT THEIR JOB, THEY WERE THE A TEAM. YET THESE MIGHTY MEN WERE CALLED HELPERS, NOT BOSSES, PRIMADONNAS OR RUGGED INDIVIDUALISTS, THEY MAJORED IN MIGHT BUT UNDER DAVID'S LEADERSHIP. MAKING WAR WAS

THEIR THING, THEY WERE GOOD AT IT, THEY WERE PROFESSIONAL SOLDIERS.

(2) SEPARATED - VERSE 8

Verse 8

12, 3, 4, 5, 6

THIS WORD MEANS TO DIVIDE, MAKE A DISTINCTION OR DIFFERENCE. IT IS USED TO DESCRIBE THAT "GROUP OF GRAVE DIGGERS, OR UNIT OF UNDERTAKERS MENTIONED IN EZEKIEL 39:14 WHO WILL HAVE SPECIAL DUTY AFTER THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG, A SPECIAL CORPS FOR A SPECIAL FORCE, IN OTHER WORDS A SPECIAL FORCES UNIT. THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH THE CHURCH IS JUST THAT, A SPECIAL GROUP CALLED OF GOD FOR A SPECIAL TASK IN THE WORLD.

✓ (3) FIT FOR BATTLE - VERSE 8

THESE MEN WERE A GROUP OF SOCIAL MISFITS WHO WERE PERFECT FITS IN DAVID'S CAUSE. THE SIGHT OF OF BLOOD, THE SOUND OF COMBAT DID NOT FRIGHTEN THEM. THEY DID NOT FLEE FROM THEIR FOES BUT RATHER FOUGHT FOR THEIR CAUSE. COMPARE I TIMOTHY 3:17 WHERE THE WORD PERFECT LITERALLY MEANS FITTED. WE ARE FITTED FOR FRUITFULNESS IN THE LORD'S WORK.

"that the man of God may be able to handle every word of God." (1 Peter 3:15)

(4) COULD HANDLE SHIELD AND SPEAR - VERSE 8

THESE MEN KNEW HOW TO HANDLE THEIR WEAPONS. TODAY, AS THEN, IN SOME QUARTERS GREAT EMPHASIS WAS PLACED ON DRESS, UNIFORM, AND PARADES AND NOT ENOUGH ON FIELD TACTICS AND WEAPONS. IT IS EASY TO GET A CROWD ON THE PARADE GROUND, HARD TO FIND THEM ON THE BATTLEFIELD. ACCORDING TO EPHESIANS 6:16-18 OUR WEAPONS ARE THE WORD OF GOD AND PRAYER USED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. IN THE LORD'S WORK, GREAT EMPHASIS IS BEING PLACED ON



GRS - FBI -

(Biao - Shot)

(they know how to handle their weapons)

NEW WEAPONRY SUCH AS PSYCHOLOGY, MANAGEMENT
TECHNIQUES AND METHODS TO THE EXTENT THAT
IN SOME QUARTERS MEN HAVE FORGOTTEN OUR
BASIC WEAPONRY. POINT: COULD YOU SHOW A
PERSON FROM THE BIBLE HOW TO BE SAVED AND
SURE? IF YOU CAN, WHY NOT DO IT - THIS
WEEK?

(5) FACES OF LIONS - VERSE 8

Scary
THEY HAD THE LOOK. FIERCE FACES THAT LOOKED
LIKE WARRIORS OR LIONS LOOKING FOR THEIR
PREY - READY TO KILL AND EAT SOMEBODY.
THE "DON'T MESS WITH ME SYNDROME." A LION
ON THE LOOSE OR PROWL IS A SCARY ANIMAL
EVEN TO HUNTERS WITH WEAPONS. A FEARSOME
SIGHT - NOT A SISSY IN THE WHOLE GROUP.
THEY CAME TO FIGHT AND THEY LOOKED THE
PART.

(6) SWIFT AS GAZELLES ON MOUNTAINS
VERSE 8

*Desert
Stomps*
THEIR SWIFTNESS WAS IN FLIGHT AND FIGHT.
THE IDEA OF (SPEED) IS IN THE TEXT BECAUSE
THE SAME WORD IS USED IN EXODUS 12:33 TO
DESCRIBE ISRAEL'S EXODUS FROM EGYPT, IN
OTHER WORDS, QUICKLY IN A HURRY. THE PHRASE
"NOT TOO SWIFT" IS USED TO DESCRIBE
INEPTNESS IN OUR TIME - NOT SO HERE.

(7) "WENT OVER JORDAN...WHEN IT HAD
OVERFLOWED" - VERSE 15

the Enemy
IT WAS NOT EASY FOR THESE MEN TO GET TO
DAVID. THERE WERE OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME
AND OPPONENTS TO OVERRUN. SWOLLEN RIVERS
AND HOSTILE TROOPS DID NOT TURN THEM BACK.

PERSONAL DANGER DID NOT KEEP THEM FROM THE CAUSE. PHILIPPIANS 4:13 GIVES US SIX WAYS TO LOOK AT OPPOSITION:

- (1) I CAN - *Positive*
- (2) I CAN DO - *(Candors & the can'ts)*
- (3) I CAN DO ALL THINGS - *name it*
- (4) I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST -
- (5) I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS
- (6) I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME.

III. THEY WERE ARMED - VERSE 2

THESE TROOPS WERE "DRAWERS OF THE BOW" BUT WERE ALSO SKILLFUL WITH THE SLING. THEY WERE "ROCK THROWERS" BUT IN THE RIGHT SENSE OF THE WORD. WHEN THEY REPORTED FOR DUTY THEY WERE READY FOR BATTLE. ONE OF THE PROBLEMS OF OUR TIME IS THAT SOME ^① FOLK DO NOT KNOW THAT THERE IS A WAR IN PROGRESS. (EPHESIANS 6:12, II COR. 10:4)

^② TOO MANY OF THE TROOPS ARE IN THE HOSPITAL AND NOT ON THE BATTLEFIELD. ALSO, MANY OF ^③ THE TROOPS ARE UNARMED AND SOME ARE WEARING THE WRONG ARMOUR AND USING THE WRONG WEAPONS. (COMPARE SAUL AND DAVID) *(Rom. 6:14)*

IV. THEY WERE AMBIDEXTROUS - VERSE 2

THESE MEN WERE TO COMBAT WHAT A SWITCH HITTER IS TO BASEBALL. IT SPEAKS OF THE CAPACITY FOR VERSATILITY. THEY MADE A GREATER CONTRIBUTION TO THE CAUSE BECAUSE THEY WERE

→ "7 Last Words of the Church"

Change ↑ ↓

*McClay
Telephone pole*

ABLE TO USE BOTH HANDS. (COMMENT REGARDING DR. STEVENS' SERMON) ONE OF OUR PROBLEMS IN THE LORD'S WORK IS HALF-HEARTEDNESS AND ONE-HANDEDNESS. PEOPLE WHO USE ONLY A SMALL PORTION OF THE RESOURCES WITH LACKLUSTER DEDICATION. DAVID PROVIDED SPECTACULAR LEADERSHIP IN THE REGARD FOR HE WAS SHEPHERD, SOLDIER, STATESMAN ALL WITH EQUAL SKILL.

V. THEY WERE ALIGNED - VERSE 18, 22, 28

(1) ON THY SIDE - VERSE 18

THE ASV SAYS, "WE ARE YOURS...AND WITH YOU." DAVID'S CAUSE WAS THEIR CAUSE AND THEY WERE LOYAL TO HIM. THEY KNEW WHICH SIDE THEY WERE ON AND MADE THEIR LOYALTY CLEAR TO FRIEND AND FOE. DAVID'S BACK WAS NEVER IN DANGER FROM HIS OWN TROOPS. THERE IS MUCH GORILLA WARFARE WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE TODAY. SELF-STYLED LEADERS, CHOOSING UP SIDES, HURTING THE CAUSE.

(I HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH FOLK WHO SPLIT OFF FROM OTHER WORKS FOR PERSONALITY REASONS AND NOT DOCTRINAL CONVICTIONS. FIND A PLACE, A CHURCH, WHERE PEOPLE BELIEVE WHAT YOU BELIEVE AND WHOSE PURPOSE IS A BIBLICAL PURPOSE, WHERE CHRIST IS HONORED AND THE BIBLE IS PREACHED, AND BE LOYAL TO THE CHURCH AND ITS LEADERSHIP AND IF YOU CAN'T BE, FIND ANOTHER PLACE AND STOP CAUSING TROUBLE.

(COMPARE JOE WEAVER - START YOUR OWN CHURCH.) DAVID KNEW HOW TO BE LOYAL AND WAS A LOYAL FRIEND, HE GAVE IT AND RECEIVED IT WITH HUMILITY.

(2) PEACE WAS THEIR CONCERN - VERSE 18

IT TAKES MEN OF PEACE TO BRING PEACE TO A MOVEMENT. SOMETIMES WAR TO STOP A WIDER WAR.

(3) NOT OF DOUBLE HEART - VERSE 33

THEIR HEART WAS IN THE CAUSE. (MATT. 15:8)
THESE FOLKS COULD BE COUNTED ON WHEN THE
BATTLE RAGED. (RELATE TAZWELL - FLIGHT
THROUGH THICK AND THIN - THIN OUT.) *together*

VI. THEY WERE ASSEMBLED - VERSE 22 *23*

MT 9:36
"GREAT ARMY." FROM A GROUP OF 600 ROGUES
AND DISCONTENTS, THE ARMY SWELLED TO 339,600
A GREAT CITIZEN ARMY ENOUGH TO DO THE JOB,
PROTECT ISRAEL FROM HER ENEMIES. THE CAUSE
WAS CONTAGIOUS. MEN KEPT COMING TO DAVID
AND THE FORCES KEPT ON INCREASING IN SIZE.
GOD KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING. THERE ARE ENOUGH
TROOPS TO DO THE JOB, THE PROBLEM IS THAT
THE TROOPS ARE NOT DOING WHAT THE COMMANDER
SAID DO. OUR GREAT CONCERN IN THE CHURCH
SEEMS TO BE GETTING A CROWD INSTEAD OF
BUILDING A CHURCH. JESUS DEVOTED MOST OF HIS
TIME TO THE TRAINING OF 12 MEN, NOT APPEALING
TO THE MASSES. THE ARITHMETIC OF THE CHURCH
ADDITION - ACTS 2:47; SUBTRACTION - ACTS 5:5;
MULTIPLICATION - ACTS 6:1; DIVISION -
ACTS 8:1. THE GREAT EMPHASIS TODAY SEEMS
TO BE ON "COMMERCIALS" IN THE FORM OF
OFFERINGS WITH MORE EMPHASIS ON MONEY THAN
ON WORLD EVANGELISM. BUILDING CHURCHES
IS THE KEY.

VII. THEY WERE ALERT AND AWARE - VERSE 32

ALERT SUGGESTS INTELLIGENCE, QUICK TO
UNDERSTAND, ON THE LOOKOUT. AWARE MEANS
INFORMED, COGNIZANT AND AWAKE. THESE MEN
KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON AND WHAT THE
CONFLICT WAS ALL ABOUT. ONE REASON THEY
WERE INVOLVED WAS THEY UNDERSTOOD WHERE
DAVID WAS GOING. IN THE LORD'S ARMY,

Megatrends 2000

Demographics

in-farm!

THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF SOLDIERS, THOSE ON LEAVE, AWOL, DESERTERS, COWARDS, CRYBABIES, COMPLAINERS, AND TROUBLEMAKERS. WHAT KIND OF SOLDIER ARE YOU - ESPECIALLY CONCERNING ALERTNESS AND AWARENESS?

II TIM. 2:3-4 SUGGESTS THAT A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST WHO IS ON ACTIVE DUTY DOES NOT GET ENTANGLED WITH OUTSIDE AFFAIRS IN ORDER THAT HE MAY PLEASE HIS COMMANDING OFFICER. OUR OBJECT IS TO PLEASE THE ONE WHO ENLISTED US AND LET NOTHING SIDE TRACK US FROM THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH WE HAVE BEEN CALLED. THE WORD THEY IS AN INTERESTING TERM AND IT IS USED IN THE TEXT. "THEY" ALWAYS GET THE CRITICISM AND NEVER GET THE CREDIT. THEY IN THE LORD'S WORK IS NOT THOSE WHO ARE REMOTE AND REMOVED FROM THE WORK BUT SHOULD BE YOU AND ME - INVOLVED AND AGGRESSIVELY, ACTIVELY SERVING THE LORD IN THE PLACE OF HIS CALLING.

12:40

("joy in service")

Capable, loyal,

Soldier = joy

Who are "they"?
they is me!

Bae for 1994

"FUNDAMENTAL FACTS ABOUT JOHN 5:24"(Five Significant Statements you will
of the most Ever Read!!!)

THE TERM FUNDAMENTAL IS USED TO DESCRIBE A WIDE VARIETY OF PEOPLE RANGING FROM CRAZY CULTS SUCH AS SNAKE HANDLERS AND JAMES-TOWN FOLLOWERS TO PICKETING PREACHERS WHOM NEWSPAPERS REFER TO AS "KNOW NOTHING" TO MILITANT MOSLEMS. (MY THEOLOGY PROFESSOR REFERED OFTEN TO "NEWSPAPER THEOLOGY" WHICH IS ALMOST ALWAYS WRONG WITH DEALING WITH THEOLOGICAL ISSUES!) THE TERM "FUNDAMENTALISM" ACCORDING TO WEBSTER IS A MOVEMENT IN AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM REEMPHASIZING AS FUNDAMENTAL TO CHRISTIANITY BELIEF IN THE INERRANCY OF THE SCRIPTURES, ⁽¹⁾ BIBLICAL MIRACLES, ESPECIALLY THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND PHYSICAL RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. MOST PEOPLE WHO ATTEND A BIBLE PREACHING CHURCH WOULD AGREE TO THESE BASIC BELIEFS AS BEING CARDINAL IN OUR DOCTRINAL POSITION. BELIEVING THESE TRUTHS WOULD MAKE ONE A "FUNDAMENTALIST" SO WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A RADICAL RIGHTIST OR A CARD CARRYING CRAZY BECAUSE ONE BELIEVES SUCH BASIC BELIEFS? FUNDAMENTAL MEANS THAT WHICH PERTAINS TO THE FOUNDATION, THE BASIS OR THAT WHICH IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL IN ONES BELIEFS. THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE FAITH ARE THOSE DOCTRINES WHICH ARE NOT UP FOR GRABS, BECAUSE OF A PANEL OF THEOLOGICAL EXPERTS CONSIDERS THEM NO LONGER RELEVANT TO THE CHURCH. THEN THE TEXT BEFORE US, THERE ARE SOME FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS THAT ARE OF PARAMONT IMPORTANCE AND WORTHY OF CAREFUL CONSIDERATION.

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF HEARING WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY

"what we hear depends on where we are" (G.H. MORRISON)
Golf course - on church!

WHEN PERSONS IN AUTHORITY SPEAK WE LISTEN. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN DON NEHLEN OR MAJOR

OAS
L.E.S.

A. JESUS SAID THAT SOME PEOPLE DO NOT
HEAR - THEY ARE NOT LISTENING MATTHEW
 13:9-13, 15, 16 (*Orene - GKS.!*)

REV. 3:20, I SAM. 3 - Samuel (3) "if any man hear my voice" "any sheep hear my voice" follow me!

(THERE IS AN INTERESTING STORY ABOUT THE MATTHEW PASSAGE RELATING TO THE GREAT PREACHER GEORGE WHITFIELD. THE STORY IS TOLD THAT WHITFIELD WAS PREACHING OUTDOORS TO A CROWD OF SEVERAL THOUSAND. A HARDENED UNBELIEVER WENT TO SEE THE GREAT PREACHER BUT COULD NOT ~~HEAR~~ SO HE CLIMBED UP INTO A NEARBY TREE. PUTTING

HIS FINGERS INTO BOTH EARS HE BEGAN TO WATCH IF NOT LISTEN. A PERSISTENT FLY LIT ON HIS NOSE AND HE SHOOK HIS HEAD VIOLENTLY BUT THE FLY SIMPLY WOULDN'T MOVE. JUST AS HE REMOVED A FINGER FROM HIS EAR TO FLICK THE FLY AWAY, WHITFIELD QUOTED A VERSE: "HE THAT HATH EARS TO HEAR, LET HIM HEAR." HE THEN COMMENTED ABOUT THOSE WHO SIMPLY REFUSE TO HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD. THE MAN IN THE TREE WAS SO STRUCK BY WHAT HE HEARD AND HOW IT HAD HAPPENED THAT HE NOT ONLY OPENED HIS EARS BUT HIS HEART TO THE GOSPEL.) (WHITFIELD PREACHED IN THE MID-1700'S AND THE GREAT OUTDOORS MEETINGS CAME INTO BEING BECAUSE THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FROWNED ON REVIVAL-TYPE PREACHING IN THE CHURCHES. WHITFIELD ALSO TRAVELED AND PREACHED IN AMERICA.)

I. Harkins

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF BELIEVING WHAT GOD SAYS

Change
D. L. MOODY WAS DEALING WITH A PERSON WHO CAME FORWARD IN HIS MEETINGS WHO WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH FEELINGS. AFTER HEARING THE MAN REFER TO HIS FEELINGS SEVERAL TIMES, MOODY PUT HIS FINGER ON JOHN 5:24 AND ASKED THIS QUESTION: "WHOM DO YOU BELIEVE, YOUR FEELINGS OR GOD?" FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN ~~MOODY~~ TALKS ABOUT CARS - DO YOU LISTEN, DO YOU BELIEVE HIM. WHEN YEAGER TALKS ABOUT AIRPLANES OR FURNACES DO YOU BELIEVE HIM? IF EINSTEIN WERE HERE TO TEACH A COURSE ON MATHEMATICS, WOULD YOU BELIEVE HIM? WE ACCEPT THE WORD OF AUTHORITIES. WHEN A TEACHER OR SCIENTIST SAYS THAT LIGHT TRAVELS AT THE SPEED OF 186 THOUSAND MILES PER SECOND AND THAT THE SUN IS APPROXIMATELY 93 MILLION MILES FROM THE EARTH WE BELIEVE THOSE FACTS BECAUSE THEY ARE USUALLY SPOKEN

*Neil Armstrong - Moon!
(Rocks on the surface of moon!) Listen!!!*

TO US BY PEOPLE WHO KNOW. WHEN A SURGEON SPEAKS OF THE NECESSITY OF AN OPERATION, WE MAY SEEK A SECOND OPINION AND THEN STAKE OUR LIVES ON WHAT THEY HAVE SAID IS NECESSARY. I CANNOT PROVE, ON THE BASIS OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, THAT THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS WAS FOUGHT IN 1066 BUT I ACCEPT THE WORD OF RELIABLE HISTORIANS. WHEN GOD SPEAKS ON A SUBJECT I HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO HEAR AND BELIEVE. THE WORDS BELIEVE AND FAITH ARE CLOSELY RELATED - BLOOD BROTHERS. ONE IS THE NOUN, THE OTHER THE VERB FORM OF THE SAME ROOT WORD. IT OCCURS 250 TIMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. BOUND UP IN THE IDEA OF BELIEVING SOMEONE IS THE IDEA OF COMMITMENT (JOHN 2:24) FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN A PERSON JUMPS FROM AN AIRPLANE WITH A PARACHUTE AFTER HE HAS LEAPED THROUGH THE DOOR IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE IF HE CHANGES HIS MIND - HE'S COMMITTED! (ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN STORIES IN THIS REGARD HAS TO DO WITH JOHN G. PATON, PIONEER MISSIONARY TO THE NEW HEBRIDES ISLANDS IN THE PACIFIC. WHEN HE WAS TRANSLATING THE GOSPEL OF JOHN HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO TRANSLATE THE ENGLISH WORD BELIEVE IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS. THE STORY GOES THAT SOME HUNTERS BROUGHT IN SOME GAME AFTER A WEARY EXCURSION AND ONE OF THE MEN COMMENTED AS HE SAT DOWN OR RECLINED ON THE GROUND THAT IT WAS GOOD TO "LEAN ONE'S WEIGHT" ON THE GROUND AND REST. WHEN PATON HEARD THAT WORD HE KNEW HE HAD THE IDEA OF TRUST IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE - TO LEAN ONE'S WHOLE WEIGHT UPON.) (A COLLEGE STUDENT WAS ASKED BY A PASTOR ABOUT HER RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS CHRIST. SHE REPLIED: "I HAVE NEVER TRUSTED ANYONE IN MY LIFE." THE PASTOR ASKED HOW SHE HAD GOTTEN HOME FROM COLLEGE FOR THE VACATION. REPLY WAS THAT SHE HAD FLOWN ON

Dr. R. B. Lillard
P.O. No.!

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AN AIRPLANE. HE RECOUNTED TO HER THE PROCEDURE OF SECURING HER TICKET FROM AN AGENT WHOM SHE DID NOT KNOW, RECEIVING INFORMATION REGARDING FLIGHTS AND THEIR ACCURACY FROM A SYSTEM NOT TESTED, RIDING TO THE AIRPORT IN A CAB DRIVEN BY A MAN WHOM SHE DID NOT KNOW, BOARDING AN AIRPLANE PILOTED BY A MAN - THE PILOT WHOM SHE DID NOT PERSONALLY KNOW NOR HAD SHE CHECKED HIS CREDENTIALS. SHE HAD SIMPLY TRUSTED OR BELIEVED OR PUT HER FAITH IN OTHERS TO DO THE CHECKING FOR HER!) (HISTORY RECORDS THAT WILLIAM PENN, FOUNDER OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, WAS WELL-LIKED BY THE INDIANS. ONCE THEY TOLD HIM HE COULD HAVE AS MUCH OF THEIR LAND AS HE COULD ENCOMPASS ON FOOT IN A SINGLE DAY. EARLY THE NEXT MORNING PENN STARTED OUT AND WALKED UNTIL LATE THAT NIGHT. WHEN HE FINALLY WENT TO CLAIM THE LAND FROM THE INDIANS THEY WERE GREATLY SURPRISED FOR THEY DIDN'T THINK HE WOULD TAKE THEIR PROPOSAL SERIOUSLY. BUT THEY KEPT THEIR PROMISE AND GAVE HIM A LARGE AREA WHICH TODAY IS PART OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA. WILLIAM PENN SIMPLY BELIEVED WHAT THEY SAID - NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS.)

