



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

"come just as you are"

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing

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Vol. 40 Issue 771

Oct. 18, 2013

Worship Music

[Overcomer-Mandisa](#)

[Stronger-Mandisa](#)

[Good Morning-Mandisa](#)

Prayer

Lord, I want You to help me become a worker who pleases You. Help me also to please my employer and direct supervisor with the quality of my work. Forgive me for wanting to take it easy and for complaining when I am asked to do something extra or to fulfill a task that isn't in my job description. I want to be the kind of Christian worker who brings joy and pleasure to those who are over me and who presents a good testimony to the name of Jesus. This is really my desire, so I am asking You to help me to do more, to be more, and to demonstrate an attitude of excellence regarding my work, in Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

Matthew 24:36 (AMP)

36 But of that [exact] day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

"Daily Devotional"

Charles Stanley

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- 1 **WHY DO** the nations assemble with commotion [uproar and confusion of voices], and why do the people imagine (meditate upon and devise) an empty scheme?
- 2 The kings of the earth take their places; the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed One (the Messiah, the Christ). They say,
- 3 Let us break Their bands [of restraint] asunder and cast Their cords [of control] from us.
- 4 He Who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord has them in derision [and in supreme contempt He mocks them].
- 5 He speaks to them in His deep anger and troubles (terrifies and confounds) them in His displeasure and fury, saying,
- 6 Yet have I anointed (installed and placed) My King [firmly] on My holy hill of Zion.
- 7 I will declare the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, You are My Son; this day [I declare] I have begotten You.
- 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations as Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth as Your possession.
- 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like potters' ware.
- 10 Now therefore, O you kings, act wisely; be instructed and warned, O you rulers of the earth.
- 11 Serve the Lord with reverent awe and worshipful fear; rejoice and be in high spirits with trembling [lest you displease Him].
- 12 Kiss the Son [pay homage to Him in purity], lest He be angry and you perish in the way, for soon shall His wrath be kindled. O blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied) are all those who seek refuge and put their trust in Him!

Psalm 2....also in reference to specific Scripture the side notes.....

➡ Psalm 2:2 2 The kings of the earth take their places; the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and His Anointed One (the Messiah, the Christ). They say,

Acts 4:25-27 (AMP) 25 Who by the mouth of our forefather David, Your servant and child, said through the Holy Spirit, Why did the heathen (Gentiles) become wanton and insolent and rage, and the people imagine and study and plan vain (fruitless) things [that will not succeed]? 26 The kings of the earth took their stand in array [for attack] and the rulers were assembled and combined together against the Lord and against His Anointed (Christ, the Messiah). 27 For in this city there actually met and plotted together against Your holy Child and Servant Jesus, Whom You consecrated by anointing, both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and peoples of Israel,

➡ Psalm 2:7 7 I will declare the decree of the Lord: He said to Me, You are My Son; this day [I declare] I have begotten You.

Hebrews 1:5 (AMP) 5 For to which of the angels did [God] ever say, You are My Son, today I have begotten You [established You in an official Sonship relation, with kingly dignity]? And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He will be to Me a Son?

Hebrews 3:5-6 (AMP) 5 And Moses certainly was faithful in the administration of all God's house [but it was only] as a ministering servant. [In his entire ministry he was but] a testimony to the things which were to be spoken [the revelations to be given afterward in Christ]. 6 But Christ (the Messiah) was faithful over His [own Father's] house as a Son [and Master of it]. And it is we who are [now members] of this house, if we hold fast and firm to the end our joyful and exultant confidence and sense of triumph in our hope [in Christ].

2 Peter 1:17-18 (AMP) 17 For when He was invested with honor and glory from God the Father and a voice was borne to Him by the [splendid] Majestic Glory [in the bright cloud that overshadowed Him, saying], This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased and delight, 18 We [actually] heard this voice borne out of heaven, for we were together with Him on the holy mountain.

➡ Psalm 2:9 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like potters' ware.