1. HAVING
2. BELIEVING

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING WHAT GOD SAYS WE MAY HAVE

"got it"

THE WORD "HATH" IS THE OLD ENGLISH WAY OF REFERRING TO THE PRESENT TENSE. IN ACTS 16:16 THE PHRASE "POSSESSED WITH" MEANS HAS. PEOPLE WHO KNOW JESUS CHRIST ARE POSSESSED WITH, RIGHT NOW, ETERNAL LIFE. SIMPLY STATED, THEY HAVE THAT KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY BEFORE THEY DIE. THE SAME TENSE IS USED IN JOHN 3:16. LET US SUPPOSE THAT IT WERE POSSIBLE TO SPEAK WITH LEPERS WHOM JESUS

(ΕΧΟΥΜΕΝ)
"Having"

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CLEANSSED AND ASK THEM ONE QUESTION - ARE YOU CLEAN? SPEAK TO BLIND BARTIMAEUS AND ASK - CAN YOU SEE? TO THE DEAF - CAN YOU HEAR? TO THE LAME - CAN YOU WALK? THEREFORE, WHY IS IT SO UNTHINKABLE THAT WE CANNOT ASK OURSELVES THIS QUESTION - "ARE YOU SAVED, DO YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, ARE YOU ALIVE SPIRITUALLY?" IF YOU HAVE CHRIST YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE AND IN THE LANGUAGE OF COMMERCE - IT IS A "DONE DEAL." IT IS A COMPLETED TRANSACTION THE MOMENT ONE RECEIVES CHRIST. THE PREPOSITIONS IN THE PHRASE "HAS PASSED OUT OF DEATH INTO LIFE ARE INTERESTING. THE PREPOSITIONS ARE EK AND EIS. OUT OF THE REALM OF DEATH INTO THE REALM OF LIFE.

IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING WHAT GOD SAYS TO AVOID

- (1) Hearing (4) Avoiding
(2) Believing (5) Choosing
(3) Having

THERE ARE SOME SUBJECTS THAT ARE SOCIALLY TABOO IN OUR SOPHISTICATED SOCIETY. THEY ARE SIN, DEATH, HELL AND JUDGMENT. JUST AS SOME FOLKS SAY THAT IN SOCIAL CIRCLES WE DO NOT DISCUSS RELIGION OR POLITICS, SO OTHERS ADD THESE SUBJECTS AND PUT THEM ON THE "OFF LIMITS LIST." (WHAT IF SOMEONE SAID THAT WE WILL NEVER TALK ABOUT DEATH, NEVER BRING IT UP, NEVER PERMIT ANYONE TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT IT AND BY DOING THIS DEATH WILL GO AWAY. HOW FOOLISH. THINKING, CAREFUL, RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE INSURE THAT WHICH IS IMPORTANT AGAINST POSSIBLE DISASTER. WE DO THAT WITH LIFE, INSURANCE, HOME INSURANCE, EDUCATION INSURANCE, YOU NAME IT - SOMEONE INSURES IT. SURELY, IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO INSURE ONE'S SOUL SAFELY FOR ETERNITY IT DESERVES CAREFUL ATTENTION. THE WORD CONDEMNATION IN THE TEXT APPEARS FOUR TIMES IN THE CHAPTER: 5:22, 27, 29, 30. IT IS THE GREEK WORD KRISIS - EVEN THE SOUND OF THE TERM IS SIGNIFICANT. IN II THESS. 1:5

THE Importance of Choosing Life Sett.!
Over Death - (Explain - Rom 6:23) Agree.
In 3:16 / 10:28) Rev. 20:14 Personal destiny is determined by Personal Decision

JUDGMENT IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RIGHTEOUS GOD. GOD'S JUDGMENT WILL BE ACCORDING TO RIGHTEOUSNESS. HEB. 9:27 SPEAKS OF DEATH AND THE NEXT EVENT AFTER DEATH - JUDGMENT.

THAT JUDGMENT SCENE IS RECORDED IN REV. 11:20FF. THE BIBLE SAYS IT IS POSSIBLE TO REMOVE OUR CASE FROM THAT COURT DOCKET AND MOVE FROM THE COURTROOM TO CHRIST. WE SETTLE OUR CASE OUT OF COURT BY PERMITTING OUR ADVOCATE TO TAKE OUR PLACE AND TO SETTLE OUR

RIGHTEOUS DEBT BEFORE GOD THROUGH HIS WORK ON THE CROSS. WHEN ONE TURNS TO CHRIST HE WON'T HAVE TO APPEAR IN GOD'S COURTROOM -

HIS CASE IS SETTLED OUT OF COURT BEFORE THAT DAY OF JUDGMENT. IT WAS THIS IDEA THAT BROUGHT CHARLES FINNEY TO CHRIST. FINNEY,

A YOUNG LAWYER, WAS SITTING IN HIS LAW OFFICE IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK EARLY ONE MORNING. THE LORD BEGAN TO DEAL WITH FINNEY AND HE

BEGAN TO ASK HIMSELF SOME QUESTIONS. IT WAS AS IF THE LORD SAID WHAT ARE YOU PRACTICING LAW FOR - ANSWER TO GET RICH. WHAT THEN?

RETIRE. WHAT THEN? DIE. WHAT THEN? THE WORDS CAME FROM FINNEY'S OWN MOUTH - JUDGMENT.

HE FLED TO A WOODED AREA NEAR HIS OFFICE AND THERE CAME TO KNOW CHRIST AS SAVIOUR. THE REST IS HISTORY. HE BECAME NOT A BRILLIANT

LAWYER BUT A BRILLIANT PREACHER INVOLVED IN BRINGING MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS TO CHRIST OVER A PERIOD OF 50 YEARS. SOMEONE HAS

POINTED OUT THAT COURT CASES ARE SOMETIMES LABELED THE PERSONS NAME, SAY JOHN SMITH VS. THE PERSON WHO IS PRESSING THE COURT

ACTION. HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED PUTTING YOUR NAME ON THE DOCKET AS THE PERSON VS. GOD!

Dr.
Malt
settled
out of
court!

*(Oct. 1991 - RM)*ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTS

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES MIGHT BE MORE ACCURATELY DESIGNATED THE ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THIS BOOK RECORDS THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THROUGH THE APOSTLES AND OTHER CHURCH BELIEVERS DURING THE FIRST THREE DECADES OF CHURCH HISTORY. THE BOOK RECORDS THE BEGINNING, BURDENS AND BLESSINGS OF THE EARLY CHURCH. SOMEONE HAS CHARACTERIZED ACTS AS THE "OWNER'S MANUAL" FOR THE CHURCH. IF THERE IS ONE LESSON THAT IS NEEDED YET NEGLECTED ABOUT THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH IT IS WHEN THE CHURCH HAS ACCEPTED SUBSTITUTES FOR THE SPIRIT'S WORKING THE CHURCH HAS BECOME POWERLESS AND INEFFECTIVE. WHEN A CHURCH STOPS ITS EVANGELISM THRUST IT BEGINS TO DRY UP AND FINALLY DIE. MISSIONS MUST BE AT AND IN THE HEART OF THE CHURCH. (ACTS 1:8) THE SPIRITUAL MAN WHO READS ACTS, WILL BE IMPRESSED WITH THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN POWER IN THE FIRST CENTURY CHURCH. LET US EXAMINE SEVERAL VERSES WHICH SPEAK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH.

I. THE HOLY SPIRIT CHANGES UNBELIEVERS INTO BELIEVERS - Acts 2:38

THE BIBLE ATTRIBUTES SALVATION TO ALL THREE MEMBERS OF THE TRINITY. (ISAIAH 45:22, MATTHEW 1:21, TITUS 3:5) THE TERM GIFT IN THE TEXT IS SINGULAR AND IS NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE GIFTS.

(1) GIFT - TO THE CHURCH AS A WHOLE AND TO THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER AT THE MOMENT OF REGENERATION.

(2) GIFTS - EPHESIANS 4:8 SPEAKS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS. GIFTS ARE IN TWO CATEGORIES: PERMANENT AND PASSING. (TEMPORARY GIFTS SUCH AS APOSTLES, PROPHETS AND SPEAKING IN TONGUES HAVE CEASED.) THE WORD REPENT MEANS TO CHANGE THE MIND. THE BIBLE DOES NOT RECOMMEND BUT REQUIRES A SPIRITUAL CHANGE CALLED THE NEW BIRTH BEFORE A PERSON CAN ENTER HEAVEN. IN A LOCAL CHURCH SETTING, ALL PEOPLE MAY ATTEND AND ARE WELCOME BUT THOSE WHO ARE ACTUALLY INVOLVED IN THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY AND THRUST MUST BE ONLY SAVED PEOPLE. REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS GO TOGETHER. BELIEF PRECEDES BAPTISM. (ACTS 2:41, 3:19, 10:43) REMISSION IS LINKED TO REPENTANCE. THE CHANGE THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS INTO A PERSON'S LIFE IS CALLED SPIRITUAL BIRTH. (JOHN 3:5, 6, 8; JOHN 6:63) THIS EXPERIENCE IS CALLED THE NEW, SECOND BIRTH. (ILLUSTRATE BY TWO PLAINS.) IN THE EARLY CHURCH, THE EMPHASIS WAS UPON BEING SAVED, BORN AGAIN, A BELIEVER, WASHED IN THE BLOOD, REDEEMED, FORGIVEN AND KNOWING THE LORD IN A PERSONAL WAY. TODAY, IN MANY CHURCHES THIS HAS DEGENERATED INTO SHOW-UP, SIGN-UP, PAY-UP, AN APPROACH THAT HAS MISSED THE EMPHASIS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. THE SPIRIT OF GOD DOES NOT DIRECT A PERSON WHO IS NOT FULLY EQUIPPED TO RECEIVE HIS SIGNAL. (ROMANS 8:14)

II. THE HOLY SPIRIT CONTROLS THE BELIEVER - Acts 4:31

NOTE THE VERSE SAYS NOTHING ABOUT SPEAKING IN TONGUES AS AN INDICATION OF THE SPIRIT'S FULLNESS. HERE AND IN OTHER PLACES ONE INDICATION OF BEING SPIRIT-FILLED IS SPEAKING THE WORD OF GOD BOLDLY. FULLNESS

AND BOLDNESS SEEM TO GO TOGETHER IN SCRIPTURE. A WEAK WITNESS IS AN INDICATION OF THE ABSENCE OF THE SPIRIT'S POWER IN THE BELIEVER'S LIFE. ACCORDING TO EPHESIANS 5:18, SPIRITUAL RELATIONS AND NOT SPIRITUAL GYRATIONS IS AN INDICATION OF THE SPIRIT'S FILLING. THE HOLY SPIRIT SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A SUBSTANCE POURED INTO AN EMPTY VESSEL. THINK INSTEAD OF AN OWNER OCCUPYING A DWELLING, IN FULL CONTROL OF EVERY PART. THAT IS THE EMPHASIS OF THE SPIRIT'S FULLNESS, CONTROL OF THE LIFE. ALSO, THE SPIRIT'S FILLING IS NOT THE SPIRIT'S BAPTISM. IN SCRIPTURE, SPIRIT BAPTISM IS ONCE AND FOR ALL BELIEVERS. THIS IS A BIG ALL BECAUSE THE CORINTHIAN BELIEVERS WERE FAR FROM SPIRITUAL IN NATURE! (I COR. 12:13) NOWHERE IS THE BELIEVER COMMANDED TO BE BAPTIZED BY THE SPIRIT, HOWEVER WE ARE COMMANDED TO BE FILLED. THERE ARE MANY FILLINGS AND ONE RESULT OF FILLING IS THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

III. THE SPIRIT CALLS BELIEVERS INTO CHRISTIAN WORK - Acts 13:1-2, 20:28

THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF AN ORGANIZED EFFORT TO DO MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THE GENTILES. IT GIVES INSIGHT INTO GOD'S METHOD IN MISSIONS.

(1) THE HOLY SPIRIT SELECTS THE PERSONNEL AND DIRECTS THE PROGRAM. "I HAVE CALLED THEM."

(2) HE CALLS ACTIVE PEOPLE. "AS THEY MINISTER."

(3) MISSIONS IS A LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY -
AT ANTIOCH...THEY SENT.

(4) GOD'S WORK IS HARD WORK. (THE WORD
FOR WORK IS ERGON AND SUGGESTS THE EXPENDITURE
OF ENERGY. THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS GOD'S
WORK AND HIS WORKERS TOGETHER. (MATTHEW 9:38 -
"HE WILL SEND FORTH LABORERS IN ANSWER TO
PRAYER."

IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT CHASTENS CHURCH MEMBERS - Acts 5:1-5

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT INTEGRITY AND ETHICS
IN CHURCH BUSINESS. BARNABUS' GENEROUS ACTS
MAY HAVE TRIGGERED THIS EFFORT. (ACTS 4:36-37)
ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA ATTEMPTED TO EMULATE
BARNABUS' GENEROSITY BUT LIED ABOUT HOW MUCH
THEY GAVE. PLEASE NOTICE THAT NOBODY EITHER
SUGGESTED OR COMPELLED THEM TO DO WHAT THEY
DID, THE PROPERTY WAS THEIRS TO DO WITH AS
THEY PLEASED, TO GIVE IT TO THE CHURCH WAS
A VOLUNTARY ACT. THE PROBLEM AROSE WHEN THEY
TOOK CREDIT FOR HAVING GIVEN ALL BUT ONLY
GAVE PART. (COMPARE WRITING A CHECK FOR
\$1000, GETTING \$500 IN CHANGE, YET CLAIMING
A \$1000 GIFT!) GOD DESIRED TO KEEP THE
EARLY CHURCH FREE FROM HYPOCRISY AND DEALT
WITH THIS INFRACTION IN DRAMATIC, DRASTIC
DISCIPLINE. POINT: IF GOD STILL ACTED IN
SUCH A FASHION TOWARD CHURCH MEMBERS WHO LIE
ABOUT THEIR CONTRIBUTION OR EFFORTS IN THE
LORD'S WORK, HOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD WANT TO
BE MEMBERS OF A LOCAL CHURCH?

V. THE HOLY SPIRIT CONSTRAINS BELIEVERS - Acts 20:22

TEXTUAL CONSIDERATION:

(1) THE NASV MARGIN NOTE SAYS "THE SPIRIT."
THIS IS A POSSIBLE, VALID TRANSLATION AND

IS NOT TAMPERING WITH THE TEXT. KEEP IN MIND THERE WERE NO CAPITALS OR PUNCTUATION IN SOME OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS.

(2) THE NIV SAYS "AND NOW, COMPELLED BY THE SPIRIT, I AM GOING TO JERUSALEM...."

(3) BAGSTER'S VERSION OF THE NESTLE'S GREEK TEXT SAYS "BY THE SPIRIT."

THE SPIRIT OF GOD MOVED IN PAUL'S LIFE IN SUCH A WAY THAT HE FACED DANGERS AND DIFFICULTIES WITH COURAGE AND DETERMINATION. PAUL WAS DETERMINED TO DO HIS CHRISTIAN DUTY AND WORK EVEN IN THE FACE OF DEATH.

(ACTS 21:15) APPLICATION: THERE ARE THOSE RARE AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT SO BURDENS A BELIEVER THAT HE MUST DO A CERTAIN DEED NO MATTER WHAT THE COST. IT IS THE DEED AND NOT THE DIFFICULTIES THAT IS PARAMOUNT IN HIS MIND.

VI. THE HOLY SPIRIT COMFORTS THE BELIEVER - Acts 9:31

THE WORD COMFORT IN THE TEXT IS THE SAME WORD TRANSLATED IN JOHN 14:16, 26 AND JOHN 16:7. THESE VERSES SPEAK OF THE SPIRIT'S TWO-FOLD MINISTRY AS (1) CONVICT THE SINNEER AND (2) COMFORT THE SAINT. PAGAN RELIGIONS AND CULTS OFFERED NO COMFORT TO THEIR CONSTITUENTS. IN THE PRESENCE OF SICKNESS, SORROW AND DEATH THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS PRESENT TO COMFORT. A PASTOR NAMED HOFFMAN VISITED A PARISHIONER IN DEEP DISTRESS. AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME, THE CHURCH MEMBER SAID: "PASTOR, WHAT SHALL I DO, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO." AFTER A PERIOD OF LONG SILENCE, THE PASTOR SAID: "I KNOW NOW WHAT TO DO, I MUST TELL JESUS AND PLEASE

must

PRAY FOR ME." ON HIS WAY HOME, THE PASTOR COULD NOT ESCAPE THAT INTERESTING AND HAUNTING PHRASE "I MUST TELL JESUS." HE SET THAT PHRASE TO POETRY AND MUSIC AS FOLLOWS:

I MUST TELL JESUS ALL OF MY TRIALS; I CANNOT BEAR THESE BURDENS ALONE; IN MY DISTRESS HE KINDLY WILL HELP ME; HE EVER LOVES AND CARES FOR HIS OWN. I MUST TELL JESUS ALL OF MY TROUBLES; HE IS A KIND, COMPASSIONATE FRIEND; IF I BUT ASK HIM, HE WILL DELIVER, MAKE ALL MY TROUBLES QUICKLY AN END. I MUST TELL JESUS! I MUST TELL JESUS! I CANNOT BEAR MY BURDENS ALONE; I MUST TELL JESUS! I MUST TELL JESUS! JESUS WILL HELP ME, JESUS ALONE.

1

ROBERT K. SPRADLING

A.M.
JULY 1975

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

Highland

Acts 9:31

even split

GOD EXPECTS OUR CHURCH TO GROW. HOWEVER, CHURCHES DO NOT GROW BY ACCIDENT. LEFT TO THEMSELVES, CHURCHES DO NOT GET BIGGER THEY USUALLY GET SMALLER. ACROSS AMERICA, CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND MEMBERSHIP IS DECLINING. MANY ~~MAJOR~~ DOMINATIONS ARE CONCERNED WITH THE LOSSES OF RECENT YEARS. BY CONTRAST, THERE ARE CHURCHES WHICH ARE GROWING BY LEAPS AND BOUNDS. IT IS NOT UNUSUAL TO HEAR OF CHURCHES HAVING ONE TO TEN THOUSAND PEOPLE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL! THESE CHURCHES USUALLY HAVE ONE BASIC IDEA IN COMMON, NAMELY, THE BIBLE IS CENTRAL IN THE MINISTRY AND EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS IS AT THE CORE OF THEIR BELIEFS. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID THAT THE EARLY CHURCH DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH INFLUENCE TO KEEP ITS LEADERS OUT OF JAIL. IT HAD NO LARGE BUILDINGS, PROGRAMS, LOBBY AT THE CAPITOL BUT IT DID HAVE POWER WITH GOD AND THAT POWER CHANGED THE ROMAN EMPIRE. SOMETIMES THIS VERSE IN ACTS 9 IS OVERLOOKED BECAUSE IT STANDS IN THE SHADOW OF A CHAPTER WHICH DEALS WITH ONE OF THE GREATEST CONVERSIONS IN CHURCH HISTORY. THE CONVERSION EXPERIENCE OF MEN LIKE MARTIN LUTHER, AUGUSTINE, C. I. SCOTFIELD AND OTHERS HAVE BEEN DRAMATIC CONVERSIONS BUT NONE LIKE THAT OF THE APOSTLE PAUL! HIS CONVERSION EXPERIENCE DOMINATES THIS ENTIRE CHAPTER.

I. THE MARK OF PEACE

-(Eirene)

"Kept on having joy... a period of peace"

A Conversion = Calm!

A WORD OF EXPLANATION IS IN ORDER FOR THE WORD CHURCHES OR LITERALLY THE CHURCH (SINGULAR AS IN THE ORIGINAL TEXT) THE WORD CHURCH REFERS TO A CALLED OUT COMPANY OF BELIEVERS. IT REFERS TO A KIND OF PEOPLE WHO ARE DIFFERENT AND SEPERATE FROM THE WORLD. MOST PEOPLE THINK OF A CHURCH IN TERMS OF A BUILDING BUT THE BIBLE NEVER DOES! THE LORD THINKS OF THE CHURCH AS PEOPLE CALLED TO HIMSELF NOT TO SHARE IDEAS OR OPINIONS BUT TO HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD! JESUS TALKED ABOUT "MY CHURCH" - MATT. 16:18. WHEN THE LORD SPOKE TO SAUL OF TARSUS HE INDICATED THAT IN PERSECUTING THE CHURCH, SAUL WAS PERSECUTING CHRIST! (ACTS 9:4) THE WORD REST IN THE TEXT LITERALLY MEANS PEACE. THE CHURCHES THROUGHOUT PALATINE AND SPECIFICALLY IN JERUSALEM HAD BEEN

(Some folk:- W.W. Ty is a conv. home!

quite successful! all well at work!)

like Sam!

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

2.

UNDERGOING SEVERE PERSECUTION. (8:1) THE WORK OF SAUL OF TARSUS HAD INCREASED THIS PERSECUTION AND NOW THAT SAUL HAS BEEN CONVERTED A PERIOD OF TRANQUILITY AND UNITY HAS SWEEPED ACROSS ALL OF THE CHURCHES. LISTEN TO PAUL'S OWN TESTIMONY "FOR YE HAVE HEARD OF MY CONVERSATION IN TIME PAST IN THE JEWS' RELIGION, HOW THAT BEYOND MEASURE I PERSECUTED THE CHURCH OF GOD, AND WASTED IT:" (GAL. 1:13)

"AND WAS UNKNOWN BY FACE UNTO THE CHURCHES OF JUDAEA WHICH WERE IN CHRIST: BUT THEY HAD HEARD ONLY, THAT HE WHICH PERSECUTED US IN TIMES PAST NOW PREACHETH THE FAITH WHICH ONCE HE DESTROYED." (GAL. 1:23)

THE CHURCH SHOULD BE A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE FIND PEACE.

(RELATE THE TESTIMONY OF STEVE HOLDEN'S MOTHER WITH REFERENCE TO PEACE IN HIS LIFE.) OF ALL PLACES ON THE EARTH, THERE SHOULD BE HARMONY AND PEACE IN THE HOUSE OF GOD. THIS IS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE BUT IT SHOULD BE.

THE QUEST FOR PEACE IS A WIDE SPREAD ONE. MEN DO NOT FIND REAL PEACE UNTIL THEY KNOW JESUS CHRIST AS LORD AND SAVIOR. CHURCHES THAT ABIDE BY THE PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN PERSONAL CONDUCT AND CHURCH GOVERNMENT WILL KNOW THE PEACE OF GOD. IN THE CHURCH, DECISIONS ARE NOT MADE ON THE BASES OF PERSONAL AMBITION OR THE DESIRES OF A LIMITED FEW BUT RATHER SHOULD BE MADE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL AND WHEN THIS IS DONE THE SPIRIT OF GOD WILL BRING PEACE TO THE CHURCH.

"ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE." (EPH. 4:3) NOTICE THE RELATIONSHIP OF UNITY AND PEACE AND THAT BOTH OF THESE WORDS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. HE BRINGS UNITY TO THE CHURCH AND PEACE BOTH PERSONALLY AND AS A CONGREGATION. NO CHURCH WILL EVER GROW THAT IS CONSTANTLY FIGHTING AND BICKERING OVER PETTY THINGS.

II. THE MARK OF EDIFICATION = ("being built")

THE WORD "EDIFIED" IS OFTEN USED IN THE BIBLE TO SUGGEST BUILDING TO CONSTRUCT SOMETHING TO REPAIR OR TO EMBELLISH A BUILDING. THIS WORD IS USED BY CHRIST IN MATTHEW 16:18 AND IS TRANSLATED "BUILD." THE BIBLE LOOKS UPON THE CHRISTIAN AS A KIND OF A SPIRITUAL HOUSE BEING BUILT-UP WITH THE WONDERFUL TRUES OF THE WORD OF GOD. GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE TO BE BUILDING BLOCKS IN THE WORK OF THE LORD RATHER THAN STUMBLING BLOCKS. HE WANTS US TO BE BUILDERS AND NOT WRECKING CREWS. I KNOW IT IS EASIER TO TEAR DOWN AND SOMETIMES ITS MORE FUN TO WRECK SOMETHING THAN TO BUILD SOMETHING BUT IN THE END THE BUILDERS

note - kick down craftsmen to build a beam! - I have one! well! well!

Some
ck word!

Acts

20:17-32

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

(A) ARE THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE LORD. THE CHURCH HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO THE LORD'S PEOPLE TO BUILD THEM UP IN THE MOST HOLY FAITH. ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF AN AGGRESSIVE CHURCH ON THE LORD'S DAY IS TO EDIFY THE LORD'S PEOPLE. (PAUL REES TELLS HOW A PILOT OF A FLYING FORTRESS IN WORLD WAR II DESCRIBED THE EXPERIENCE HE HAD IN BRINGING BACK HIS PLANE FROM A MISSION OVER GERMANY. HE WAS BASED IN ENGLAND. THE PILOT COMMENTED DURING THE STRIKING CONTRAST OF THE ENGLISH LANDSCAPE AS SEEN FROM THE AIR BECAUSE OF THE LARGE NUMBER OF CHURCHES WHICH DOTTED THE LANDSCAPE. THE PILOT SAID THAT THESE CHURCHES HAD TALL STATELY SPIRES AND THEY AFFORD EXCELLENT LANDMARKS. WHEN THE WEATHER IS BAD THE PILOT SAID THEY USED THE CHURCHES AS GUIDES TO LEAD THEM HOME. THE PILOTS BECAME SO FAMILIAR WITH THESE CHURCHES THAT WHEN THEY WERE LET DOWN WHEN OVERCAST AND COULD SEE THE CHURCHES BENEATH THEM THEY COULD DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THEY WERE ON COURSE. IN BAD WEATHER ONE MIGHT WELL UNDERSTAND THAT THESE STEEPLES RISING TO HEAVEN ARE COMFORTING SITES TO PILOTS ON THEIR WAY HOME. HE SAID "WHEN THE WEATHER IS BAD, WE USE THE CHURCHES AS GUIDES TO LEAD US HOME." EDIFICATION IS PART OF THAT VITAL GUIDANCE. I AM AWARE OF THE FACT THAT SOME PEOPLE NEVER SEE ANYTHING WORTHWHILE IN CHURCH. BUT MOST OF US WHO ARE CHRISTIANS KNOW THE BLESSING GOD'S WORD IS TO OUR LIVES FROM SUNDAY TO SUNDAY AS WE GATHER HERE AT CHURCH. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE SPIRITUAL PERSON IS EASILY EDIFIED. IT IS THE MAN IN REBELLION AGAINST THE WORD OF GOD THAT IS MOST CRITICAL OF EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE THAT TAKES PLACE AT CHURCH. DURING COLLEGE DAYS, I LEARNED A HELPFUL LESSON CONCERNING THIS IDEA OF EDIFICATION. IN THIS PARTICULAR COLLEGE TOWN THERE ARE NUMBER OF FUNDAMENTAL CHURCHES. MY WIFE AND I FOUND A SMALL WORK IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA WHERE THE PASTOR WAS A GRADUATE OF GRACE SEMINARY AND A BIBLE EXPOSITOR. OTHER CHURCHES IN THE CITY HAD GREATER PROGRAMS AND EVEN FRIENDLIER PEOPLE BUT NONE HAD A BETTER PROGRAM OF THE SIMPLE AND CLEAR TEACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD AND FOR EVERY COLLEGE STUDENT EDIFICATION WAS VERY IMPORTANT. FOR THE SPIRITUAL CHRISTIAN EVERYTHING ELSE IN CHURCH WILL BE SECONDARY TO THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD OF GOD! DR. CHARLEY STEVENS USE TO TELL THE STORY OF HIS FATHER FATHERS APPROACH TO WORKING A TEAM OF HORSES. HE SAID THERE ARE TWO WAYS TO GET WORK OUT OF A TEAM. 1. YOU CAN WHIP

(Arnold - Chris Creek)

Tree: Root System =
To Branches or... • (John 21:15-17)

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

4.

THEM INTO LINE. (2) YOU CAN FEED THEM WELL. MOST OF US RESPOND BEST OF ALL TO THE WELL-BALANCED SPIRITUAL DIET IN OUR WORK FOR JESUS CHRIST.

III. THE MARK OF REVERENCE (*missing element in our society*)

THE WORD FEAR IS ONE OF THOSE NEUTRAL WORDS WHICH MAY HAVE EITHER A GOOD OR BAD MEANING. THE CONTEXT DETERMINES THE USAGE. IN THIS CONTEXT THE WORD FEAR REFERS TO REVERENCE OR AWE THAT FEELING THAT ONE EXPERIENCES IN THE PRESENCE OF A SUPERIOR PERSON, NAMELY, THE GOD OF HEAVEN. IN THIS VERSE IT SIMPLY MEANS THE CHRISTIAN WERE LIVING REVERENT LIVES, THAT IS THEY WERE CONSCIOUS OF GODS PRESENCE AND POWER AND IT RENDERED AN ANESTHETIC INFLUENCE ON THE LIFE. LACK OF REVERENCE FOR GOD IS ONE OF THE CARDINAL SINS OF THE UNSAVED. "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES." (ROMANS 3:18)

THERE ARE SEVERAL WORDS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WHICH REFER TO WALKING. ONE IS THE WORD PERIPATEO WHICH IS THE GENERAL WORD FOR WALKING WITH EMPHASIS ON THE ACT OF WALKING. IT WAS USED OF CERTAIN PHILOSOPHERS WHOSE FOLLOWERS WALKED AROUND WITH THEM TO LEARN. THAT IS THEY MOVED FROM PLACE TO PLACE AS THEY TAUGHT PEOPLE. ANOTHER WORD STOICHEO MEANS TO WALK IN AN ORDERLY FASHION OR STRAIGHT LINE WITH CERTAIN BOUNDS. THE WORD IN OUR TEXT TODAY IS BEST TRANSLATED "GOING ON ITS WAY". THE EMPHASIS IS ON THE WORD GO. THE CHURCH WAS ON ITS WAY WITH A SPECIFIC AIM OR GOAL AS OPPOSED TO THE AIMLESSNESS OF MEN OUTSIDE OF CHRIST. THE CHURCH WAS GOING FOR GOD BUT WITH A PROPER ATTITUDE OF REVERENCE FOR THE LORD. ONE OF THE MISSING ASPECTS OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND SERVICE TODAY IS REVERENCE FOR GOD.

"SERVANTS... BUT IN SINGLENESS OF HEART, FEARING GOD," (COL. 3:22) "FEAR GOD," (1 PET. 2:17) "FEAR GOD, AND GIVE GLORY TO HIM; FOR THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME: AND WORSHIP HIM THAT MADE HEAVEN," (REV. 14:7)

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE IDEA OF REVERENCE FOR GOD IN CHURCHES, IT HAS TO DO IN LARGE MEASURE WITH ASTE. OCCASIONALLY ONE WILL COME TO ME A LITTLE OFFENDED BY THE APPARENT LACK OF WORSHIP IN FUNDAMENTAL CHURCHES. I THINK THEY HAVE A LEGITIMATE CONCERN BECAUSE SOMETIMES BEFORE OUR CHURCHES THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF TALKING, SHAKING OF HANDS, MOVING ABOUT WHICH IS DISTRACTING IN A WORSHIP SERVICE. SOMETIMES PEOPLE GET UP COME IN AND GO OUT OF A WORSHIP SERVICE LIKE THEY WERE IN A MOVIE THEATER!

(Traverse City)
(Barfoot)

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

the quietness of a morgue!

5.

Quiet I HAVE BEEN TO CHURCHES WHERE ALL WAS ABSOLUTELY QUITE IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE AND TO ME THAT IS VERY DESIREABLE. HOWEVER, SOME OF THESE CHURCHES ARE AS DEAD AS LAST YEARS CORPSE! THEY HAVE REVERENCE BUT THATS ABOUT ALL THEY HAVE! THE FACT THAT BELIEVERS ENJOY TALKING WITH ONE ANOTHER IN THE HOUSE OF GOD INDICATES A DESIRE TO BE WITH THE LORD'S PEOPLE AND A SPIRIT OF EXCITEMENT AND ENTHUSIASM IN THE SERVICE! KA FRIEND OF MINE SAID RECENTLY "I WOULD RATHER TONE DOWN A FANATIC THEN RESURRECT A CORPSE." MY POINT IS THAT MANY CHURCHES ARE DEAD SPIRITUALLY BUT THEY ARE ALL SO REVERENT. LET ME ADD ANOTHER WORD. I THINK REVERENCE TO GOD IS EXPRESSED NOT ONLY IN ATTITUDE BUT ALSO APPAREL. SUNDAY IS THE LORD'S DAY, CHURCH IS THE LORD'S HOUSE AND I THINK A WORD OF CAUTION AND RESPONSIBILITY IS IN ORDER ESPECIALLY TO THE YOUNG IN THIS MATTER OF DRESS. GOOD TASTE IS IN ORDER WHEN WE COME INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD. I REALIZE THERE IS SUCH A CASUAL SPIRIT ABROAD IN THE LAND TODAY ANY KIND OF DRESS IS SUPPOSE TO BE ACCEPTABLE ANYWHERE. I DON'T AGREE! (RELATE THE STUPIDITY OF A MAN LIKE WOODY ALLEN WEARING A TUXEDO AND SNEAKERS. IT MAY BE GOOD PUBLICITY BUT ITS BAD TASTE!) A LITTLE DIGNITY AND DECORUM IS IN ORDER IN THE HOUSE OF GOD! WEARING A SUITS AND TIE WON'T HURT FELLOWS ON THE LORD'S DAY AND DRESSING IN A LADY LIKE WAY IN GOOD TASTE AVOIDING SHORTS AND SLACKS WON'T HURT YOUNG LADIES EITHER! SUCH COMMENTS WERE NOT NECESSARY IN YEARS GONE BY WHEN MOTHERS AND FATHERS TOOK THE TIME SUPERVISE THEIR CHILDREN BUT NOW IT IS A DIFFERENT GENERATION AND A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT NEEDS TO BE GIVEN IN THIS REGARD. PERHAPS WE SHOULD PUT A SIGN OVER THE DOOR OF OUR CHURCH AUDITORIUM, WHICH SIMPLY SAYS REVERENCE, PLEASE! YOU ARE ENTERING INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD!

lights on
A Dress or Propt needed
Handwritten
Bruses

IV. MARK OF COMFORT

PAGAN RELIGIONS AND STRANGE GODS DO NOT COMFORT THERE CONSTITUENTS. HOWEVER, ONE OF THE TITLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THAT OF DIVINE COMFORTER. PAUL WROTE THE CORINTHIANS THESE WORDS "BLESSED BE GOD, EVEN THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER OF MERCIES, AND THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT; WHO COMFORTETH US IN ALL OUR TRIBULATION, THAT WE MAY BE ABLE TO COMFORT THEM WHICH ARE IN ANY TROUBLE, BY THE COMFORT WHEREWITH WE OURSELVES ARE COMFORTED OF GOD. (IICORN. 1-3-4) "NEVERTHELESS GOD, THAT COM-

Handwritten notes in green ink:
...the quietness of a morgue!
...the quietness of a morgue!
...the quietness of a morgue!

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

6.

FORTH THOSE THAT ARE CAST DOWN, COMFORTED US BY THE COMING OF TITUS;" (II CORN. 7:6) I THESS. 4:18, I THESS. 5:11, "WHEREFORE COMFORT YOURSELVES TOGETHER, AND EDIFY ONE ANOTHER, EVEN AS ALSO YE DO." THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST ISN'T PERFECT AND AS A MATTER OF FACT IT WILL ALWAYS HAVE HYPOCRITES AND PEOPLE WHO OFFEND OTHERS AND WHO ARE PETTY IN THEIR APPROACH TO LIFE. BUT WITH ALL ITS PROBLEMS, THE CHURCH IS ABLE TO COMFORT PEOPLE IN LIVES DESPERATE HOURS. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU COME TO CHURCH LOW IN SPIRIT, DISCOURAGED AND READY TO GIVE UP BUT YOU HAVE BEEN COMFORTED BY THE PRESENCE OF GODLY PEOPLE, THE SINGING OF HYMNS AND THE PRAYING OF PRAYERS AND MOST OF ALL THE EXPOSITION OF THE WORD OF GOD. A GROWING SPIRITUAL CHURCH MUST MINISTER COMFORT TO ITS CONSTITUENTS. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH IS TO COMFORT THE AFFLICTED AND AFFLICT THE COMFORTABLE. (Sanger)

V. THE MARK OF NUMBERS

THE BOOKS OF ACTS IS A BOOK OF BIBLE ARITHMETIC. IN ACTS 2:41-47 THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH. ACTS 5:1 AND FOLLOWING THE LORD SUBTRACTED FROM THE CHURCH. IN ACTS 8:1 THE CHURCH WAS DIVIDED PEOPLE WERE SCATTERED TO THE EXTREMES OF PALESTINE AND IN OUR TEXT TODAY THE CHURCH WAS MULTIPLIED. THE WORD MULTIPLIED IS USED MORE IN THE BOOK OF ACTS THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE NEW TESTAMENT BOOK. THE WRITER LUKE IS TRYING TO IMPRESS UPON US THAT THIS TIME IN CHURCH HISTORY WAS A TIME GREAT INCREASE IN NUMBERS. (COMPARE ACTS 6:1,7 ACTS 7:17 AND ACTS 12:24) THERE IS A MANIA AMONG SOME CHURCHES TODAY TO BE LARGE AT ANY EXPENSE. CHURCH WORK HAS BECOME A KIND OF RACE TO BE THE BIGGEST SOMETHING OR OTHER IN YOUR TOWN. CHURCHES ADVERTISE THAT THEY HAVE THE FASTEST GROWING SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE CITY, THEY ADVERTISE THE LARGEST CHURCH IN THE STATE OR IN THE UNITED STATES. (RELATE DR. VICKS ADVERTISEMENT OF THE WORLDS LARGEST SUNDAY SCHOOL WHEN THAT IS ALSO THE CLAIM OF JACK HYLES, JERRY FALWELL, AND SEVERAL CHURCHES IN THE STATE OF OHIO AT THE SAME TIME!) A FRIEND OF MINE HAS COINED THE TERM JUMBOISM OR THE SUPER CHURCH SYNDROME. THIS IDEA OF HAVING CLOWNS AND A CIRCUS ATMOSPHERE AT SUNDAY SCHOOL EVERY SUNDAY HAS DONE MUCH TO CHEATEN THEM THE GOSPEL. IT MAY HELP THE PREACHERS EGO TO SAY HE HAS THE BIGGEST OR BEST SOMETHING IN A CITY BUT IT DOES NOTHING TO ENHANCE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST IN THE EYES OF THE UNSAVED. VANCE HAVNER HAS SAID

chs not interest in us have us that are interesting!

They should!

"FIVE MARKS OF CHURCH GROWTH"

Rock

7.

THAT THE CHURCH IS NO PLACE TO HAVE **MUSIC, MOVIES, MAGIC AND MONKEYSHINES** EVERY SUNDAY! I AGREE. INSPITE OF ALL THE **DISTASTEFUL THINGS** WHICH ARE BEING DONE, GOOD SOLID BIBLE CENTERED CHURCHES **ARE INTERESTED IN NUMBERS**. AS A MATTER OF FACT **ONE IS A NUMBER**. THERE IS A BOOK IN THE BIBLE CALLED THE BOOK OF NUMBERS. THE BOOK OF ACTS IF FILLED WITH **SPECIFIC NUMBERS** OF PEOPLE THAT WERE REACHED AND HELPED THROUGH THE GOSPEL. **LARGENESS** IS NOT USUALLY THE PROBLEM NEARLY AS MUCH AS **SMALLNESS** IN CHURCHES. DID YOU EVER HEAR ANYONE SAY "OUR CHURCH IS TOO SMALL?" YOU NEVER WILL BECAUSE SUCH A QUESTION WOULD IMPLY SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE ABOUT IT AND MOST PEOPLE ARE NOT WILLING TO ACCEPT THAT RESPONSIBILITY. SOMEONE ASKED **SPURGEON** WHICH KIND OF CHURCH HE WOULD RATHER PASTOR A LARGE OR A SMALL ONE. HIS ANSWER WAS A **LARGE ONE** FOR A SPECIFIC REASON. (EXPLAIN) I MUST CONFESS THAT I WOULD RATHER PREACH TO 500 ON SUNDAY THAN 50. I WOULD RATHER PREACH TO 1000 THAN 100. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE WORD OF GOD IS GOOD FOR 50 IT SHOULD BE BETTER FOR 500. **GOD EXPECTS CHURCHES TO GROW AND WHERE THERE IS SPIRITUALLY GOOD HEALTH WILL BE PROPER GROWTH.** A CHURCH THAT IS NOT GROWING IN NUMBERS IS NOT IN TOUCH WITH GOD. I AM INTERESTED IN **QUALITY AS WELL AS QUANTITY** AND REALIZE THERE MUST BE SOME KIND "QUALITY CONTROL" IN ANY ORGANIZATION BUT FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE ADOPTED "LET'S STAY SMALL PHILOSOPHY" AND IT WILL KILL A LOCAL CHURCH. LET US CONCLUDE WITH THE REASON WHY GOD WANTS HIS CHURCH TO GROW. **QUESTION: WHERE WOULD YOU BE TODAY IF SOMEONE HADN'T CARED ENOUGH TO BRING THE GOSPEL TO YOU?**

*(Esse Escue)
MARR ESCUE*

Something cared!

*When all is said & done
more is said than done!*

*85% of all
chs. in U.S. under 300!*

*RKS + 6 D.
growth
5*

Big Road

" P. Lot

" Build

" Budget

no me B.g!

A MAN WHO WENT TO HEAVEN WITHOUT DYING

II KINGS 2:1-11

2 THIS IS A STRANGE SOUNDING SUBJECT. YET EVERY BELIEVER IN CHRIST HAS THAT HOPE: "O JOY! O DELIGHT, SHOULD WE GO WITHOUT DYING, NO SICKNESS, NO SADNESS, NO DREAD AND NO CRYING, CAUGHT UP THROUGH THE CLOUDS WITH OUR LORD INTO GLORY, WHEN JESUS RECEIVES HIS OWN." THE GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT OF SEVERAL PREMILLENIAL BIBLE TEACHERS, I HAVE KNOWN, WAS THAT THEY MISSED THE EXPERIENCE OF GOING TO HEAVEN WITHOUT DYING. (I COR. 15:51) "LISTEN, I WILL TELL YOU A SECRET. WE SHALL NOT ALL DIE, BUT SUDDENLY IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE, EVERYONE OF US WILL BE CHANGED AS THE TRUMPET SOUNDS! THE TRUMPET WILL SOUND AND THE DEAD SHALL BE RAISED BEYOND THE REACH OF CORRUPTION AND WE WHO ARE STILL ALIVE SHALL SUDDENLY BE UTTERLY CHANGED." (PHILLIPS TRANSLATION) THIS VERSE SPEAKS OF A WHOLE HOST OR GENERATION OF PEOPLE WHO WILL SHARE IN A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE. ELIJAH APPEARED ON THE SCENE SUDDENLY AND SPECTACULARLY. (1 COR. 15:51) IT WAS ONE OF THE DARKEST HOURS IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY AND AHAH WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SPIRITUAL DECLINE. ELIJAH'S COURAGE TO SPEAK THE TRUTH IN HIGH PLACES PLUS HIS TWENTY YEARS OF UNFLINCHING PROPHETIC MINISTRY IS ONE OF THE FEW BRIGHT SPOTS IN THE HISTORICAL BOOKS. HE DISAPPEARED FROM HISTORY AS SUDDENLY AS HE APPEARED. HE WAS ONE OF TWO MEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT TO BE TRANSLATED.

1 K. 17:1-18
Elijah - (1 K. 17 - Ahab + Jezebel express
 Carmel - "Fire" "Eve Elevation" (Enoch + Elijah)
 To Heaven

Elisha - #2 - Shunammite Woman
 Naaman - (2 K. 4-5)
 "Miracles"

A change in leadership.