Revelation 12:5 (AMP) 5 And she brought forth a male Child, One Who is destined to shepherd (rule) all the nations with an iron staff (scepter), and her Child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Revelation 19:15 (AMP) 15 From His mouth goes forth a sharp sword with which He can smite (afflict, strike) the nations; and He will shepherd and control them with a staff (scepter, rod) of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath and indignation of God the All-Ruler (the Almighty, the Omnipotent).

Psalm 2

The second psalm deals with the Kingdom Age. The glorious Kingdom Age when Jesus reigns upon the earth. A Messianic psalm. Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? For the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his Anointed (Psa 2:1-2), "His Anointed" there is His Messiah. The word Messiah is the anointed one. So they have taken counsel together against Jehovah and against His Messiah. declaring, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us (Psa 2:2-3). And so, man rebelling against God and against Jesus Christ. The heathen raging, imagining a vain thing that they can cast God off from their lives. But he that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the LORD shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure (Psa 2:4-5). So we are looking at God's judgment upon the Christ-rejecting world. And in spite of their gathering together to try to thwart the return of Jesus Christ, yet God will establish His kingdom upon the earth. God declares, Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me (Psa 2:6-7),

Now this is Jesus speaking, the King who is on the holy hill... or rather, beg your pardon, God is still speaking.

Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession (Psa 2:7-8).

Now, verse 8 is often taken out of context and it is used by many missionary societies as sort of a key verse for the missionary society. "Ask of Me and I'll give You the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." But this is not really a missionary scripture. It has nothing to do with present day missions. This scripture has to do with the Kingdom Age, as the Father declares unto the Son, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give You the heathen for Thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." It's talking about that glorious day when our prayers are fulfilled and His kingdom has come and His will is being done in the earth even as it is in heaven, and His kingdom covers the entire earth. So it is the Father speaking to the Son promising to Him the kingdom, ruling over the whole earth. Then God speaks of the nature of that kingdom.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psa 2:9).

Now, Jesus in His message to the Church of Thyatira, picked up from this particular psalm, and He said, "He that overcometh," verse 26 of chapter 2 of Revelation, "He that overcometh, and keepeth My works until the end, to him will I give power over the nations. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers. As I have received of My Father." And so Jesus actually quotes from this psalm as regards to the nature of the Kingdom Age. Now, when Jesus comes again to the earth in His second coming, the purpose is to establish God's kingdom upon the earth. That the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies of the Kingdom Age might come to pass, as righteousness will cover the earth and waters do cover the sea. And He will reign in righteousness, in truth, and in judgment. But it will be an ironclad reign. During this period of time Satan is to be bound and cast into the abusso, the bottomless pit. So he will not be one that we will have to contend with in the Kingdom Age. All we'll have to contend with is that inherent evil that is in man.

Now, when Jesus comes again, the first thing that will transpire is that He will gather together all of the nations for judgment and He will separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will place those on His right hand, and He will say unto those, "Come ye, blessed of the Father, inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundations of the earth. For I was hungry and you fed Me; thirsty and you gave Me to drink; naked and you clothed Me; sick and you visited Me" (Matthew 25:34-36). And to those on the left He will say, "Depart from Me ye workers of iniquity into everlasting judgment that was prepared for Satan and his angels. For I was hungry and you didn't feed Me. I was thirsty and you didn't give Me to drink. I was naked and you didn't clothe Me." "Well, Lord, when did we see You in these conditions?" And He said, "Inasmuch as you did it unto the least of these my brethren, you did it unto Me" (Matthew 25:41-45). Speaking of His brethren the Jews. So the nations will actually be judged concerning their treatment of His brethren. Now, those who are placed on the right side will be allowed to go into the Kingdom Age. Now when Jesus comes again in His second coming, we will be coming with Him, only we will be in our glorified bodies. We will have gone through the metamorphosis that Paul speaks about in I Corinthians, chapter 15. "I show you a mystery, we are not going to all sleep but we're all going to be changed." The metamorphosis. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. For this corruption must put on incorruption; this mortal must put on immortality." So Paul said, "When Christ who is our life shall appear then shall we also appear with Him in glory." We'll be coming back with Jesus to live and reign with Him for a thousand years, during His millennial reign upon the earth. In Revelation, chapter 1, verse 6, as it is speaking of Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave Himself for us, and all, and it speaks there, "And we shall reign with Him as a kingdom of priests." And then in the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation as He takes the sealed scroll out of the right hand of Him who is sitting upon the throne, the glorious song that is sung at that point by the church is, "Worthy is the Lamb to take the scroll and loose the seals, for He was slain and has redeemed us by His blood out of all nations, tribes, tongues, and peoples. And hath made us unto our God a kingdom of priests and we shall reign with Him upon the earth" (Revelation 5:9-10).