-2-

I. ELIJAH'S LAST DAY ON EARTH - *Recorded in the Bible.*

SOMEHOW, PERHAPS BY DIVINE REVELATION, BOTH ELIJAH AND THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS KNEW HIS DEPARTURE WAS IMMINENT. THERE WAS NO CRYING, PRAYING, PLEADING OR POUTING ON ELIJAH'S PART BUT RATHER A VERY MATURE ATTITUDE CONCERNING HIS FINAL DAY ON EARTH. THAT DAY WAS MARKED BY SEVERAL FEATURES:

(A) CONTROL - VERSE 1

THE TEXT MAKES IT VERY CLEAR WHO IS IN CONTROL OF SUCH THINGS AS OUR DEPARTURE FROM THIS LIFE. "THE LORD WOULD TAKE ELIJAH UP INTO HEAVEN...." ELIJAH WASN'T CONSULTED, ONLY NOTIFIED! GOD MAKES ALL SUCH DETERMINATIONS EVEN IN THE CASE OF A VERY SPECIAL SERVANT. THE LORD IS IN CHARGE AND WHEN OUR WORK IS DONE IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON TO HEAVEN, (COMPARE JOHN THE BAPTIST) ELIJAH'S WORK PASSED ON TO ANOTHER.

when where (RELATE STORY OF MAN TO FORTUNE TELLER ASKING TWO QUESTIONS.) THE PSALMIST WAS CORRECT WHEN HE SAID: "MY TIMES ARE IN THY HANDS...." (PSALM 31:15)

(B) CONTINUATION - VERSE 2

"THE LORD HATH SENT ME...." ELIJAH'S LAST DAY ON EARTH WAS MARKED BY A CONTINUING MINISTRY. THE LORD CONTINUED TO GUIDE AND LEAD HIM IN THE WORK TO WHICH HE HAD BEEN CALLED. ELIJAH WAS TRUE TO HIS CALLING OR MISSION IN LIFE TO THE VERY LAST DAY. THERE WAS NO GUESSING OR WONDERING WHAT GOD WANTED HIM TO DO. HE KEPT AT HIS WORK, STAYED BUSY FOR GOD AND HIS LAST TRIP WAS TO SAY FAREWELL TO HIS FRIENDS AND YOUNG

*L. Strauss
F. Brown*
Tarry Test (Tough)
ch. Purpose - accept
something less - else
or Best!

Voices = hurry / Not Tarry!

Richard Strauss -

COLLEAGUES AT THREE BIBLE SCHOOLS KNOWN AS THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS. (FROM THE DAYS OF SAMUEL SCHOOLS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR PUPILS KNOWN AS SONS OF THE PROPHETS. THE GREAT PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WERE THE SPIRITUAL LEADERS OF THE TIME AND ATTRACTED YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SOUGHT TO RECEIVE SOMETHING OF THEIR SPIRIT AND VISION FOR THE SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING OF THE NATION. THE PROPHETS AND THEIR COLLEAGUES LIVED IN COLONIES AND THREE OF THESE CITIES OR CENTERS OF RELIGIOUS LIFE ARE MENTIONED IN THE TEXT. THEY WERE PLACES OF STUDY, PRAYER, MEDITATION AND PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT PROPHETIC MINISTRY WHICH SO PROFOUNDLY AFFECTED THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF ISRAEL. IT WAS ALSO A PLACE WHERE SACRED MUSIC AND SACRED TRADITIONS WERE CONTINUED BOTH ORALLY AND IN WRITTEN FORM.) SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT HE SPOKE IN CHAPEL THAT DAY ENCOURAGING HIS YOUNG FRIENDS TO KEEP ON KEEPING ON IN THE WORD OF GOD AND THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY. ELIJAH CONTINUED HIS WORK IN THE LIVES OF YOUNG MEN. (II TIM. 2:2) WE THINK OF PROPHETS AS PREACHERS BUT THEY WERE ALSO EDUCATORS. (FOR EXAMPLE, THOUGH NOT A PROPHET, D. L. MOODY LACKED FORMAL EDUCATION BUT BECAME INSTRUMENTAL IN THE HANDS OF GOD IN TRAINING ONE OUT OF EVERY 10 EVANGELICAL MISSIONARIES IN THE WORLD. IN AMERICAN HISTORY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY WAS CHARTERED FOR THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATING ENGLISH AND INDIANS IN KNOWLEDGE AND GODLINESS. FIFTY YEARS LATER, YALE WAS FOUNDED WITH THE STATED PURPOSE OF PREPARING YOUNG MEN FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT IN CHURCH AND STATE. PRINCETON UNIVERSITY CAME INTO EXISTENCE WHEN THESE TWO DEPARTED FROM THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES TO WHICH THEY HAD BEEN DEDICATED.

Fr: right water! moody student!

NOW NONE OF THESE INSTITUTIONS HAVE A BURDEN FOR THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. IN 1880 A NEW TYPE OF SCHOOL ROSE IN AMERICA SPECIFICALLY FOR TRAINING MISSIONARIES. IT WAS CALLED A BIBLE INSTITUTE. THIS ALONG WITH THE SCOFIELD BIBLE DID MUCH TO RAISE UP A NEW MOVEMENT OF FAITH MISSIONS AND BIBLE TEACHING TO KEEP THE DOOR OF WITNESS OPEN TO A GENERATION OF PEOPLE. ELIJAH KNEW THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING HIS WORK IN THE LIVES OF OTHER PEOPLE. GOD GAVE HIM ELISHA TO CARRY ON THAT WORK. SOMEONE ASKED JOHN WESLEY WHAT HE WOULD DO IF HE KNEW THE LORD WERE COMING IN THREE DAYS. "I SHOULD DO JUST THE WORK WHICH I HAVE ALREADY PLANNED TO DO: MINISTERING IN ONE PLACE: MEETING MY PREACHERS IN ANOTHER UNTIL THE MOMENT CAME WHEN I WOULD BE CALLED...." IN THIS STATEMENT, WESLEY TOUCHES AN IMPORTANT TRUTH, NAMELY, THE RIGHT KIND OF CHRISTIAN NEEDS NO EXTRA TIME TO GET READY TO MEET THE LORD. COME WHEN HE WILL, THE SERVANT IS READY. ANOTHER GREAT PREACHER EXPRESSED THE SAME TRUTH BY SAYING HE WOULD CONTINUE HOEING IN HIS GARDEN! (2)

(C) COMPANIONSHIP - VERSE 6-8

NOTICE THE REPETITION OF THE PHRASE "THEY TOO" - VERSE 6, 7, 8. ACTS 3:1 SAYS: "NOW PETER AND JOHN WENT UP TOGETHER INTO THE TEMPLE AT THE HOUR OF PRAYER...." THERE IS A SPECIAL KIND OF TOGETHERNESS THAT COMES OUT OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE. ACCORDING TO VERSE 11 THEY WALKED AND TALKED AND AS THEY WALKED AND TALKED SUDDENLY ELIJAH WAS ESCORTED TO GLORY.

1 Double Portion:
-5- Not double duty -
Power... Success in
in service. (moses & Joshua)

✓ THESE TWO MEN HAD THE SAME GOALS AND DESIRES IN LIFE HENCE SPIRITUAL INTERESTS SHOULD MOLD SPECIAL FRIENDSHIPS. ✓ THOSE WHO HAVE A COMMON LIFE THROUGH A COMMON LORD SHOULD HAVE COMMON INTERESTS. A PERSON WITH A FEW GOOD FRIENDS IS INDEED A WEALTHY PERSON AND THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. (COMPARE DAVID AND JONATHAN, PAUL AND TIMOTHY.) SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WHILE READING A BOOK BY THE LATE V. RAYMOND EDMAN I NOTICED A STRANGE SOUNDING TERM HE USED WITH REFERENCE TO HIS WIFE OF MANY YEARS. HE REFERRED TO HER AS - "FRIEND WIFE." THIS MIGHT SUGGEST ONE OF THE GREAT SECRETS FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE - TO BE FRIENDS.

(D) CONCERN

✓ ACCORDING TO VERSE 9, ELIJAH'S DESIRE WAS TO LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND OF SPIRITUAL HELP AND ELISHA'S DESIRE WAS TO BE COUNTED WORTHY OF THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY. POINT: THESE TWO MEN HAD SPIRITUAL INTERESTS UPPERMOST IN THEIR MINDS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, MANY CHRISTIANS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE EXCEPT SPIRITUAL INTERESTS. QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU WANT MOST IN LIFE? HOW MANY COULD HONESTLY SAY THE ANOINTING OF GOD ON THE LIFE IS THEIR SUPREME SPIRITUAL DESIRE?

II. THREE REASONS WHY GOD TOOK ELIJAH HOME TO HEAVEN IN SUCH A SPECTACULAR WAY

✓ (SUPPOSE AT 11:55 TODAY, A MOTORCADE OF CADILLACS, LINCOLNS AND MERCEDES ARRIVED AT OUR FRONT DOOR WITH CHAUFFERS AND SECURITY PEOPLE BY THE DOZENS SWARMING OVER

THE BUILDING AND DOWN THE AISLES ASKING IF MR. BLANK WAS HERE. A SPECIAL ENVOY TO ESCORT HIM TO THE AIRPORT. THE OBVIOUS CONCLUSION WOULD BE THAT MR. BLANK IS SOMEBODY IMPORTANT! ELIJAH WAS IMPORTANT TO GOD AND HE MANIFESTED THAT IMPORTANCE IN THE MANNER IN WHICH HE WAS TAKEN HOME TO GLORY.

(A) TO UNDERSCORE THE IMPORTANCE OF ELIJAH'S MINISTRY

THERE WAS A SENSE IN WHICH ELIJAH ACTED AS THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE FOR THE NATION OF ISRAEL TO TURN THEM BACK FROM IDOLATRY. ON SEVERAL OCCASION, GOD MOVED IN GREAT POWER TO ESTABLISH ELIJAH'S POWER AND AUTHORITY IN THE NATION. YET, IT WAS EASY FOR MEN TO IGNORE AND RIDICULE THE MINISTRY OF THE PROPHET LISTED HIM AS A RELIGIOUS FANATIC, A FUNDAMENTAL BIBLE BANGER OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE TIMES. THE GENERATION MIGHT NOT RECEIVE ELIJAH'S MINISTRY BUT TO IGNORE HIM WAS DIFFICULT. HIS TRANSLATION WAS GOD'S HEARTY ENDORSEMENT OR AMEN TO THE FAITHFUL WORK OF HIS COURAGEOUS SERVANT. GOD STEPPED FORWARD, STOOPED DOWN AND VINDICATED THE MINISTRY OF HIS SERVANT.

(B) TO ESTABLISH A WITNESS TO A GODLESS GENERATION

MEN DO NOT GO OUT SEEKING GOD, AND EXCEPT FOR EMERGENCIES SELDOM THINK ABOUT HIM. MAN'S PHILOSOPHY IS TO FORGET GOD IF GOD WILL ONLY LET MAN ALONE TO LIVE IN SELFISH OR SINFUL PLEASURE HE'LL BE GLAD TO FORGET GOD. PETER CHARACTERIZED THE GENERATION PRIOR TO THE SECOND COMING AS "THEY WILFULLY ARE IGNORANT"; THAT IS THEY SHUT

THEIR EYES AND MINDS TO CERTAIN BIBLE FACTS. WHEN MEN LIVE IN DEEP SIN, FREQUENTLY GOD MUST ACT IN AN UNUSUAL WAY TO AWAKEN THEM TO THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION. ELIJAH WAS GOD'S MAN AND HE ESTABLISHED THE CREDENTIALS IN A DRAMATIC WAY.

(c) TO BRING TO A DRAMATIC CLIMAX THE
MINISTRY OF A FAITHFUL SERVANT

ONLY A SHORT TIME BEFORE, ELIJAH HAD BEEN UTTERLY DISCOURAGED AND DEFEATED. HE ASKED GOD TO DIE. THINK WHAT ELIJAH WOULD HAVE MISSED IF GOD HAD ANSWERED HIS PRAYER. GOD KNEW WHAT WAS BEST FOR ELIJAH AND HAD SOMETHING BETTER IN MIND THAN THE DISCOURAGED PROPHET COULD EVER ENVISION. SO IT IS WITH US. A LOST JOB MAY MEAN SOMETHING BETTER. A SHATTERED ROMANCE MAY INDICATE SOMETHING BETTER IS IN THE FUTURE. A SERIOUS REVERSE IN LIFE COULD MEAN GOD HAS SOMETHING BETTER. INSTEAD OF DYING A DEFEATED MAN, GOD LET ELIJAH LIVE TO TRIUMPH OVER HIS ENEMIES AND HIS PROBLEMS AND GO HOME TO HEAVEN IN A VERY UNUSUAL AND DRAMATIC FASHION. "Fire" = His trademark!

III. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ELIJAH'S
TRANSLATION TO US TODAY

MOST MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH ARE BOTH DISPENSATIONALISTS AND PREMILLENIAL IN THEIR THEOLOGY. THAT MEANS, WE ARE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE CHURCH DID NOT EXIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. HOWEVER, IN THE TRANSLATION OF ELIJAH AND ENOCH A BIBLE PRINCIPLE AND PICTURE IS SET BEFORE GOD'S PEOPLE. THE PRINCIPLE IS THAT OF DELIVERING HIS PEOPLE FROM THE EARTH BEFORE JUDGMENT

ARRIVES. FOR EXAMPLE, GOD TOOK ENOCH UP FROM THE EARTH BEFORE THE JUDGMENT AND PROVIDED SAFETY FOR NOAH TO GO THROUGH THE JUDGMENT UNHARMED. WHEN GOD ESTABLISHED HIS KINGDOM IN HISTORY, HE INSTITUTED THAT ACTION WITH A SERIES OF PRE-KINGDOM JUDGMENTS IN THE FORM OF PLAGUES ON EGYPT, THE NATION RESTRICTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GOD'S KINGDOM ON EARTH. WHEN GOD ESTABLISHES HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH AGAIN IN HUMAN HISTORY, IT WILL BE PRECEDED BY PRE-KINGDOM JUDGMENT AS MENTIONED IN REVELATION 4-19. PRIOR TO THAT JUDGMENT, GOD WILL TAKE THE CHURCH OUT OF THE EARTH BY TRANSLATION. (1 THESS. 4:13FF, 1 THESS. 1:10, 5:9, REVELATION 3:10. THE NEXT EVENT ON GOD'S PROPHETIC PROGRAM IS THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH. EXPLAIN. CONCLUSION: SOME DAY WILL BE OUR LAST DAY ON EARTH TOO. FOR SAINT AND SINNER, EVERYTHING FUTURE WILL BE BASED ON PAST DECISIONS. THAT IS WHAT CHURCH IS ALL ABOUT. YOU WON'T LEARN ABOUT THE COMING OF THE LORD AT CIVIC MEETINGS, SPORTS MEETINGS, BUT IN CHURCH WHERE THE BIBLE IS PREACHED. THE MISSION OF THE MINISTER IS TO TELL PEOPLE TO GET READY - IN THE SAME FASHION OF ELIJAH. MANY WILL RATIONALIZE AND SAY IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN TO ME, THERE IS PLENTY OF TIME, SOMEDAY, BUT WE ALL HAVE AN APPOINTMENT TO KEEP WITH GOD. (ACTS 17:31)

Peter
fired
at
H. L.

TAXES, TOLLS FOR TRAVELLING ROADS, CROSSING BRIDGES, USING HARBORS, MARKET SALES TAXES, TOWN TAXES FOR ENTERING THE CITY. FOR EXAMPLE, IF A PERSON WERE TRAVELLING A CERTAIN ROAD HE MIGHT HAVE TO PAY A TAX FOR USING THE ROAD, OR THE CART CARRYING THE LOAD AND THE BEAST THAT PULLED IT. ANYTHING THAT COULD BE TAXED WOULD BE! AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE TAX COLLECTOR HAD THE RIGHT TO SEARCH ONE'S PERSONAL PROPERTY. HE COULD COMPEL THE TAXPAYER TO OPEN LUGGAGE ASSESS TAX ON ANYTHING HE SAW. HE COULD THEN SET AN EXHORBITANT SUM AND IF THE TAXED PERSON DID NOT HAVE THE MONEY TO PAY, THE TAX COLLECTOR WOULD LEND HIM THE MONEY TO PAY AND CHARGE HIM WHATEVER RATE OF INTEREST HE DESIRED. NO WONDER TAX COLLECTORS HELD "MOST HATED STATUS" IN SOCIETY. IT IS INTERESTING THAT JESUS CALLED ONE OF THESE TAX COLLECTORS SO FEARED AND HATED BY THE POPULOUS TO BE ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES AND THEN WENT HOME TO EAT WITH HIM! THE PHARISEES WERE FURIOUS! LEVI ABANDONED HIS LIFESTYLE AND BUSINESS TO FOLLOW JESUS. WHEN HE CAME TO KNOW THE LORD HIMSELF, HE SOUGHT A METHOD OF INTRODUCING OTHERS TO JESUS. TODAY, WE CALL THAT METHOD "LIFESTYLE OR FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM." LEVI HAD A GARDEN BUFFET OR PARTY AND INVITED HIS FRIENDS AND FORMER ASSOCIATES TO ATTEND. HE USED HIS RESOURCES TO REACH OTHERS - TO GET THEM TO JESUS. THIS PARTICULAR MEETING WAS NOT DESIGNED FOR BUSINESS ADVANTAGE OR TO COLLECT TAXES BUT SIMPLY THAT PEOPLE MIGHT SEE OR HEAR JESUS - THAT'S ALL - THAT'S ENOUGH! THIS WAS A MEETING JUST FOR THE JOY OF IT! LEVI STARTED AN E.E. IN HIS OWN HOUSE WITH A DINNER PARTY. IN THIS PASSAGE, REFERENCE IS MADE TO DOCTORS. AS A GENERAL RULE, DOCTOR'S

DO NOT SEE HEALTHY PEOPLE, ONLY THE SICK. THE HEALTHY DON'T WANT OR NEED HIM. SO JESUS POINTS OUT THAT HE DID NOT COME TO CALL THE SELF SATISFIED WHO ARE FILLED WITH THEIR OWN GOODNESS. HE CAME TO HELP SINNERS. TWO SALIENT FACTS ABOUT EVANGELISM: (1) PERSONAL EFFORT - "IN HIS OWN HOUSE" THESE PEOPLE DID NOT DROP IN FOR A BITE TO EAT AT LEVI'S HOUSE - THEY WERE INVITED. THE CONTACT WAS CRITICAL. LIKewise, SINNERS DO NOT WANDER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD - THEY ARE INVITED. WE ARE TOLD TO GO AFTER THEM! (MATTHEW 28) (2) PERSONAL EXPENSES - "A GREAT FEAST" THERE'S EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT MATTHEW FOOTED THE ENTIRE BILL FOR THIS BANQUET. BUSINESS PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLE OF BANQUETS FOR BUSINESS. LEVI USED HIS RESOURCES TO REACH THE UNREACHED. (COMPARE TED DEMOSS AND OTHERS) OPINION: THESE PEOPLE ENJOYED THE MEAL. JESUS WAS A CHARMING GUEST. THERE WAS NO CURSING, DRINKING, GAMBLING OR BAD JOKES JUST A GOOD TIME FAR BETTER THAN THEY EXPECTED. HERE WAS A SOCIAL EVENT TO SATISFY THE SOUL AS WELL AS THE STOMACH. THE LORD DOES FAR MORE THAN PEOPLE EVER EXPECT. THEY CAME CURIOUS TO SEE HIM AND SOME EXPERIENCED THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS. THESE OUTCASTS WOULD NEVER BE CAST OUT AGAIN. (JOHN 6:37)

II. THE MEAL WITH SIMON THE PHARISEE

LUKE 7:36-50

IN ALL PROBABILITY THIS WAS AN INVITATION BORN OUT OF CURIOSITY MORE THAN COURTESY. IT WAS PROBABLY A PROFESSIONAL GESTURE AND NOT A FRIENDLY ONE. ONE IS IMPRESSED WITH THE FACT THAT JESUS DID NOT SHUN HIS CRITICS NOR COURT HIS FANS.

THE ABSENCE OF GOOD MANNERS IS OBVIOUS FROM THE PRESENCE AND EMPHASIS OF THREE WORDS IN THE TEXT WHICH POINT TO THE PHARISEES FAILURE: WATER, KISS, AND OIL. THE HOMES OF WELL-TO-DO WERE BUILT AROUND A COURTYARD OR GARDEN. CERTAIN GUESTS WERE INVITED BUT IF A RABBI WAS THE FEATURED GUEST THE HOUSE WAS OPEN TO ALL THAT COULD GET NEAR ENOUGH TO SEE AND HEAR HIM. IT WAS A KIND OF A EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY, SEMINAR, ACADEMIC EVENT FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD AND THE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY. HOWEVER, WHEN AN INVITED GUEST ARRIVED, THE HOST HAD A THREE FOLD SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: (1) PLACE A HAND ON THE GUESTS SHOULDER AND A KISS ON THE CHEEK - A MARK OF RESPECT. IT WAS NEVER EVER NEGLECTED WHEN A RABBI APPEARED. TO DO SO WAS A TERRIBLE SOCIAL BLUNDER (2) WATER FOR THE FEET - SERVANTS TO DO IT. (3) OIL FOR THE HEAD - HOT SUN - DROP OF OIL AS A LUBRICANT FOR THE SKIN AND PERFUME. GOOD MANNERS REQUIRED ALL THREE AND IN THIS CASE NONE WAS DONE. ONE COMMENTATOR SUGGESTS SIMON WAS CELEBRITY CONSCIOUS BUT HE TRIED TO PATRONIZE JESUS. POINT: THIS STORY SHOWS TWO DIFFERENT ATTITUDES TOWARD JESUS. SIMON - HE FELT NO CONCERN AND NO NEED FOR JESUS. RELIGIOUSLY, SOCIALLY, IN NO WAY WOULD HE TURN TO CHRIST FOR HELP. WEeping WOMAN - SHE HELD BACK NOTHING, UNASHAMED, USELFISH AND UNINHIBITED SHE WORSHIPPED JESUS WHOLLY. TO HER NOTHING WAS TO GOOD FOR JESUS AND NOBODY TOO BAD AND SHE WAS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE. IN THIS PASSAGE FAITH AND FORGIVENESS GO TOGETHER. SIMON HAD JESUS OVER FOR DINNER BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH. LIKE THE WEeping WOMAN, REPENTANCE IS REQUIRED IN OTHER WORDS TO CHANGE ONE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD HIM OR NO FORGIVENESS IS FORTHCOMING.