So we are coming back to reign with Jesus upon the earth in his kingdom for a thousand years. That's one company, the church in their glorified bodies. But it will be possible and there will be some who will actually live through the Great Tribulation period; they'll survive it. And providing they have not worshipped the antichrist, providing they have not taken his mark, and providing their interest in God's people, they will be allowed to enter into the Kingdom Age in these bodies like we presently have in an earth that will be renewed and restored as was the Garden of Eden. In that again there will be a restored longevity of life. For a child will die being one hundred, those that are evil. But yet, those that are righteous will fulfill their years. They won't die; they will live during this entire period of time. The longevity will be restored.

But our position with Christ at that time. Satan will be bound, that force will be bound. And so Christ will be ruling, but we will be the enforcers of righteousness. As He said to the church of Thyatira, "To those that are overcome they will be with Me and they will rule over the nations with a rod of iron." And so here speaks of the ironclad type of rule that Jesus will have. In other words, people will be forced to be good. A person who is evil gets popped like a clay pot. Broken in shivers like a potter's vessel when it is hit with a piece of iron. It will be an ironclad rule. We won't have any sob sisters carrying signs in those days of leniency for the rapist. There will be absolute righteous judgment exercised. And people will be forced, that is, those who live in.

Now those who survive and live into the Kingdom Age, being in these bodies, will actually be able bear children, and there probably will be quite a population explosion during this period of time as the earth will be restored to such ideal conditions. However, at that point, we in our glorified bodies will be as the angels who neither marry nor are given in marriage. But we will just be with Christ, reigning and ruling with Him during the Kingdom Age over those people who have survived the Great Tribulation, who have survived the judgment of Jesus. And I do believe that that is what the forty-five day thing is in Daniel, where he says, Daniel is saying, "How long, Lord, until the end?" And He said, "From the time that they cause the daily sacrifices and oblations to cease it will be one 1,290 days, but blessed is he who comes to the 1,335 day." Which that blessedness of it is that you have made it through the judgment period; you can enter into the glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ. During this thousand years, as we live upon a renewed earth under ideal conditions, it will be glorious. Annually we will be all taking a trip to Jerusalem to sit at the feet of Jesus, and just to worship there together in a glorious annual holiday. As the kings of the earth, which will be the church, come and sort of present themselves before the Lord in Jerusalem. Bringing the fruits of their section of the earth.

And the Lord said that in the parable when he had distributed the talents. To the one he gave five, he brought back and he said, "Lord, you gave me five. I have increased them and here are ten." And the Lord said, "Well done thou good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in a few things now I will make thee ruler over ten cities. Enter into the joy of the Lord, enter into the Kingdom Age and ruling over ten cities." So the degree of our reigning and ruling with Christ will be in relationship to the degree of our faithfulness to those things that He has entrusted to us now. If I am faithful now in the little things that God has entrusted to me. But He said if He has entrusted the little things and we have not taken care of them, why would He entrust to us the greater things of the kingdom? So we live and reign with Christ.

Now at the end of that thousand year reign, Satan is going to be released and will go around the earth and will deceive many people. Now, there is no way that Satan at that point could deceive you or drag you down, because you are already in your glorified body. And you see, the only real angle that Satan has with us now is with the body. If it weren't for this body of flesh, Satan would be no problem to me at all. But it is because of my body of flesh, my fleshly desires that he appeals to that cause me to trip up. But I will be in my glorified body. So people say, "Oh, Satan's gonna... you know, many deceived. Will I be deceived?" No. Not if you are a child of God in your glorified body, no way. But those who have come into the kingdom who have been forced to be righteous, those who were born during this thousand-year period, will then have their time of testing. And God, just to prove through all eternity the human depravity of man, will allow Satan to be released. After men have lived in the ideal conditions under the reign of Christ for a thousand years, Satan will actually be able to gather together a great army to rebel against Jesus to come against Jerusalem to try to drive Him out. If you can believe that. Human depravity. God will have proven it once and for all, so that no one throughout all eternity will question the judgment of God in that He has cast certain ones out from His eternal kingdom. There will be no challenging of the fairness or justice of God, because every man will have his chance, and man will prove what is in him.