III. THE MEAL WITH ZACCHAEUS CHIEF PUBLICAN LUKE 19:1-10

THE FIRST ARRESTING FEATURE ABOUT THIS STORY AS IT RELATES TO OUR SUBJECT IS THAT JESUS INVITED HIMSELF TO BE A GUEST IN ZACCHAEUS' HOME. ZACCHAEUS WAS WEALTHY BUT ALSO QUITE NEEDY. SOMEHOW, EVERYTHING ZACCHAEUS HAD GAINED BOTH AT HIS JOB AND IN HIS POSSESSIONS HAD NOT BROUGHT FULFILLMENT AND SATISFACTION TO HIS LIFE.

A. OBSTACLES - THERE WERE MANY HINDERANCES TO KEEP ZACCHAEUS FROM JESUS. WHERE HE LIVED - ENVIRONMENT. WHAT HE DID - JOB. HIS SIZE - GENES AND THE CROWDS - CIRCUMSTANCES IT IS SAFE TO SAY THAT ANY TIME A PERSON IS ANXIOUS OR SERIOUS ABOUT GETTING SAVED THERE WILL ALWAYS BE OBSTACLES IN HIS WAY. CONCERNING HIS RESIDENCE, THERE ARE TOWNS WHERE THE GOSPEL IS MORE READILY AVAILABLE THAN IN OTHERS. IT WOULD PROBABLY BE EASIER TO HEAR THE GOSPEL AT CHARLESTON, WV THAN IN LAS VEGAS, NV. JERICHO WAS A FAMOUS CITY NOTED FOR ITS PRODUCTION OF SPICES AND PERFUMES. HOWEVER, IN SPITE OF ITS NICE CLIMATE AND OTHER BUSINESS FEATURES IT WAS A TOWN OF GREAT WICKEDNESS FILLED WITH THIEVES AND ROBBERS. POINT: IT IS NEVER EASY TO BE SAVED BUT THERE'S SOME PLACES THAT ARE MORE CONDUCTIVE TO SALVATION THAN OTHERS. SOME CITIES WELCOME A GOSPEL MINISTRY AND OTHERS ARE HOSTILE TO IT. WE HAVE ALREADY ALLUDED TO THE DIFFICULTY OF ZACCHAEUS' JOB. THE FACT ZACCHAEUS WAS THE HEAD COMMISSIONER OVER THE TAX DIVISION OF THAT CITY, INDICATES THAT HE WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL AT HIS JOB AND PROBABLY VERY UNPOPULAR WITH THE PEOPLE. THERE ARE CERTAIN TYPES OF JOBS THAT MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR A PERSON TO BE SAVED. IF DISHONESTY AND IMMORALITY ARE PART OF A JOB PROFILE, IT MIGHT

MINDING THE MIND

ROMANS 8:5-6

WE TALK ABOUT THE MIND A LOT. THIS IS REFLECTED IN THE PHRASES WE USE REGULARLY. FOR EXAMPLE, DIRTY MINDED, NARROW MINDED, BROAD MINDED, SIMPLE MINDED, SINGLE MINDED. WE SET OUR MIND TO A TASK. WE KEEP OUR MIND ON OUR WORK. WE CALL TO MIND WHEN WE REMEMBER, WE MIND THE STORE OR OUR MANNERS. WE DON'T LIKE FOR PEOPLE TO "MESS WITH OUR MIND."

SOMETHING MAY BE IN THE BACK OF OUR MIND EVEN IF WE ARE FEEBLE MINDED OR WE MAY LOSE OUR MIND EVEN BOGGLE THE MIND. IF WE ARE NOT EXERCISED ABOUT AN ISSUE, WE MAY SAY "I DON'T MIND." WE MAY BE MINDFUL OR MINDLESS. THERE IS A WAR GOING ON AND THE BATTLEFIELD IS THE MIND OF MAN. SATAN IS THE MASTERMIND WAGING THE CONFLICT AND IT IS AS OLD AS EDEN. (II Cor. 10:4) THE MIND IS AN AMAZING COMPUTER THAT STORES MATERIAL FOR LATER RECALL. WE ARE TOLD THAT TEN THOUSAND OR MORE THOUGHTS GO THROUGH THE HUMAN MIND EVERY DAY - THREE AND A HALF MILLION PER YEAR. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT WE NEVER REALLY FORGET ANYTHING. THE MEMORY STORES MATERIAL ON THE SURFACE, BELOW THE SURFACE OR IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS. OUR MIND AFFECTS HOW WE FEEL, HOW WE ACT, OR EVEN HOW SOON WE MAY GET WELL. WE TALK ABOUT BEING "PSYCHED-UP" IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULTS. SOLOMON SAID: "FOR AS HE THINKETH IN HIS HEART SO IS HE." (PROV. 23:7) DOCTORS TELL US WE ARE WHAT WE EAT. PSYCHIATRISTS TELL US THAT WE ARE WHAT WE THINK. THE MIND IS A TARGET FOR CULTS, COLUMNISTS AND COMMERCIALS - A STEADY FLOW OF INFORMATION BOMBARDS THE EAR AND EYE GATE

ON A REGULAR BASIS. WE ARE MIND-CONSCIOUS IN OUR SOCIETY. MENTAL PROBLEMS RANGING FROM MILD TO MASSIVE WILL AFFECT ONE IN TEN OF US. QUESTION: WHAT IS THE MIND?

APPARENTLY IT IS THAT PART OF US THAT DEALS WITH HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS, THAT THINKS, PERCEIVES, PLANS, REFLECTS AND MAKES JUDGMENTS, MORAL AND OTHERWISE. THERE IS NO SINGLE WORD FOR MIND IN THE BIBLE AND NONE FOR BRAIN. DIFFERENT WORDS DESCRIBE VARIOUS FUNCTIONS SUCH AS THE EMOTION, WILL, AND INTELLECT. SINCE SATAN HAS A STRATEGY FOR THE MINDS OF MEN, WE SHOULD KNOW WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT. IN EPHESIANS 6:11, THE WORD WILES IS THE GREEK WORD FROM WHICH WE GET OUR ENGLISH METHODS. BELIEVERS ARE WARNED TO UNDERSTAND SATAN'S METHODS AND SCHEMES. HIS BATTLE PLAN IS TO DECEIVE, DISARM AND DESTROY AND MUCH OF THIS ACTIVITY IS MIND-ORIENTED. IN II COR. 2:11 THE WORD DEVICES IS THE GREEK WORD FOR MIND. IT REFERS TO DESIGNS OR PLANS THAT ORIGINATE AND EMANATE FROM SATAN. IN OTHER WORDS, THE BELIEVER SHOULD KNOW HIS BAG OF TRICKS, ESPECIALLY THOSE TRICKS THAT RELATE TO THE MIND.

I. A REPROBATE MIND - ROMANS 1:28

THIS IS A WORD WE DO NOT USE MUCH ANYMORE. IT HAS A HARSH, JARRING SOUND AND IS USUALLY ONLY USED IN JEST. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT REFERS TO SOMEONE WHO IS MORALLY STERILE. IT IS A REFERENCE TO THE RENEGADE SINNER. IT REFERS TO SOMETHING THAT HAS FAILED A TEST OR MISSED A STANDARD SPECIFICALLY A PIECE OF METAL THAT ISN'T UP TO PRODUCTION STANDARDS. IN OTHER WORDS, SOMETHING THAT IS READY FOR THE JUNK PILE OR WORTHLESS.

"you old reprobate"

NOT
Appaled
exit!

-3-

WHEN IT COMES TO SIN, THE REPROBATE IS SOMEONE WHO HAS ABANDONED ANY IDEA OF GOD. ANOTHER TERM WOULD BE DEPRAVED. THIS PERSON APPLAUDS SIN, LIVES IN IT AND LIKES IT. WHEN IT COMES TO MORAL JUDGMENTS, THE SCALES NEVER TIP UPWARD, ONLY DOWNWARD. THIS PERSON HAS NO DESIRE TO KNOW GOD. AS A MATTER OF FACT, GOD IS NOT IN HIS THOUGHTS AT ALL. THIS WORD COMES TO MIND WHEN WE READ OF THE SINS OF OUR SOCIETY SUCH AS RAPE AND MURDER, SO HEARTLESS IN THEIR EXECUTION BUT THEN SEE JUDGES WHO ARE NOT CONCERNED ENOUGH TO KEEP SUCH PEOPLE AWAY FROM ORDINARY CITIZENS. THIS TYPE OF SINNER SAYS TO GOD, "LEAVE ME ALONE" AND GOD DOES! THIS SAME WORD APPEARS IN II TIMOTHY 3:8 WHERE IT IS USED TO DESCRIBE EGYPTIAN MAGICIANS WHO IMITATED THE MIRACLES OF MOSES BUT HAD NO INTEREST IN THE THINGS OF GOD. THE NEED OF THE REPROBATE IS TO REPENT WHICH MEANS "TO CHANGE THE MIND" ABOUT CHRIST.

II. THE BLINDED MIND - II Cor. 4:3-6

IN THIS PASSAGE, THE UNSAVED MAN IS CHARACTERIZED AS HAVING BEEN BORN SPIRITUALLY BLIND. HE WILL STAY THAT WAY UNTIL AND UNLESS HE HEARS THE GOSPEL WHICH ACTS AS SIGHT-GIVING AND LIGHT-GIVING TO HIS SOUL. (COMPARE SAUL OF TARSUS AND HIS CONVERSION.) THE NATURAL MAN IS "BLIND-MINDED". HIS EYES ARE CLOSED TO THE THINGS OF GOD AND ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE NOT ONLY IS HE SPIRITUALLY BLIND, HE IS ALSO SPIRITUALLY DEAD! (EPH. 2:1) IN EPH. 4:17 THE WORD VANITY OR VAIN IS USED TO DESCRIBE SOMETHING THAT IS GOING NOWHERE. IT REFERS TO A PERSON WHO HAS MISSED A TARGET OR AS E. Y. MULLINS SAYS, "ASCENDS THE SPIRAL STAIRCASE THAT LEADS NOWHERE." THE UNSAVED MAN IS TREADING A RELIGIOUS TREADMILL.

Life = A Dead End.

Sp. on Empty

ALL the time!

IT KEEPS HIM BUSY BUT GETS HIM NOWHERE IN TERMS OF ETERNITY. THE VAIN MIND KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT GOD, HIS WILL OR PURPOSE. THE WRITER OF ECCLESIASTES CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT LIFE IS INDEED VAIN APART FROM GOD. COLOSSIANS 1:21 PAINTS THE NATURAL MAN IN DARK HUES. IT CHARACTERIZES HIM AS AN ENEMY OR HOSTILE AGAINST GOD'S LAWS AND GOD'S CLAIM UPON HIS LIFE. HE RESISTS ANY AND ALL EFFORTS OF GOD IN HIS LIFE. BY THE WAY, THIS RESISTANCE IS BOTH ACTIVE AND PASSIVE. SOME PEOPLE NOD TO GOD BUT THEY ARE NOT ON SPEAKING TERMS - THEY ARE NOT FATHER AND SON NOR ARE THEY FRIENDS IN FELLOWSHIP. THE GOSPEL IS LIGHT TO SIN-DARKENED EYES. FOR THE BLINDED SINNER GROPING IN SPIRITUAL DARKNESS HIS GREATEST NEED IS THE LIGHT THAT COMES THROUGH THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.

III. THE RENEWED MIND - EPHESIANS 4:22-24

THE NEW MAN IN CHRIST IS TO ADOPT A LIFESTYLE THAT DID NOT EXIST BEFORE CHRIST CAME INTO HIS LIFE. WHEN A PERSON GETS SAVED, GOD DOES A WORK ON HIS MIND. ONCE HIS MIND HAD BEEN TO ACHIEVING GOALS FOR HIS OWN INTEREST, NOW THAT HE IS SAVED, THOSE MAY CHANGE. OLD STORIES WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE ROSTER OF HIS MIND. THEY WERE DROPPED IN A MENTAL DUMPSTER NEVER TO BE BROUGHT UP AGAIN. VOCABULARY - PROFANE AND GODLESS WORDS THAT DWELL ON THE VULGAR AND THE DISTASTEFUL WILL BE ABANDONED AS A NORMAL COURSE OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH. HABITS - PLACES AND PRACTICES THAT ONCE WERE PRIMARY IN HIS LIFE WILL FALL AWAY LIKE LEAVES FROM A TREE. ATTITUDES - THE LIE, ONCE A MAJOR WEAPON IN HIS ARSENAL OF SELF-PROMOTION WILL CEASE TO BE A WEAPON. ONE AUTHOR SUGGESTS THAT

life

THE RENEWED MIND MAY BE COMPARED TO A LANDLORD AND A TENANT. IMAGINE A CHRISTIAN ~~LIVES~~ ^{AN AN} IN AN APARTMENT HOUSE. HIS OLD LANDLORD MADE HIS LIFE MISERABLE. HE CHARGED EXORBITANT RENT RATES, NEGLECTED THE UPKEEP OF THE APARTMENT. HE WOULD OFTEN ENTER THE APARTMENT UNANNOUNCED AND LEAVE BEHIND ALL KINDS OF DISRUPTION AND MESSSES. IN THE PROCESS OF TIME, A NEW LANDLORD TOOK OVER THE BUILDING. HE ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS GOING TO BE A LIVE-IN LANDLORD AND MANAGE THE APARTMENT FROM THE APARTMENT. HE BROUGHT IN DRAMATIC CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS. ONE DAY THE OLD LANDLORD SHOWED UP AT THE DOOR, AS MEAN AS EVER, GROWLING AND DEMANDING THE RENT. THE CHRISTIAN ASKED HIMSELF THE QUESTION, DO I PAY THE RENT? ANSWER - NEVER. IT IS NOT HIS BUILDING ANYMORE AND HIS THREATS AND INTIMIDATION HAVE NO BEARING ON YOUR CONDUCT. SIMPLY STATED, THE CHRISTIAN TELLS THE OLD LANDLORD TO TAKE UP HIS BUSINESS WITH THE NEW LANDLORD. IF HE COMES BACK AGAIN AND AGAIN, THE ANSWER WILL BE THE SAME EVERY TIME. THE BELIEVER HAS A NEW LANDLORD NOW THAT HE IS SAVED. THAT LANDLORD IS JESUS CHRIST. WHEN THE OLD LANDLORD OR DEVIL KNOCKS AT HIS DOOR, HE SIMPLY LETS CHRIST ANSWER THE DOOR BECAUSE HE IS NOW UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT AND BELIEVE ME, CHRIST KNOWS HOW TO DEAL WITH SATAN. (COMPARE ROMANS 6:13-16)

IV. THE TRANSFORMED MIND - ROMANS 12:2

THERE IS AN INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RENEWED AND TRANSFORMED MIND. HOWEVER, THIS VERSE SEEMS TO EMPHASIZE MATTERS OF DEDICATION AND SERVICE WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PROCESS THAT TAKES PLACE. SOMEONE HAS CALLED IT A MENTAL METAMORPHOSIS. PAUL STATES THAT

THE BELIEVER IS NOT TO LET THE WORLD DICTATE OR DECIDE HOW HE OR SHE WILL CONDUCT HIS LIFE. THE WORLD WITH ITS FADS AND FASHIONS CHANGE BUT THE BELIEVER DOES NOT GET HIS ETHICAL BELIEFS AND STANDARDS FROM SOCIETY ALONE - WE ARE ACCORDING TO THIS VERSE, TO STOP SAYING AMEN TO WHAT THE WORLD SAYS. FIND OUT WHAT JESUS CHRIST WANTS YOU TO DO AND DO IT. THAT REVELATION IS CLEARLY STATED IN THE BIBLE. SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED, CORRECTLY SO, THAT ONE OF THE GREAT FAILURES OF THE CHURCH IN ITS INFLUENCE ON THE NON-CHRISTIAN WORLD IS: "THE WORLD DOES NOT BELIEVE IN HIM WHOM IT HAS NOT SEEN BECAUSE IT HAS NO CAUSE TO BELIEVE IN US WHOM IT HAS!" ACCORDING TO THIS PASSAGE THE TRANSFORMED MIND MANIFESTS THE FOLLOWING TRAITS:

POWER
(1) POSITION IS NOT PARAMOUNT - THE TRANSFORMED MIND DOES NOT COVET OR CLING TO POWER. IT IS CONTENT TO BE WHERE AND WHAT GOD WANTS HIM OR HER TO BE. (PHILLIPPIANS 2:5)

(2) WEALTH IS NOT HIS CHIEF GOAL IN LIFE - THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR IS NOT ALMIGHTY WITH ALMIGHTY GOD AND SHOULD NOT BE WITH GOD'S CHILDREN. ACCORDING TO II COR. 8:9, CHRIST HAD IT ALL AND GAVE IT ALL UP FOR US.

(3) THE TRANSFORMED MIND DESIRES TO SERVE, NOT BE SERVED - THE KEY VERSE OF MARK IS MARK 10:45. THE KING OF KINGS LIVED IN A TIME OF POMPOUS, PROUD RULERS. HE CHOSE TO DEMONSTRATE TO HIS FOLLOWERS HOW THEY TOO COULD BE SERVANTS LIKE HIM. LET ME SUGGEST FOUR KEY WORDS FROM A PRACTICAL VIEWPOINT REGARDING THE TRANSFORMED MIND:

(A) METHOD - NOTHING IS ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT A PLAN. WHERE THERE IS NO METHOD, THERE IS NO MASTERY. HAVE A METHOD OF BIBLE STUDY.

(Phil 4:7)

(B) MEMORY - PSALM 119:11 - A MENTAL ASSAULT ON THE WORD OF GOD BY COMMITTING IT TO ONE'S MIND IS A SAFEGUARD OF THE MIND.

(C) MEDITATE - JOSHUA 1:8 - PRAYER IS PART OF OUR SUCCESS BUT REFLECTION ON THE SPIRITUALLY-RICH MORSELS OF THE WORD OF GOD IS IMPORTANT.

(D) MOVE - GET GOING FOR GOD. MOST BELIEVERS AS THEY SOAK UP THE SCRIPTURE AND SATURATE THEMSELVES WITH SPIRITUAL VITALITY NEED TO GET MOVING AND USE WHAT THEY HAVE.

W. E. SANGSTER TELLS THE FOLLOWING STORY. A MAN NAMED FRANK HAD HIS LIFE CHANGED BY THREE BRIEF PHONE CALLS. FRANK HAD A YOUNGER BROTHER NAMED ED. THE FATHER IN THE FAMILY DIED BEFORE THE BROTHERS WENT AWAY TO COLLEGE. FRANK TOOK THE OVERSIGHT TO PROVIDE FOR HIS YOUNGER BROTHER'S EDUCATION. AFTER COLLEGE, ED MARRIED AGNES. ED AND AGNES MOVED AWAY. A FEW YEARS LATER FRANK CAME TO TOWN AND PHONED HIS BROTHER. AGNES ANSWERED THE PHONE. WHEN FRANK INVITED THE TWO OF THEM TO DINNER THAT NIGHT, AGNES DECLINED SAYING THAT ED HAD A BUSINESS APPOINTMENT AND COULD NOT COME. DISAPPOINTED FRANK CALLED AN OLD COLLEGE FRIEND AND ASKED HIM TO JOIN HIM FOR DINNER. THAT TIME THE FRIEND REPLIED THAT HE WAS GOING TO ED AND AGNES' HOME FOR DINNER THAT NIGHT. STUNNED BY WHAT HE HAD HEARD AND BEFORE HE COULD RECOVER, ED CALLED SAYING THAT HE WAS TIED UP THAT NIGHT BUT WOULD FRANK HAVE LUNCH WITH HIM TOMORROW. FRANK MUMBLED SOME KIND OF REPLY, THEN HUNG UP. NOW HE KNEW, HIS BROTHER AND SISTER-IN-LAW WERE HAVING A PARTY AT THEIR HOME AND NOT ONLY WAS HE NOT INVITED, THE APPARENTLY DID NOT WANT HIM THERE. ALSO, IT SEEMED AS IF

ED LIED TO HIM. NEXT MORNING WHEN HIS BROTHER HAD GONE TO WORK, FRANK CALLED AGNES AND LET HER HAVE IT! IN RETALIATION, AGNES EXPLAINED THAT FRANK'S BROTHER HAD WANTED HIM AT THE PARTY BUT SHE DIDN'T BECAUSE SHE KNEW HE WOULD SPOIL EVERYTHING. SHE EXPLAINED THAT ONE REASON THEY HAD LEFT TOWN ORIGINALLY WAS TO GET OUT OF FRANK'S REALM OF INFLUENCE BECAUSE OF HIS DOMINANT PERSONALITY. SHE REMINDED HIM THAT HE WAS A BIG SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN AND HAD TO BE THE CENTER OF EVERY CONVERSATION. IF HIS BROTHER TOLD A STORY, HE WOULD TELL A BETTER ONE, IF HIS BROTHER EXPRESSED AN OPINION, HE WOULD EXPRESS A DIFFERENT ONE AND TRY TO MAKE HIM LOOK FOOLISH. THIS WAS AN IMPORTANT DINNER MEETING FOR ED WITH IMPORTANT PEOPLE COMING AND SHE WANTED HIM TO PUT HIS BEST FOOT FORWARD AND WITH FRANK THERE, THAT COULDN'T BE DONE. AFTER SEVERAL FEEBLE PROTESTS, AGNES FINALLY SAID TO FRANK - "YOU OUGHT TO GET WISE TO YOURSELF." THAT PHRASE BEGAN A SELF-EXAMINATION PERIOD FOR FRANK IN WHICH HE BEGAN TO SEE WHAT OTHERS SAW WAS A SIDE OF HIMSELF TO WHICH HE HAD BEEN BLIND ALL OF HIS LIFE. POINT: WE NEVER MAKE REAL SPIRITUAL PROGRESS UNTIL WE SEE OURSELVES AS WE REALLY ARE. UNTIL WE DO, WE WILL NEVER SEE THE NEED FOR A TRANSFORMED MIND.

RKS

Revel in Right
not the wrong

BCC/AM

1/5/75

10-81

Bill Watson
Berkshire is
my love... life
Glad in

"SAY IT AGAIN"

PHILIPPIANS 4:4

celebrate God
all day every day
revel in him!
world Party

BY ALL EARTHLY STANDARDS, PAUL SHOULD HAVE BEEN A MISERABLE PERSON. IF GLADNESS DEPENDED UPON HEALTH, THEN PAUL SHOULD HAVE BEEN UNHAPPY FOR HIS HEALTH WAS POOR. IF GLADNESS DEPENDED UPON MONEY, PAUL HAD LITTLE. IF GLADNESS DEPENDED UPON SUCCESS, PAUL HAD LITTLE OUTWARD SUCCESS AFTER HIS CONVERSION. HOWEVER, IF GLADNESS DEPENDED UPON DOING THE WILL OF GOD NO MATTER WHAT ELSE CAME INTO HIS LIFE, THEN PAUL WAS A HAPPY MAN. THE BIBLE TEACHES THERE IS NOT ENOUGH WEALTH IN THE WORLD TO SATISFY THE SOUL. THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH TRANQUILIZERS TO DEAL WITH OUR TENSIONS. A FEELING OF FRUSTRATION SEEMS TO TURN OUR DAYS INTO NOTHING MORE THAN ANSWERING PHONES, RAISING CHILDREN, TRYING TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF EMPLOYER, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS. ROUTINE AND SAMENESS SURROUND US LIKE A BLANKET. AT TIMES, LIFE IS FLAT AND MEANINGLESS TO SO MANY PEOPLE. PAUL BELIEVED THAT LIFE IN CHRIST COULD BE BOTH SIMPLE AND SERENE WHEN A BELIEVER FOCUSES HIS ATTENTION UPON THE LORD. A MAN LIKE PAUL COULD REJOICE NO MATTER WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES. HE REALLY BELIEVED THAT JESUS CHRIST IS ADEQUATE FOR ALL OF LIFE'S PROBLEMS. WE WILL LIMIT OUR STUDY TO THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE CONCERNING THE THINGS OVER WHICH PAUL COULD AND DID REJOICE. (THE WORD REJOICE LITERALLY MEANS "BE GLAD". THE INDEX OF OUR CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE REVOLVES AROUND THE THINGS WHICH MAKE US GLAD. ARE WE GLAD ONLY WHEN WE HAVE MATERIAL THINGS OR DO SPIRITUAL GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS MAKE US GLAD?)

I. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD REJOICE BECAUSE HE IS SAVED AND SECURE IN CHRIST - 1:5-7

SEVERAL PHRASES IN THE PRELIMINARY VERSES IN THIS CHAPTER INDICATE PHILIPPIANS WERE SAVED PEOPLE. THE TERM SERVANT IN VERSE 1 SUGGESTS SLAVERY. THE IDEA IS THAT OF ONE WHO HAS BEEN PURCHASED AND POSSESSED BY A MASTER. THE SLAVE HAD NO WILL OF HIS OWN BUT LIVED ONLY TO DO THE WILL OF HIS MASTER. MANY OF THE PHILIPPIANS HAD

"SAY IT AGAIN"

TV. painter (Barb Ross)
He sees the whole picture 2.

2.
BEEN SLAVES NOW THEY WERE SLAVES OF JESUS CHRIST. THE TERM SAINTS ALSO INDICATES THESE PEOPLE WERE SAVED. IT IS THE MOST COMMON WORD IN ALL OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TO REFER TO PEOPLE WHO ARE CHILDREN OF GOD. THE WORD IS RELATED TO THE TERM HOLY. THE PRIMARY IDEA IS THAT SOMEONE OR SOMETHING HAS BEEN SET APART FOR SERVICE TO GOD. THE TERM "IN CHRIST JESUS" ALSO REFERS TO SAVED PEOPLE. ONLY THE REDEEMED ARE IN CHRIST. ONE OF THE GREAT VERSES ON THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER IS VERSE 6. LET ME QUALIFY THE TERM SECURITY. THE BIBLE DOES NOT TEACH THAT ONCE YOU ARE SAVED YOU WILL GO TO HEAVEN NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO. NO PERSON IS GIVEN A LICENSE TO SIN IN THE BIBLE. IT DOES MATTER HOW WE BEHAVE. CREED AND CONDUCT GO TOGETHER. HOWEVER, THE BIBLE DOES TEACH THAT THE BELIEVER WHO IS IN CHRIST IS SAFE JUST AS NOAH AND HIS FAMILY WERE IN THE ARK. EVERY BELIEVER RESTS HIS HOPE ON SOME KIND OF SECURITY. HE EITHER BELIEVES IN TEMPORAL SECURITY OR ETERNAL SECURITY. (COMMENT ON JOHN 6:37 AND JOHN 10:26-30) (BARNHOUSE'S ANSWER TO THE MAN WHO SAID "AREN'T YOU AFRAID YOU WILL SLIP THROUGH THE FINGERS OF GOD?" HIS ANSWER "I AM ONE OF HIS FINGERS!") GOD IS AT WORK IN THE BELIEVER'S LIFE. HE WILL CONTINUE THAT WORK UNTIL THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH. WE CANNOT ALWAYS SEE WHAT THE LORD IS DOING IN THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE BUT IF A PERSON IS BORN AGAIN, GOD IS AT WORK! WE DO NOT ALWAYS SEE THE FINISHED PRODUCT, BUT THE LORD DOES! GOD ALWAYS FINISHES HIS WORK. KEEP IN MIND THAT WE ARE NOT HOLDING ON TO GOD. HE IS HOLDING ON TO US. THE TERM SECURITY CAUSES SOME CHRISTIANS TO BRISTLE. IT IS INTERESTING THAT PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN SOCIAL SECURITY WANT TO ARGUE OVER WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE ETERNALLY SECURE IN CHRIST. THIS WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE MORE CONFIDENCE IN WASHINGTON THAN IN HEAVEN! (COMMENT ON GALATIANS 5:4.) THE BASIC QUESTION REGARDING THIS GREAT BIBLE DOCTRINE IS WHOM SHALL WE BELIEVE? DO WE BASE OUR DOCTRINE OR CONVICTIONS ON CASE STUDIES OF PEOPLE WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN SAVED AND TURNED BACK TO THE WORLD? OR DO WE BASE OUR CONVICTIONS ON CLEAR TEACHINGS OF THE WORD OF GOD ON THIS SUBJECT? (1 JOHN 5:4 "FOR WHOSOEVER IS BORN OF GOD OVERCOMETH THE WORLD: AND THIS IS THE VICTORY THAT OVERCOMETH THE WORLD, EVEN OUR FAITH.") THE OVERCOMER IS BORN OF GOD.

How safe
was
Noah?

Prove by overcoming. Those who don't - I don't!

THE PERSON WHO SUCCUMBS TO THE WORLD WAS NOT BORN OF GOD.

II. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD REJOICE OVER THE MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL IF NOT OVER THE MESSENGERS
1:12-18

WHILE PAUL WAS IN JAIL FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL, SOME FOLK WERE PREACHING THE GOSPEL FOR SELFISH AMBITIONS HOPING TO GET AHEAD OR CAPITALIZE ON THE MINISTRY. THEIR MOTIVES WERE LOW. THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS SPIRITUALLY MATURE ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT IT IS BETTER TO HAVE A MAN PREACHING WITH IMPERFECT METHODS RATHER THAN NOT PREACHING AT ALL! WHILE PAUL WAS IN PRISON, SOME SELF-SEEKING PERSONALLY AMBITIOUS PEOPLE WERE USING THE GOSPEL TO ADVANCE THEMSELVES. WHILE PAUL WAS IN PRISON, SOME PREACHERS SOUGHT TO ENHANCE THEIR OWN POSITION OF LEADERSHIP IN THE PHILIPPIAN CHURCH. PAUL LOOKED BEYOND THE PETTY PERSONALITIES AND REALIZED THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A MAN TO DO GOOD EVEN IF HE DOESN'T DO IT OUR WAY! THIS IS A DIFFICULT LESSON TO UNDERSTAND TODAY. I PERSONALLY AM IN DISAGREEMENT WITH THIS GENERATION OF BELIEVERS WHO WERE REARED ON A KIND OF FREE-LANCE CHRISTIANITY WHICH KNOWS NO LOCAL TITHES. THEY WERE SAVED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, NURTURED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, AND THEREFORE, KNOW NO LOYALTY OR HOW TO BEHAVE IN LOCAL CHURCHES. MANY PEOPLE ARE CHURCH DRIFTERS LOOKING FOR A BRIGHTER PERSONALITY AND A BIGGER PROGRAM. THEY ARE FOR ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING AS LONG AS IT IS NOT LOCAL CHURCH CENTERED. THEY BELIEVE IN SOWING AND HARVESTING -- THEY JUST DON'T BELIEVE IN BARNs FOR THE HARVEST! HAVING EXPRESSED THIS OPINION, LET ME HASTEN TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE WHOSE CULTURAL WAYS MAY OFFEND ME AND MINE MAY OFFEND THEM. THEY MAY DRESS DIFFERENTLY THAN I, LISTEN TO A DIFFERENT KIND OF MUSIC, AND EMPLOY DIFFERENT METHODS. HOWEVER, EVEN THOUGH I MAY NOT CARE TO ENTER INTO THEIR ACTIVITIES, I DO AND WILL REJOICE WHEN CHRIST IS PREACHED EVEN THOUGH I AM IN DISAGREEMENT WITH THE METHOD. MY APPROVAL OF SOMEONE'S METHODS IS NOT THE POINT. I REJOICE IF THE MESSAGE IS PREACHED EVEN THOUGH I BELIEVE THE MESSAGE IS MORE EFFECTIVE IF THE METHODS ARE CORRECT! (MY GOOD FRIEND WARREN WIERSBE HAS WRITTEN

SPYGEN

A VERY MEANINGFUL ARTICLE IN THE CURRENT MOODY MONTHLY IN WHICH HE SUGGESTS THAT WE ARE SO RELIGIOUSLY ACTIVE AND SO RESULTS-ORIENTED MANY OF US ARE ON A RELIGIOUS TREADMILL AND CHURCH HAS BECOME A CENTER OF ACTIVITY TO THE EXCLUSION OF A PLACE OF SPIRITUAL WORSHIP - AMEN! MANY CHURCHES ARE FEEDING THEIR PEOPLE ON ACTIVITIES -- AND I BELIEVE IN BEING ACTIVE FOR CHRIST -- BUT MANY ARE ACCEPTING A RELIGIOUS SUBSTITUTE. DR. WIERSBE SUGGESTS THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO FILL THE STOMACH WITH MATERIAL WHICH IS NOT NUTRITIOUS AND GOOD FOR ONE'S HEALTH. WORSHIP OF GOD SHOULD BE PRIMARY IN OUR SPIRITUAL DIET EACH LORD'S DAY. RELIGIOUS SUBSTITUTES LEAVE THE SPIRITUAL MAN HUNGRY. WE NEED TO COME FACE TO FACE WITH GOD IN OUR WORSHIP SERVICES.) ADDITIONAL NOTE: I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WILL NOT PERMIT YOU TO DISAGREE AGREEABLY. SOMEHOW DISAGREEMENT WITH METHODS IS A PERSONAL AFRONT TO MANY CHRISTIANS.

III. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD REJOICE THAT DEATH IS NOT THE END OF IT ALL -- VERSE 20 - 23

SOME OF YOU HAVE BURIED A LOVED ONE THIS YEAR. IT IS DIFFICULT TO LOSE SOMEONE WE LOVE. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT DESPAIR AS PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO HOPE. THE PERSON WHO HAS LIVED IN THIS LIFE FOR CHRIST KNOWS THE JOY OF DYING IN CHRIST. THE TERM GAIN IS A STARTLING WORD. THIS WORD WAS USED IN GREEK WRITINGS TO SUGGEST "INTEREST ON MONEY". ACCORDING TO 2 COR. 5:1 THE BELIEVER WHO DIES GAINS THE PRESENCE OF OUR LORD. ANOTHER TERM IS USED "FAR BETTER". SOMETHING HAS BEEN LOST IN THE TRANSLATION OF THIS PHRASE. IT IS A SUPERLATIVE INDICATING SOMETHING THAT IS VERY MUCH BETTER. PAUL WAS NOT ANXIOUS TO DIE BUT HE KNEW THAT HIS HOPE DID NOT LIE IN THE GRAVE BUT RATHER IN CHRIST WHO HAS RISEN FROM THE DEAD. THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE WILL LEAVE A VACUUM AND TEARS OVER THEIR LOSS. BUT THE BEST IS YET TO COME FOR THE CHRISTIAN. (1 THESS. 4:13-16)

IV. THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD REJOICE THAT HE IS PERMITTED TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST -- 1:29

ANY PERSON WHO WALKS AROUND ENJOYING HIS PERSECUTION AND HOPING THAT SOMEONE WILL PUNISH HIM

Spiritual
Junk -
Food

Cutting
Lawn
Chair

Les
ipk

FOR HIS WRONGDOING HAS A SERIOUS PROBLEM. THERE IS, HOWEVER, AN INDICATION IN THE BIBLE THAT BELIEVERS ARE CALLED UPON TO SUFFER FOR CHRIST'S SAKE. THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE IN SUFFERING FOR OUR OWN PSYCHOLOGICAL PECULIARITIES AND FOIBLES. WHEN TRIAL OR TESTING COMES INTO THE LIFE OF THE AVERAGE BELIEVER, THE FIRST QUESTION HE ASKS IS "WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE THIS?" THE IDEA IS THAT SOMEHOW GOD IS DEALING UNFAIRLY AND PUNISHING FOR SOME UNKNOWN SIN THAT WE ARE SEEKING CLARIFICATION OVER WHY THIS SHOULD COME INTO OUR LIVES. THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT SUFFERING ON THE PART OF THE CHRISTIAN IS BENEFICIAL WHEN IT MAKES US DEPENDENT UPON GOD. WHEN WE LEARN THAT WE CANNOT MAKE IT ON OUR OWN, WE ARE DEPENDENT UPON HIM, THEN SUFFERING WILL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED ITS PROPER PURPOSE. EVERY PERSON GOD EVER USED IN A MIGHTY WAY HE HAD TO BREAK. GOD IS NOT INTERESTED IN THE EXTENT OF OUR ACTIVITIES IN THE FLESH. SUFFERING IS PART OF GOD'S PROCESS IN DEVELOPING AN IMAGE OF CHRIST IN THE BELIEVER. PENTECOST SUGGESTS THAT IT IS POSSIBLE FOR AN ARTIST TO TAKE PEN AND INK AND SKETCH A DRAWING OF JESUS CHRIST. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE FOR AN ARTIST TO SKETCH AN IMAGE OF CHRIST IN STONE. GOD WANTS TO OUTLINE THE IMAGE OF HIS SON CHISELED THROUGH SUFFERING INTO THE LIVES OF HIS PEOPLE UNTIL WE REPRODUCE THE IMAGE OF CHRIST AND HIS LIKENESS IN OUR LIVES. JAMES IN CHAPTER 1 VERSE 2 SPEAKS OF THE JOY OF TESTINGS. EVERYTHING OF THE FLESH REBELS AT THIS IDEA. IN COLOSSIANS 1:24 PAUL SUGGESTS THAT THE BELIEVER'S SUFFERING ADVANCES THE CAUSE OF CHRIST. ACCORDING TO PHILIPPIANS 3:10 THE PRIMARY GOAL OF PAUL WITH REFERENCE TO SANCTIFICATION WAS TO ENTER DAILY INTO A DEEPER SURRENDER AND CONFORMITY TO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST. THE COLOSSIANS PASSAGE SUGGESTS THAT WE SHOULD DAILY FILL UP THAT WHICH IS LACKING IN OUR EXPERIENCE. SUFFERING FOR CHRIST IS A PRIVILEGE. THIS DOES NOT ALWAYS REFER TO PHYSICAL SUFFERING. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT IS SOMETIMES THE MOST DIFFICULT. TO BE MALIGNED AND MISUNDERSTOOD BY PEOPLE WHO SHOULD KNOW YOU BETTER IS EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT. ALL OF US WANT TO BE APPROVED IN OUR CONDUCT BUT THIS IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE WHEN THE GOSPEL IS AT STAKE. PAUL IS SAYING THAT THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD REJOICE ALWAYS UNDER EVERY CIR-

CUMSTANCE. PAUL HAD THOUGHT OF EVERY POSSIBLE THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO THE CHRISTIAN, AS A MATTER OF FACT, MOST OF IT HAPPENED TO HIM. HE SAYS THAT THE CHRISTIAN'S JOY IS NOT CONNECTED TO CIRCUMSTANCES ON EARTH BUT RATHER OUR JOY IS IN WALKING IN CONSTANT FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST. THE PERSON WHO LOVES JESUS CHRIST SUPREMEY WILL BE CONTENT IN HIS PRESENCE REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY AND YET MOST DIFFICULT LESSONS IN CHRISTIAN LIVING.

4:4

Trainer (Smile)

(She!) (2 jobs)

I student + Tom McCann + Ch. on week ends -

By Today's Standard - point
But we had ea. other / prep. for ministry -
part of the goal to Squire -
we willingly did without - to be with the other.
Better Re... than someone else in a mansion!

Intro Our New Address:
324 Romans
Road

(15:25) Being just had
freedom by his grace
than the old redemption
that is in Christ
Jesus...

"IN CHRIST"
ROMANS 3:24

THE PHRASE, "IN CHRIST" APPEARS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE BIBLE HERE. OUR SPIRITUAL POSITION IS INDICATED BY A SIMPLE PREPOSITION. IT IS A TECHNICAL TERM USED BY PAUL TO REFER TO THE BELIEVER'S STANDING OR POSITION IN CHRIST. THE BELIEVER IS ACCEPTED BEFORE GOD AND ENJOYS A PERMANENT, UNCHANGEABLE RELATIONSHIP TO HIM. JUST AS A BIRD DEPENDS UPON THE AIR FOR FLIGHT, JUST AS A FISH DEPENDS UPON WATER FOR SURVIVAL, JUST AS A TREE DEPENDS UPON SOIL FOR NOURISHMENT, SO THE BELIEVER'S SPIRITUAL ATMOSPHERE AND ENVIRONMENT IS JESUS CHRIST. THE BIBLE SEES EVERY PERSON IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SPIRITUAL ADDRESSES - HE IS EITHER "IN ADAM" OR "IN CHRIST." HE IS NEVER "IN NEUTRAL." SO, JUST AS EVERY PERSON HAS A GEOGRAPHICAL ADDRESS SO HE HAS A SPIRITUAL ADDRESS. TO BE SURE, FOR SOME IT IS DIFFICULT TO LOCATE THAT ADDRESS. YET THE BIBLE MAKES IT VERY CLEAR. (COMMENT REGARDING PEOPLE WHO MOVE TO CHARLESTON ESPECIALLY IN SOUTH HILLS. WHEN ASKED HOW OUR CITY WAS DEVELOPED, ONE WAS SAID IT WAS LAID OUT BY AN ENGINEER FOLLOWING A GOAT.) VERSES SUCH AS II CORINTHIANS 5:17, I THESSALONIANS 4:16 EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS TECHNICAL EXPRESSION. LET US EXAMINE SOME OF THE BENEFITS AND BLESSINGS THE BELIEVER ENJOYS - "IN CHRIST."

I. IN CHRIST THE BELIEVER HAS ACCESS TO GOD

ROMANS 5:2

(Romans Outline) 5:1, "therefore - Just
12:1" - "not
- Consider"

THIS VERSE APPEARS IN THE SECOND MAJOR DIVISION OF ROMANS. (EXPLAIN) THE WORD ACCESS MEANS RIGHT OF APPROACH. IT MEANS TO LEAD OR BRING NEAR. IT WAS USED IN ANCIENT TIMES TO DESCRIBE A PERSON WHO USHERED PEOPLE INTO THE

Stacy House
White House
Celebs House

"Access Code"
"P.I.N."
Book
2 = R. Spangly

Jury Duty
(1) Judge
(2) Jury

PRESENCE OF ROYALTY. IT WAS DANGEROUS TO ENTER THE PRESENCE OF A KING WITHOUT PERMISSION OR AUTHORIZATION. A CERTAIN OFFICER IN THE ORIENTAL COURT HAD THAT RESPONSIBILITY AND THE TERM USED TO DESCRIBE THE WORD ACCESS IS THE VERY TERM THAT WAS USED TO IDENTIFY THAT SPECIAL PERSON. WE HAVE ALL LEARNED THERE ARE PEOPLE, PLACES AND POSITIONS THAT ARE SIMPLY INACCESSIBLE TO MOST OF US. THERE ARE PLACES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE "BY INVITATION ONLY" - ALL OTHERS STAY OUT! I LEARNED THE MEANING OF THIS TERM IN A SPECIAL WAY IN OUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. (RELATE STORY OF LONG, TENUOUS ATTEMPT TO GAIN ACCESS TO OUR CHURCH PROPERTY ON CORRIDOR G. THE ROAD THAT FINALLY LINKED ANGEL TERRACE APPROXIMATELY 100 YARDS IN LENGTH RUNNING PARALLEL TO A FOUR-LANE HIGHWAY IS CALLED - AN ACCESS ROAD!) THE HUMBLEST BELIEVER HAS IMMEDIATE ACCESS INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD BECAUSE OF HIS IDENTIFICATION WITH JESUS CHRIST - A SON WHO HAS LEGAL RIGHT TO ENTER INTO GOD'S PRESENCE ANY AND ALL TIMES!