So the Kingdom Age, this is what we are referring to here. "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." As Jesus shall reign as we sing, "Where ere the Son doth ere successive journeys run."

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth (Psa 2:10).

Now he is talking really to us, who will be reigning with Him as kings, as judges, as enforcers of His righteousness.

Serve the LORD with fear, rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him (Psa 2:11-12).

The bottom line: Blessed are those who put their trust, or, happy are those who put their trust in Him.

(Through The Bible c 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible commentaries,1979-1986)

05 - Faith Answers When God Calls: AW Tozer

THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN outright, vocal critics of the Bible. Among them are those who try to generate sympathy for Old Testament Abraham.

These insist that Abraham was comfortable and well adjusted in Ur of the Chaldees, surrounded by relatives and friends. Probably he had his own business. He may have been about eligible for Social Security. He had stature in the community and status with his neighbors.

Into that happy, successful situation, a spoilsport God, with utter disdain for Abraham's personal feelings, called him to a nomadic, isolated existence.

But the critics have failed to see the most important element in God's approach to Abraham. The living God made an almost incredible offer to the patriarch: "I want to be your Friend, and I want you to be My friend!"

The man or woman who by faith is a friend of God has lost nothing but sin and guilt. He or she has come into an eternal kingdom that assures everything that is good, forever and ever!

I want to make here a case for faith. The writer of the Letter to the Hebrews gives us a summary look at Abraham and at the nature of his faith:

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. (Heb 1:1-10)

I have discovered that if I want to learn more about God and faith and righteousness, it is profitable to think deeply about Abraham. I have tried to decide which were the most critical moments and the most important events in his life.

The single most critical, most important time in Abraham's life was when he heard and answered God's call.

Life's most important decision

Some people consider the hour of physical birth, when we begin to breathe and live and function as unique people within the human race, as the most important moment in life. Others mark their marriage as the most meaningful lifetime decision. But many, many have testified to the great importance of their spiritual decision—the act of faith whereby they committed themselves and their entire futures to God.

Undoubtedly (as I said) Abraham's single, most important moment was when God unexpectedly and dramatically revealed Himself to him and called him to be a pilgrim. So it was that, when he was called, Abraham by faith obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.

We have all wondered at times about the method or methods God may have used to get through to Abraham. Do you suppose that Abraham had his own quiet times and considered the possibility of an unseen domain beyond the world he knew? Although Abraham did not have the privileges in the grace of God that we have, I am sure he was not afraid to think for himself—perhaps even about the mysteries of creation and life.

We do not know how much preparation Abraham had to make within his own soul to be ready for a direct revelation from God. I for one am perfectly satisfied to leave that theological question to the Calvinists and the Arminians!

In my own contemplation's, though, I have found great comfort in the doctrine of prevenient grace. Prevenient grace, simply stated, is the belief that before a sinful man or woman can seek God, God must first have sought the man or woman.

God has told us in many ways that He is a person. In making Himself known to us, He uses the familiar pattern of personality. He is able to communicate with us through the channels of our minds, our wills and our emotions.

If we hold to our belief that men and women were originally created in the image of God, we also must believe that there sides within our beings a capacity to know God. That is why Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about an invisible but transforming new birth from above!

The response must be ours

We are humans, and we confess that we do not know all of God's ways. We do not know the steps of searching and seeking that brought about the actual friendship between God and Abraham. Perhaps we can glimpse a clue in the confession of Augustine: "Thou madest us for Thyself, and our heart is restless, until it repose in Thee!"

We discern that a loving Personality dominates the Bible, walking among the trees in the Garden of Eden and breathing fragrance over every scene. Always a living Person is present, speaking, pleading, loving and manifesting Himself whenever and wherever His people are responsive and receptive.