II. IN CHRIST THE BELIEVER HAS AN ADVOCATE BEFORE GOD - I JOHN 2:1

THIS WORD ADVOCATE IS USED IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN TO DESCRIBE THE HOLY SPIRIT AND IS TRANSLATED COMFORTER. IT LITERALLY REFERS TO ONE WHO PLEADS THE CAUSE OF ANOTHER. A LAWYER IS A JUDICIAL ADVOCATE. (I' ~~am not a lawyer~~) A BOOK ENTITLED "THE MAN TO SEE." IT IS THE BIOGRAPHY OF EDWARD BENNETT WILLIAMS. HE REPRESENTED ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE FROM CROOKS TO CONGRESSMEN, THE RICH AND FAMOUS, THE POOR AND NOT SO FAMOUS - HE WAS THEIR ADVOCATE IN COURT. WHAT DID HE DO? HE KEPT MANY IF NOT MOST OF THEM OUT OF JAIL. IN VERY FEW CASES DID HIS CLIENTS GO TO JAIL. FOR MOST LIKE GOVERNOR JOHN CONNALLY OR WASHINGTON LAWYER CLARK CLIFFORD HE

Common Folk

LAST sentence in the MAN TO SEE: re Ben Badlee:
after Williams death in 1988

3

In years after,
in times of trouble, Badlee
... reach for the phone to
call Ed Williams
reminiscent of his friend

most

SIMPLY WAS THE BEST TRIAL LAWYER OF HIS DAY! NO
CLARK CLIFFORD WROTE TO HIM THE FOLLOWING WORDS
OF GRATITUDE AFTER WILLIAMS SUCCESSFULLY
DEFENDED CLIFFORD IN A HIGHLY PUBLICIZED CASE
"I AM TROUBLED THAT THERE IS SOMEONE WHO WAS
ATTEMPTING TO TRAFFIC INTO THE DESTRUCTION OF
SOMETHING I HAVE SPENT A WHOLE LIFE TRYING TO
BUILD AND PRESERVE, BUT THE FACT THAT **YOU ARE**
WITH ME WHEN I NEED YOU ALMOST MAKES THE WHOLE
EXPERIENCE WORTHWHILE." AN ADVOCATE IS HIS
CLIENT'S FRIEND, YOUR CASE IS HIS CASE, YOUR
CAUSE HIS CAUSE. A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP EXISTS
BETWEEN CLIENT AND COUNSELOR. THE BELIEVER HAS
SOMEONE IN HEAVEN WHO SPEAKS IN HIS FAVOR, WHO
CHAMPIONS HIS CAUSE BEFORE GOD. EVERY NEW
BELIEVER NEEDS TO LEARN A VERY IMPORTANT
SPIRITUAL LESSON IN THE AREA OF **ADVOCACY**. THERE
IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL BATH OF
REGENERATION AND THE SPIRITUAL CLEANSING OF
RENEWED FELLOWSHIP. (JOHN 13:10) THERE ARE
TWO LINKS THAT BIND THE BELIEVER TO GOD.
(EXPLAIN) THE BELIEVER IS ENCOURAGED TO "SIN
NOT" - THAT MEANS NOT EVEN ONE TIME. GOD DOES
NOT **ADVOCATE SIN** BUT HE HAS PROVIDED AN
ADVOCATE WHEN THE BELIEVER DOES SIN. GOD'S
INSTRUCTION TO THE BELIEVER IS NOT UNLIKE A
PARENT'S INSTRUCTION TO HIS CHILD ON THE FIRST
DAY OF SCHOOL. SIN IS SO HEINOUS THAT THE
THOUGHT OF PERMITTING IT EVEN ONE TIME IS
UNTHINKABLE. TO THE CHILD OF GOD, SIN IS
ACCIDENTAL AND OCCASIONAL NOT HABITUAL. THIS
VERSE IS NOT GIVEN WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT
GOD'S PEOPLE ARE **SINLESS**. BUT IT IS GOD'S
WILL FOR HIS CHILDREN THAT THEY **SIN LESS**. FOR
EXAMPLE, RACE CARS ARE DESIGNED TO RUN AND NOT
CRASH. EVEN THOUGH ONE IS A GOOD DRIVER THERE
ARE CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN EVEN THE BEST OF
RACERS CRASH. FOR THAT REASON EVERY CAR IS
EQUIPPED WITH SAFETY FEATURES AND EQUIPMENT
SUCH AS ROLL BARS, SAFETY HARNESS, HELMET,
FIRE PROOF CLOTHING, FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND

Matt.
28.16

Re-
do

Job.
9.33

Adam
Rutty
NASCPA

Lee
Rutty
Kole
Adam

Mom-School

Daytona Beach!
2005!

Titanic

- 4 -

Titanic

~~Cruise~~
~~Ship~~

OTHER EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT FOR JUST THAT - THE EMERGENCY SITUATION. ² AIRPLANES ARE DESIGNED TO FLY AND NOT CRASH. ³ SHIPS ARE DESIGNED TO FLOAT AND NOT SINK BUT THERE ARE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES SO THAT PASSENGERS MAY BE FULLY PROTECTED. THIS VERSE IS FOR THE EMERGENCY SITUATION SO THAT THE BELIEVER MAY CONTINUE IN UNBROKEN FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. JESUS CHRIST OUR ADVOCATE MAKES THAT POSSIBLE. (EXPLAIN EXPERIENCE OF GORDY BARNARD AND PARKING LOT SCUFFLE.)

III. IN CHRIST THE BELIEVER HAS AN ANCHOR FOR

THE SOUL - HEBREWS 6:19-20

Contrast
Rowboat
TO
QE
Both need an anchor.

THE SCENE IS A NAUTICAL SCENE - IT HAS TO DO WITH SHIPS, THE SEA AND SHIP EQUIPMENT. ONE FUNCTION OF AN ANCHOR IS TO KEEP A SHIP OR BOAT FROM DRIFTING. WHAT AN ANCHOR IS TO A BOAT, HOPE IS TO THE CHRISTIAN. (RELATE SEMINARY JOB IN FOUNDARY TO LEARN THAT EVEN SMALL BOATS NEED AN ANCHOR. THE SEA OF LIFE IS SOMETIMES ROUGH AND ONES BOAT IS TOSSED TO AND FRO - HOPE GOES DEEP BENEATH THE STORM TO FASTEN TO THE SURE PROMISES OF THE WORD OF GOD. FOR SOME, HOPE IS AN UNCERTAIN INDEFINITE TERM, SUCH AS "I HOPE I'M SAVED." THE IDEA IS THAT OF WISHING, LUCK OR FORTUNE. IT CARRIES THE IDEA OF MUDDLING THROUGH TO MAKE IT TO HEAVEN. HOWEVER, THE BIBLE WORD HOPE IS A TERM OF CERTAINTY. YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT IT WAS THE KEY CALLED HOPE ON A CHAIN AROUND CHRISTIAN'S NECK WHICH UNLOCKED EVERY DOOR IN DOUBTING CASTLE. DR. IRONSIDE TELLS AN INTERESTING STORY ABOUT THE USAGE OF THE TERM FORERUNNER IN THE TEXT. HE SUGGESTS THAT THIS TERM REFERS TO A SMALL BOAT THAT WAS USED BY GREEK SHIPS WHEN THEY CAME TO A HARBOR THAT WAS NOT PASSABLE AT LOW TIDE. IT WAS CUSTOMARY TO PLACE ANCHOR IN A BOAT THAT WAS CALLED THE FORERUNNER AND CAST THE ANCHOR INSIDE THE HARBOR THUS SECURING THE SHIP UNTIL THE TIDE CHANGED. THE BELIEVER'S SECURITY IS

(QE = anchor)

GUARANTEED BECAUSE HIS HOPE IS BOUND UP IN JESUS CHRIST WHO IS ALREADY SAFELY INSIDE THE HARBOR OF GLORY!

IV. IN CHRIST THE BELIEVER HAS AN ALTAR THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD - HEBREWS 13:10

OLD TESTAMENT STUDENTS ARE AWARE THAT ALTAR WAS A SPECIAL WORD. FOR EXAMPLE THE BRAZEN ALTAR WAS THE LARGEST OF THE SEVEN PIECES OF FURNITURE IN THE TABERNACLE, IT WAS THE FIRST WHEN ONE ENTERED THE GATE FOR IT SIGNIFIED THE PLACE OF SACRIFICE OR THE FIRST STEP IN ONE'S APPROACH TO GOD. IT WAS BRASS BECAUSE BRASS IS THE SYMBOL OF JUDGMENT. THEREFORE, MAN'S APPROACH TO GOD BEGINS AT THE ALTAR WHERE THE BLOOD WAS SHED. ANY OTHER APPROACH WAS UNACCEPTABLE. THIS WAS THE LESSON CAIN NEVER LEARNED! THE FIRST ALTAR I ENCOUNTERED IN CHURCH WAS NOT IN A CATHEDRAL IN ROME BUT IN A RURAL BAPTIST CHURCH WHERE IT WAS CALLED "A MOURNERS' BENCH." LATER ON, I LEARNED THAT IT WAS NOT THE PLACE BUT THE PERSON WHO WAS THE PROPER ALTAR. IN CHRIST, GOD HAS MADE ADEQUATE BELIEVER FOR THE SINNER'S APPROACH TO GOD. (MANY YEARS AGO ON A VISIT TO MEXICO 30 MILES N.E. OF MEXICO CITY AT A PLACE CALLED TAOTAWACON - THE PYRAMID OF THE SUN. IT SEEMS THAT YEARS AGO INDIANS THOUGHT OF THE SUN AS THE SOURCE OF ALL LIFE AND BELIEVED THAT THIS GOD MUST BE FED WITH HUMAN SACRIFICES AND SPECIFICALLY THE HUMAN HEART. FOR THAT REASON, CAPTIVES IN WAR WERE SAVED FOR THAT SPECIAL PROVISION. ON ONE RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY TWENTY THOUSAND WERE SACRIFICED. EACH YEAR ON A CERTAIN RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY A SINGLE BOY WOULD CLIMB TO THE TOP OF THE PYRAMID OF THE SUN SOME 250+ STEPS TO THE TOP LAY HIMSELF BACKWARD ACROSS A STONE ALTAR THEN A PRIEST WOULD OPEN HIS CHEST CAVITY WITH AN AXE AND KNIFE REMOVE

HIS BEATING HEART FROM HIS BODY AND OFFER IT
AS A SACRIFICE TO THE GOD OF THE SUN.) I AM
GLAD THAT NO SUCH SACRIFICE IS REQUIRED OF US
BEFORE GOD. OUR SACRIFICE HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE
AT A PLACE CALLED CALVARY. (COMMENT REGARDING
BROOKE - "I DID IT, ~~I'M GUILTY~~, ~~I'M RESPONSIBLE~~,
I'M SORRY!")

Its my fault!

*Jean
Edmonds*

*(3 g. daughters now!)
1 grandson*

"THE NET RESULTS"

(MAT. 13:47-50)

CERTAIN PEOPLE ARE IDENTIFIED BY CERTAIN OBJECTS. FOR EXAMPLE, LINCOLN - LOG CABIN AND STOVE PIPE HAT. MACARTHUR - CAP AND CORNCORB PIPE, CHURCHILL - CIGAR AND VICTORY SIGN. THE SAME IS TRUE OF SCRIPTURE: ABRAHAM - A TENT AND AN ALTAR SYMBOLS OF SACRIFICE AND A PILGRIM LIFE. JOSEPH - A MANY COLORED COAT SYMBOLICAL OF A PROPER COVERING. MOSES - A ROD AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS, SYMBOL OF GOD'S POWER AND GOD'S LAW. SAUL - A SPEAR REVEALING A MAN GOVERNED BY THE FLESH. DAVID - A SLING AND A HARP. ELIJAH - A CHARIOT AND A MANTLE. SEVERAL OF THE MEN WHOM JESUS CALLED TO BE HIS DISCIPLES WERE FISHERMEN. JUST AS A SHEPHERD'S STAFF SYMBOLIZED HIS WORK, SO THE FISHERMEN'S NET SYMBOLIZED HIS WORK. HISTORY REVEALS THERE WERE TWO ~~KINDS~~ KINDS OF FISHING NETS: (1) THE HAND NET - USED BY A PRACTICED FISHERMEN. (2) DRAG-NET - SOME 100 FEET LONG OR MORE WITH A BUOY AT THE TOP AND WEIGHTS AT THE BOTTOM REQUIRING SEVERAL MEN TO HANDLE. OUR LORD USED ~~THE~~ A NET ILLUSTRATION IN MATTHEW 13 TO SYMBOLIZE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. TODAY, WE WILL LOOK AT REFERENCES IN SCRIPTURE WHERE THE TERM NET APPEARS AND ASSOCIATE THE OCCURRENCE WITH CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. (SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT THESE FISHERMEN WHOM JESUS CALLED TO BE HIS DISCIPLES WOULD HAVE LIVED AND DIED IN OBLIVION EXCEPT FOR THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH JESUS CHRIST.)

I. THE DISCIPLES LEFT THEIR NETS - MARK 1:16-18

THE WORD FORSOOK IS FROM THE ROOT WORD "TO FORGIVE." IT IS TRANSLATED IN MARK 4:36 "SEND AWAY." THE WORD FORGIVE MEANS TO SEPARATE THE SINNER FROM HIS SIN. THIS SAME WORD IS USED IN JOHN 4:3, 23, 52. IT IS ALSO USED IN I JOHN 1:9! THE SAME ENGLISH WORD, BUT ANOTHER

NOT
"ought NOT"
"should NOT"
cannot = Swatal
not possible

-2-

Lord = 100%
or NOT
Lord!!!

For
ever!

GREEK WORD IS USED TO DESCRIBE MOSES' EXODUS FROM EGYPT. "BY FAITH HE FORSOOK EGYPT, NOT FEARING THE WRATH OF THE KING: FOR HE ENDURED, AS SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE," (HEBREWS 11:27.) IN THESE VERSES, A SPIRITUAL

PRINCIPLE: ~~THE CALL OF JESUS~~ REQUIRES LEAVING BEHIND THE AFFECTIONS, PURSUITS AND INTERESTS OF THE OLD LIFE. LEAVING THEIR NETS, SYMBOLIZED A CALL TO A HIGHER PLAIN, NAMELY, FISHING FOR MEN! THE CALL OF CHRIST

IS TO PUT THE SPIRITUAL OVER THE MATERIAL ASPECTS OF LIFE. THERE IS SOME CONFUSION IN OUR TIME ABOUT THIS PRINCIPLE. OUR LORD SAID: "YE CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS" - (MATTHEW 6:24)

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO RUN WITH THE HARE AND HUNT WITH THE HOUNDS! ONE CANNOT TRAVEL THE BROAD WAY AND NARROW WAY BOTH AT THE SAME TIME! (MATTHEW 7:13-14) ONE CANNOT BE BOTH A CHILD OF LIGHT AND A CHILD OF DARKNESS. THE BIBLE STATES IN II COR. 5:17 THAT CONVERSION IS A

LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE. ACCORDING COL., THERE ARE SOME THINGS TO PUT OFF AND SOME TO PUT ON. WHEN A PERSON COMES TO CHRIST, THERE ARE SOME THINGS HE WILL LEAVE AT CALVARY. PRACTICES BOTH PERSONAL AND SOCIAL, FRIENDS, VOCABULARY, ALL THE ~~SHADES~~ OF THE OLD LIFE THAT ARE IN CONFLICT WITH CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP. LET US

TAKE A MOMENT AND EXAMINE A FEW PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT. I COR. 6:9-11 - NOTICE THE EMPHASIS ON THE WORD "WERE". EPH. 2:2,3,4,12-13 - EPH. 5:3-8. NOTE AGAIN THE USAGE OF THE TERM "WERE". NEVER IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH HAS MORE BEEN TAUGHT, TALKED ABOUT, WRITTEN ABOUT, SEMINARS HELD ON THE SUBJECT OF DISCIPLESHIP. ALMOST EVERY CHURCH HAS A DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM TO THE POINT IT HAS BECOME A FAD - IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE YOU ARE MISSING SOMETHING! BUT IN MY JUDGEMENT, NEVER HAS THERE BEEN LESS PRACTICE OF GENUINE BIBLE DISCIPLESHIP! ONCE IN A WHILE, I AM CRITICIZED FOR NOT GIVING MORE LENGTHY AND PRESSING INVITATIONS. SOME FOLK THINK WE DO NOT PRESS FOR DECISIONS ENOUGH. THE BIBLE TRUTH WE HAVE BEEN EMPHASIZING INDICATES THAT

"were" not "are"

WHEN OUR LORD CALLS PEOPLE TO HIMSELF HE DOES NOT COERCE OR BEG, BUT RATHER INVITES THEM TO CONSIDER THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP AND HAVING CONSIDERED DECIDE!

II. THE DISCIPLES WERE WASHING THEIR NETS - LUKE 5:2

THE COMMENTATORS SUGGEST THAT FISH DID NOT READILY SWIM INTO DIRTY NETS. THUS, IT WAS NECESSARY TO CLEAN THE NETS ON A REGULAR, DAILY BASIS. IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM, MOST WOULD AGREE THAT THE LORD USES CLEAN VESSELS. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE LORD DOES NOT USE CRACKED OR ~~IMPERFECT~~ VESSELS. (CONTRAST THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT, - RELATE TO THE STORY OF JACK SCHULER.) PAUL SAID TO TIMOTHY: "BUT IN A GREAT HOUSE THERE ARE NOT ONLY VESSELS OF GOLD AND OF SILVER, BUT ALSO OF WOOD AND OF EARTH; AND SOME TO HONOR AND SOME TO DISHONOR. IF A MAN THEREFORE PURGE HIMSELF FROM THESE, HE SHALL BE A VESSEL UNTO HONOR, SANCTIFIED AND MEAT FOR THE MASTER'S USE, AND PREPARED UNTO EVERY GOOD WORK."

(1 TIM. 2:20-21). THE FIRST AND FOREMOST PRINCIPLE OF CHRISTIAN LIVING EVERY NEW BELIEVER NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND IS (1) CLEANSING FROM THE PENALTY OR GUILT OF SIN. THIS IS DONE ONCE AND FOR ALL THROUGH THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. (TITUS 3:5) (2) CLEANSING FROM THE POLLUTION OR GRIP OF SIN IN THE BELIEVER'S LIFE. THE FIRST HAS TO DO WITH JUSTIFICATION THE SECOND HAS TO DO WITH SANCTIFICATION. JESUS MADE THIS DISTINCTION VERY CLEAR IN JOHN 13:10. IN JOHN 15 JESUS SPOKE OF A "PURGING PROCESS" IN ORDER TO BE FRUITFUL. FULLNESS AND JOY COME FROM CLEANSING FROM SIN ON THE PART OF THE BELIEVER. 1 JOHN 1:9. DAVID'S CRY IN PSALM 51:7-12 IS THE CRY OF THE CHILD OF GOD WHOSE SIN HAS GRIEVED HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS HEAVENLY FATHER AND IN SOME RESPECTS IS FAR MORE AGONIZING THAN THE CONDITION OF THE UNREGENERATE AND THE PENALTY OF HIS TRANSGRESSIONS. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE WORD

"Lord, if we have sinner
Don't drag me into this
Can't think of - guess at it!
guess right!"

JOY IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING THIS PASSAGE. ACCORDING TO VERSE 13, THERE WOULD BE NO WITNESSING UNTIL THERE HAD BEEN CLEANSING. GOD LONGS FOR HIS CHILDREN TO BE CLEAN, BUT THERE CAN BE NO CLEANSING UNTIL FIRST THERE HAS BEEN CONFESSION. - (Jn 1:9) Confession = quest
Cleansing = follows

III. THE DISCIPLES USING THEIR NETS - JOHN 21:

6-11 (VIO) - a message for the
"Tree huggers & weed-busters!"

DO YOU REMEMBER THE STORY OF THE CHILD SITTING ON THE CREEK BANK CRYING BECAUSE HE WAS CATCHING NO FISH WHILE HIS FISHING POLE AND FISH HOOK WERE LAYING ON THE BANK SEVERAL FEET FROM THE WATER. SOMEHOW, IT HAD NEVER OCCURRED TO THAT BOY TO DROP HIS HOOK INTO THE POND. IT REMINDS ME OF THE CHRISTIANS WHO PRAY AND SAY: "DEAR LORD SEND SOME SINNERS INTO OUR CHURCH ON SUNDAY IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT HEAR THE GOSPEL AND BE SAVED." THAT PRAYER MAKES AS MUCH SENSE AS A MAN SITTING IN A BOAT ON THE LAKE PRAYING TO GOD THAT HE WILL CAUSE THE FISH TO JUMP OUT OF THE LAKE AND INTO HIS BOAT. A PERSON LIKE THAT WILL UTTERLY FAIL IN CATCHING FISH. THE PASSAGE BEFORE US REMINDED JESUS' DISCIPLES THEN AND NOW THAT CATCHING FISH DEPENDS UPON CHRIST. THERE IS A PRINCIPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORD OF GOD THAT GOD'S WORK MUST BE DONE GOD'S WAY. YET MAN STRUGGLES WITH THIS PRINCIPLE BECAUSE NOT ONLY DO WE WANT TO BE SAVED BY OUR OWN HAND, BUT WE WANT TO DO GOD'S WORK IN THE ENERGY AND POWER OF THE FLESH. LET ME SUGGEST THREE SIMPLE TRUTHS FROM THIS PASSAGE AS THEY RELATE TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: (1) THE STRUGGLES OF LIFE WITHOUT CHRIST - THESE DISCIPLES HAD WORKED ALL NIGHT WITH NOTHING TO SHOW. IT WAS A NIGHT OF DARKNESS, DISPAIR AND FAILURE. THESE MEN WERE EXPERTS AT THEIR CRAFT. THEY KNEW HOW TO FISH AND WHERE TO FISH. LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT SOMETIMES IT IS A BLESSING TO UTTERLY FAIL. NEVER HAD THEY BEEN SO AWARE OF THEIR EMPTINESS

See Morrison

Peter - Pentecost
thousands ++ ^{all} had a meeting!

AS FISHERMEN. EVERY CHRISTIAN WORKER KNOWS THE FEELING OF TOILING WITH NO APPARENT RESULTS.

(2) THE SECRET OF FULLNESS IS OBEYING THE LORD -
AFTER A NIGHT OF FAILURE, THEY SIMPLY DID WHAT HE TOLD THEM TO DO WITH IMMEDIATE RESULTS. DO WHAT JESUS SAYS, AND DO IT NOW! THIS IS A

SIMPLE YET INCREDIABLY DIFFICULT THING FOR ANYONE TO DO. TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT CHRIST KNEW THEIR BUSINESS BETTER THAN THEY DID AND THAT WHEN HE GIVES DIRECTIONS WE ARE TO OBEY. (PROV. 3:5-6).

(3) THE BLESSEDNESS OF LIFE IS BEING NEAR HIM - FISHING WAS NO FUN WHEN THE CATCH WAS ZERO. FISHING WAS INCREDIABLY EXCITING WHEN HE GAVE DIRECTION AND WHEN THEY OBEYED HIM. QUESTION: HOW MAY I BE AN EFFECTIVE

DISCIPLE OF CHRIST? (1) LEAVE THE OLD LIFE. (2) KEEP YOUR LIFE CLEAN (3) USE THE GIFTS ~~AND TALENTS~~ GOD HAS GIVEN. HE WILL BLESS IF WE WILL LET HIM.

*Go back to the
2nd 1970's at BOC*
*up. I have message Barry Barker
& Harry Beckell*

McGee - Cross Roads - message for
parent of wayward
children -
did not see
it happen - but
it did!!

THE STORY OF THREE FOOLS

THE WORD FOOL IS NOT ONE OF OUR FAVORITE WORDS; IN SOME PLACES, IT MIGHT BE A FIGHTING WORD! THERE IS SOMETHING DISTURBING, EVEN OFFENSIVE, ABOUT THE WORD FOOL. WE MAY REFER TO OURSELVES AS FOOLISH AT TIMES, SONGWRITERS AND SINGERS TALK ABOUT FOOLISH LOVE BUT TO REFER TO ONESELF AS A FOOL IS ALMOST NEVER DONE. THE WORD FOOL IS USED TO DESCRIBE

(1) THE MINDLESS ACTS AND WORDS OF A SIMPLETON.

IN MEDIEVAL TIMES, THE COURT JESTER OR OFFICIAL ENTERTAINER, WAS CALLED A FOOL.

(2) IN SCRIPTURE, THE TERM IS ATTACHED TO PEOPLE WHO LACK SPIRITUAL LIFE, INSIGHT, JUDGMENT AND VALUES. (1) SOLOMON MADE SOME EIGHTY STATEMENTS IN PROVERBS AND ECCLESIASTES ABOUT FOOLS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN PROVERBS 7:22-27 HE STATES THAT ANY MAN WHO LISTENS TO, LONGS FOR OR LINGERS AROUND A PROSTITUTE IS A FOOL. (COMMENT REGARDING JIMMY SWAGGERT AND HIS STUDY OF THE WORD (2) JESUS CALLED THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES FOOLS IN MATTHEW 23:17 NOT BECAUSE THEY POSSESSED A LOW I.Q. BUT BECAUSE THEY WERE DEVOID OF SPIRITUAL LIFE. WHEN JESUS SAID IN MATTHEW 5:22 ... "BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL SAY THOU FOOL, SHALL BE IN DANGER OF HELL FIRE."

THE CONTEXT OF THE CHAPTER INDICATES THAT OUR LORD WAS SPEAKING OF THE DANGER OF BEING ANGRY WITH OTHERS. THE MAN WHO PERMITS ANGER TO WELL UP IN HIS HEART BY CALLING ANOTHER MAN A FOOL IS ON DANGEROUS GROUND. WITHIN A 10 CHAPTER SPAN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, THERE ARE THREE REFERENCES TO MEN WHO WERE CALLED FOOLS. WE WILL EXAMINE THESE THREE REFERENCES TODAY:

*The Wife who
called the Husband Fool*

I. THE MAN WHOSE WIFE CALLED HIM A FOOL -

I SAMUEL 25:25

*(A Foolish Husband?)
The Contemptuous Fool*

FOR MANY YEARS, THE NATION OF ISRAEL HAD BEEN BLESSED WITH THE WISDOM OF GODLY EXAMPLE OF SAMUEL. HIS VERY PRESENCE WAS A CONSTANT INFLUENCE FOR GOOD. WHEN HE DIED, THE NATION PLUNGED INTO MOURNING. AFTER HIS DEATH, DAVID RETURNED TO THE FAMILIAR HAUNTS OF HEBRON AND SUPPORTED HIMSELF BY PROTECTING THE OUTLYING HERDS AND POSSESSIONS OF BEDOUINS FROM MARAUDING RAIDERS. IT WAS THE CUSTOM AND THE UNDERSTOOD PRACTICE FOR GRATEFUL BUSINESSMEN TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIS SERVICE BY CONTRIBUTING TO THE UPKEEP OF HIS GORILLA ARMY. BECAUSE OF GOD'S GOODNESS AND DAVID'S PROTECTION, A MAN NAMED NABAL HAD ENJOYED A RECORD YEAR OF PROFITS IN HIS BUSINESS. THIS CHAPTER IS ONE OF GREAT CONTRASTS. THE CONTRAST OF NABAL AND SAMUEL - NABAL AND ABIGAIL. ABIGAIL WAS A BEAUTIFUL AND BRAINY WOMAN WHO WAS MARRIED TO A SURLY, SARCASTIC, SELF-IMPORTANT MAN NAMED NABAL. (HOW COULD SUCH A BEAUTIFUL, INTELLIGENT WOMAN BE MARRIED TO SUCH A LOSER? EXPLAIN CUSTOMS OF THE ANCIENT EAST. HOWEVER, WE NEED NOT GO TO THE EAST FOR AN EXPLANATION - YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW MAY HAVE THE SAME IDEA ABOUT YOU! SIMPLY STATED, SHE WAS THE VICTIM OF A CULTURE WHERE THE CHOICE OF ONE'S LIFE COMPANION WAS NOT HERS BUT HER PARENTS. NABAL'S BREACH OF ETHICS MANIFESTED IN INSULTS AND SNEERS TOWARD DAVID WAS FROUGHT WITH DANGER. HE WAS DEVOID OF THE COMMON COURTESIES OF LIFE. HIS OVERBEARING, SELF-INDULGENT, SELF-IMPORTANT, INDEPENDENT ATTITUDE WAS OBNOXIOUS TO ALL WHO WERE AROUND HIM. THE CENTRAL POINT OF THE CHAPTER IS

25:3

ABIGAIL'S ASSESSMENT OF HER HUSBAND'S CHARACTER IN VERSE 25. IN THE EAST, NAMES OFTEN REFLECTED THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF THE PERSON AND INDEED NABAL LIVED UP TO HIS NAME - HE WAS A FOOL. DAVID HAD EVERY INTENTION OF SEPARATING HIS HEAD FROM THE REST OF HIS BODY! ONLY HIS WIFE'S TACT AND SWIFT ACTION SAVED HIS LIFE AT THAT MOMENT. TO BE SURE, DAVID HAD NO LEGAL RIGHT TO ANY OF NABAL'S PROPERTY. WHAT HAPPENED WAS A SOCIAL AND PERSONAL INSULT BUT IT WOUNDED DAVID'S PRIDE AND HE QUICKLY FORGOT THE SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE EVEN THE LIFE OF A MAN LIKE NABAL AS REVENGE WELLED UP IN HIS SOUL. THROUGHOUT THE WORD OF GOD, WE ARE INSTRUCTED THAT NO MAN HAS THE RIGHT TO SEEK REVENGE FOR PERSONAL INSULT. LEAVE THAT TO GOD. THE STORY IS VERY POINTED. IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR, NABAL SUFFERS EITHER A HEART ATTACK, STROKE, OR BOTH BUT HE DIED AND LEFT HIS WONDERFUL WIFE A WEALTHY WIDOW FOR DAVID! APPLICATION: IN HIS QUEST FOR SUCCESS AND RICHES NABAL FAILED TO REALIZE THAT ONE OF HIS MOST VALUABLE ASSETS IN LIFE WAS HIS GODLY WIFE. MANY MEN WITH A NABAL-LIKE DISPOSITION HAVE MADE THE SAME FATAL MISTAKE. NOBODY WEPT WHEN NABAL DIED. HE WAS NOT MOURNED FOR NOR MISSED. THE NABALS OF THIS WORLD LEAVE NOTHING BEHIND BUT GRIEF. THE GREATNESS IN CHARACTER IN THIS CHAPTER LIES IN SAMUEL, NOT NABAL. SOMEONE HAS SAID THERE ARE FOUR KINDS OF GREATNESS:

- (1) GREATNESS OF HAVING
- (2) GREATNESS OF DOING
- (3) GREATNESS OF THINKING
- (4) GREATNESS OF BEING

(BY THE WAY, THE PRACTICE OF POLYGAMY MENTIONED IN VERSE 44 IS NOT A GOD-SANCTIONED PRACTICE. THE BIBLE SHOWS THAT SENSUALITY

WAS DAVID'S BESETTING SIN. THERE WERE CERTAIN THINGS PRACTICED BY OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS WHICH GOD PERMITTED APART FROM IMMEDIATE JUDGMENT WHICH WERE STILL WRONG IN THE SIGHT OF GOD EVEN THOUGH MEN OF PROMINENCE, LIKE DAVID, COMMITTED SUCH SINS. THIS FIRST STEP TOWARD POLYGAMY LED TO THE MULTIPLE MISERIES OF DAVID'S LATER LIFE. SOLOMON FOLLOWED HIS FATHER'S UNSCRIPTURAL EXAMPLE.)

II. THE KING WHO CALLED HIMSELF A FOOL -

II the Deceiver SAMUEL 26:21 A Foolish King!
or a Jealous Fool the Jealous Fool

THIS CHAPTER RECORDS THE FINAL MEETING OF SAUL AND DAVID. SAUL WOULD SOON DIE, WITH HIS SONS, ON THE HILLS OF GILBOA IN SHAME AND MILITARY DISGRACE AND DEFEAT. IN THIS CHAPTER, ONCE AGAIN WE SEE THE UPS AND DOWNS, THE DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE-TYPE PERSONALITY THAT TORMENTED SAUL THROUGHOUT LIFE. FOR A SHORT TIME IN THOSE EARLY DAYS, SAUL WAS PLEASED WITH YOUNG DAVID AND WANTED HIM NEAR. DAVID'S MUSICAL ABILITY PLUS HIS COURAGEOUS AND CONSUMMATE SKILL AS A SOLDIER APPEALED TO SAUL. THEN CAME THAT DAY WHEN THEY RETURNED FROM BATTLE AND SAUL HEARD THE CHANT OF THE LADIES ALONG THE STREETS OF JERUSALEM. FROM THAT DAY FORWARD SAUL WAS SUSPICIOUS OF DAVID AND SOUGHT TO TAKE HIS LIFE. ON THIS PARTICULAR OCCASION, DAVID DISPLAYED TO SAUL ONCE AGAIN THAT GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE SAUL'S LIFE, HE CHOSE NOT TO DO SO. FOR ONE BRIEF MOMENT SAUL SEEMED TO SEE THE FOLLY OF HIS MIND SET BUT NOW IT WAS TOO LATE, THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK FOR SAUL. (THERE IS AN INTERESTING COMPARISON IN THESE TWO CHAPTERS OF DAVID'S DISPOSITION. HE WAS READY TO TAKE NABAL'S

HEAD WITH A SWORD OVER AN INSULT BUT WAS CONTENT TO SPARE SAUL'S LIFE EVEN THOUGH SAUL HAD TRIED TO KILL HIM SEVERAL TIMES. HE SIMPLY WOULD NOT SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO AVENGE HIMSELF OF HIS ADVERSARY.) SAUL'S ENTIRE LIFE MIGHT BE CHARACTERIZED AS "PLAYING THE FOOL." IN HIS TWISTED MIND, SAUL COULD NOT DETERMINE WHO WAS FRIEND AND FOE. SOMEONE HAS SAID HE WAS AN EXAMPLE OF "PARANOIA ON PARADE." IT WAS AS IF WHEN HE RECOGNIZED EVEN FOR A MOMENT HIS PROBLEM HE WAS HELPLESS TO CHANGE AND MOVED EVER ONWARD IN A COURSE OF SELF-DESTRUCTION. THE SORROW THAT SEEMED TO ENGULF SAUL ON THIS OCCASION, THE POINT OF CALLING HIMSELF HARD NAMES, DID NOT INDICATE A CHANGE OF HEART. HE SAW IF BUT FOR A MOMENT THE FOLLY OF HIS CONDUCT BUT MADE NO ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THAT CONDUCT! HE RECOGNIZED THE UNKINGLY-LIKE BEHAVIOR ON HIS PART BUT STOPPED SHORT OF CORRECTING THE PROBLEM. SIMPLY STATED, HE RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEM BUT WOULD NOT RECTIFY IT! THIS IS INDEED THE LIFESTYLE OF A FOOL!

III. THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF WHO CALLED THE COMMANDER OF HIS ARMY A FOOL -

*the Dolt
or a Fool*

II SAMUEL 3:33 (3:1) *A Foolish Soldier
The Careless Fool*

I SAMUEL CLOSES WITH THE DEATH OF KING SAUL. SAUL'S MILITARY CHIEF, A MAN NAMED ABNER, PUT ISHBAOSHETH, SAUL'S SON, ON THE THRONE AS A WEAK PUPPET KING WHO DID ABNER'S BIDDING. UNDER ABNER'S LEADERSHIP MUCH OF THE LOST TERRITORY WAS REGAINED. HOWEVER, AS TIME WENT ON DAVID'S FORCES BEGAN TO INCREASE IN NUMBER AND POWER. II SAMUEL 2 TELLS THE STORY OF AN ATTEMPT BETWEEN THE FORCES OF ABNER AND THE FORCES OF JOAB TO SETTLE SOME MILITARY SCORES BY A REPRESENTATIVE-TYPE WARFARE OR

WAR GAMES BETWEEN TWO COMPANIES OF 12 MEN ON EACH SIDE. HOWEVER, WHEN JOAB'S SIDE WON HANDILY CONFLICT BROKE OUT AMONG THE REST OF THE FORCES AND ABNER WAS FORCED TO FLEE FOR HIS LIFE. JOAB, WHO WAS DAVID'S NEPHEW, HAD TWO SOLDIER BROTHERS NAMED ABISHAI AND ASAHAI. THE LATTER OF THE TWO WAS RECOGNIZED FOR HIS SKILL AND SPEED AS A RUNNER. THIS CHAPTER TELLS HOW ABNER KILLED ASAHAI. JOAB VOWED TO KILL ABNER - A KEY POINT IN THIS CHAPTER! TWO YEARS WENT BY AND A QUARREL ERUPTED BETWEEN ABNER AND ISHBOOSHETH OVER A WOMAN. WOUNDED IN PRIDE AND SEEKING TO OFFER DAVID HIS RENEWED ALLEGIANCE, ABNER MADE OVERTURES TO DAVID TO TRANSFER HIS ALLEGIANCE. AFTER SOME PRELIMINARY TESTS OF HIS SINCERITY, A FEAST WAS GIVEN IN HONOR OF ABNER. AT THE FEAST, JOAB WAS NOT PRESENT BUT OUT ON A MILITARY EXPEDITION. WHEN HE RETURNED AND LEARNED OF THE EVENTS THAT HAD TRANSPIRED IN HIS ABSENCE, HE SENT A MESSAGE TO ABNER UNDER DAVID'S NAME TO MEET HIM OUTSIDE THE GATE OF THE CITY OF HEBRON - WHERE ABNER WAS LIVING. FEIGNING A PRIVATE CONVERSATION, JOAB STABBED ABNER TO DEATH. QUESTION: WHY IN DAVID'S LAMENT DID HE CALL ABNER A FOOL? IN THE DAYS OF MOSES, SIX CITIES - THREE ON EACH SIDE OF THE JORDAN RIVER - WERE ESTABLISHED AS PLACES OF ASYLUM FOR THOSE GUILTY OF ACCIDENTAL MANSLAUGHTER. ONE OF THOSE CITIES ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE JORDAN RIVER WAS THE CITY OF HEBRON. THERE WAS NO POINT IN THE ENTIRE NATION OF ISRAEL MORE THAN 30 MILES AWAY FROM THE SANCTUARY AND SAFETY OF A CITY OF REFUGE. IT WAS ABOUT ONE DAY'S HARD JOURNEY. IN THE ORIENT, IF A MAN WAS SLAIN, IT WAS THE DUTY OF THE NEAREST RELATIVE TO

Key

AVENGE HIS DEATH. IT WAS THE KIND OF JUSTICE EXECUTED IN THOSE DAYS. THE PERSON WAS CALLED THE AVENGER OF BLOOD. ESTABLISHING THE CITIES OF REFUGE WAS A JUDICIAL STEP TO PROTECT A MAN UNTIL HIS CASE COULD BE PROPERLY JUDGED IN COURT. UNTIL HIS TRIAL WAS CONDUCTED, THE ACCUSED COULD LIVE IN ONE OF THESE SIX CITIES. IF PROVEN TO BE INNOCENT HE WOULD BE BROUGHT BACK TO THE CITY OF REFUGE TO LIVE UNTIL THE HIGH PRIEST DIED. AFTER THAT HE WAS FREE TO GO HOME. HOWEVER, IF THE AVENGER OF BLOOD COULD GET TO HIM OUTSIDE THE PROTECTIVE CUSTODY OF A CITY OF REFUGE, THE AVENGER OF BLOOD COULD TAKE HIS LIFE WITHOUT JUDICIAL PENALTY OR BLAME! HEBRON WAS A CITY OF REFUGE AND ABNER WAS NOT LIVING THERE BY ACCIDENT. HE LIVED THERE FOR HIS OWN PROTECTION. DAVID'S LAMENT POINTS TO THE FACT THAT ABNER DID A VERY FOOLISH THING. HE MISCALCULATED WHEN HE BELIEVED THAT JOAB WOULD LET BYGONES BE BYGONES. HE WAS UNAWARE OF THE DEEP BURNING REVENGE IN JOAB'S HEART AND WAS ALSO UNAWARE OF HIS OWN PERIL BY ACQUIESCING TO JOAB'S INVITATION. IF ABNER HAD ONLY STAYED INSIDE THE CITY WALLS THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING JOAB COULD HAVE DONE. JOAB DIED JUST A FEW STEPS AWAY FROM LEGAL SAFETY. POINT: THERE ARE HOSTS OF PEOPLE LIKE ABNER WHO WILL DIE FOOLISHLY NEAR THE PLACE OF SAFETY. MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE HEARD THE GOSPEL AND KNOW THE WAY OF SALVATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING SAVED SIMPLY MISCALCULATE. THEY PLAN TO GET RIGHT SOME DAY BUT FAIL TO TAKE THEIR SITUATION INTO VIEW. AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH, ABNER THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS GOING HIS WAY. HE WAS ACCEPTED BY DAVID AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE ASSOCIATED WITH A MAN WHO APPRECIATED HIS WORTH AS A MILITARY

ABNER

STRATEGIST AND WARRIOR. BUT ABNER DIED WITHOUT WARNING. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, THERE WAS A MAN WHO WAS NOT A SOLDIER BUT A BUSINESSMAN WHO LIKE ABNER MISCALCULATED. (LUKE 12:20) GOD CALLED THIS MAN "A FOOLISH MAN." THE EVIL IN HIS LIFE WAS NOT THAT HE HAD TOO MUCH BUT THAT HE HAD NOTHING ELSE. WHEN DEATH CAME, HE HAD NOTHING LEFT. HE HAD MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY AND PURPOSE OF MAN'S EXISTENCE, NAMELY, TO BRING GLORY TO GOD. ANY PERSON WHO LIVES HIS LIFE AND IGNORES GOD IS INDEED A VERY, VERY FOOLISH PERSON.

B. Too little
Col. Va.
house
Too much

Organ
Lilies
Lunch

Longer
Fon
Place

Lively
place

I have
heard
them
it

Aunt
Florence

Our Building Our Belief
① Lights ② Landscape = life
See (Aunt Flo) - 2-4
Construct -
Colon's
street says...
Welcome!

BOTH IDEAS ARE TRUE. THE HOUSE OF GOD SHOULD BE A LOVELY PLACE. IT SHOULD BE WARM (COOL) INVITING, WORSHIPFUL. IT SHOULD BE CLEAN AND CARED FOR. LIBERALS SOMETIMES MAKE TOO MUCH OF FACILITIES, FUNDAMENTALISTS MAKE TOO LITTLE. OUR KIDS MANIFESTED A LOVE FOR OUR HOUSE OF GOD WHILE ON VACATION WANTING TO DRIVE HOME TO ATTEND THEIR OWN CHURCH. FOLKS SOMETIMES DRIVE 20 OR 40 MILES EACH WAY TO ATTEND CHURCH. DR. STEVENS COMMENT TO BIBLE COLLEGE STUDENTS, VANCE HAVNER SAID THAT SOME FOLKS NEVER SEEM TO FIT - ANYWHERE. THEY ARE LIKE THE NEIGHBORHOOD DOG - THEY ROAM FROM CHURCH TO CHURCH NEVER HAPPY, NEVER SETTLED, NEVER LOYAL. FIND A CHURCH WHERE YOU CAN FIT AND FIT IN. VERSES 2-3 THE PSALMIST HAD A LONGING FOR GOD ENHANCED BY ATTENDANCE IN THE HOUSE OF GOD. WHEN THE WRITER-WORSHIPPER THOUGHT OF THE BIRDS WHO BUILT THEIR NESTS NEAR THE TEMPLE HE VIEWED IT AS A GREAT PRIVILEGE ON THEIR BEHALF. VALUE INTENSIFIES WHEN OPPORTUNITY VANISHES. (EXPLAIN) I WAS SAVED, ORDAINED, MARRIED, PREACHED, CHILDREN MARRIED, HOPED TO BE BURIED - AROUND A LOCAL CHURCH. VERSE 4: WORSHIP SHOULD BE A DELIGHT AND NOT A DULL DUTY. LIFE AND LOUD ARE NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME. NICE NEED NOT BE NOISY. FRED BROWN SAYS THAT THE DEVIL HAS TWO SEATS IN HIS HOUSE - CAKE OF ICE AND A HOT STOVE. LOCAL CHURCHES AREN'T PERFECT BY A LONG WAY. I HAVE DISCOVERED SOME THINGS IN CHURCH THAT WILL NEVER BE JUST EXACTLY RIGHT: (Keep 30 papers out of B. 10. 10. 10.)

⊕ SOUND - TOO LOUD OR TOO LOW. COMMENT REGARDING AUNT FLO.

(2) TEMPERATURE - TOO HOT OR TOO COLD. (Work area)

(3) FIXING - SOMETHING WILL ALWAYS NEED FIXING. (1976 - New Self aux Rain - P.M. call fell -

4 men dug - "Fixing" School
"washed the crew" Die core
In rubble - "always fixing" never stops