If God had not in His own way first moved toward Abraham, Abraham would never have moved toward God. I do believe that! I also believe, however, that if Abraham had been insensitive, he would never have heard God's voice calling him. That was indeed the critical moment in the life of Abraham. Abraham was a man. It is well known that many men have set their jaws and stubbornly clenched their fists as they confidently assured themselves, "I am self-sufficient! I will not bow to this business of religion!"

If Abraham had rejected God's overtures, he would have returned to making bigger and better idols for men and women intent on choosing their own brand of deity. And you can mark this down, too: If Abraham had refused the calling of God, the whole history of the world would have been vastly different, and different for the worse.

The Bible record of God's calling people is varied, yet always consistent. Moses was alone with his sheep in the desert when God send, "I have heard the cry of my people. I want you to go to Pharaoh and say, 'Let my people go.'" Moses tried to squirm out of that call. But the hand of God had been laid on him and he could not escape.

Jacob also was alone in the wilderness. He was running away from a bad situation at home. He had a night vision of heavenly angels ascending and descending, and there God spoke to him. God called him. And through that call Jacob the cheat became Israel, a prince with God.

We need to get quiet

The gospel invitation is offered to one and all, but many are too preoccupied to hear or heed. They never allow God's call to become a reason for decision. Their relationship with God never becomes a personal encounter. As a result, they live out their entire lives insisting that they never heard any call from God.

The answer to that is plain. God has been trying to get through to them, but their line is always busy! They are engrossed in a host of worldly pursuits.

In our activistic, achievement-oriented era, there is a prevailing notion that no person really amounts to anything if he or she cannot be described as a "go-getter." The go-getter is the person who never allows himself or herself to be quiet or still—not even for a minute. He or she is our ever-ready nominee to get things done. Given time, he or she will turn the world up side down.

But it is surely necessary for us to have times when we stop what we are doing and think for a season. I try to practice the art of quietness often, for there is not a person alive who can meditate while involved in the non-stop, hundred-mile-an-hour pace of the ambitious go-getter.

The Quakers had many fine ideas about life, and there is astray from them that illustrates the point I am trying to make. It concerns a conversation between Samuel Taylor Coleridge and a Quaker woman he had met. Maybe Coleridge was boasting a bit, but he told the woman how he had arranged the use of time so he would have no wasted hours. He said he memorized Greek while dressing and during breakfast. He went on with his list of other mental activities—making notes, reading, writing, formulating thought sand ideas—until bedtime.

The Quaker listened unimpressed. When Coleridge was finished with his explanation, she asked him a simple, searching question: "My friend, when dost thee think?"

God is having a difficult time getting through to us because we are a fast-paced generation. We seem to have no time for contemplation. We have no time to answer God when He calls.

When the important matters of the soul are at stake, the most useful thing we can do is to do nothing, even if only for a short time. There are times when we can go the fastest by not going a tall. We can go farthest by standing still for a while.

Then, too, we can talk the loudest by not saying a word. We will not be taking the Lord by surprise; He will speak His message.

Abraham was listening

Abraham was listening. He was probably alone some where when God spoke to him. In our day, we are so socially minded that we cannot endure being alone. People say they are in misery if they are alone.

I knew of a young man who was hospitalized and forced to lie quietly for a time. He implored his father, "Dad, bring my record player or something to keep me busy. Otherwise I just have to lie here and think." Then he added his own commentary on the nature of his personal life, "And it is hell to think."

If we do not give God a listening ear, we will miss His best for our lives. He wants to bring us into the right place, the best place for His will in us to be accomplished. For Abraham, Ur of the Chaldees was not the right place. The eternal God had plans for something far better. In order for Abraham to be known as "the friend of God" and "the father of the faithful," he had to go out from the place that held him. Either he would act in faith, going against the voice of reason, or he would respond, "I can be satisfied to think that all gods and all religions and all worship are pretty much alike and all lead to the same conclusion!"

Abraham made his choice, and by faith he demonstrated that there is a difference in following a God and Creator who lives eternally.

The world around us wants to put us in the same restrictive strait jacket that would have kept Abraham in Ur of the Chaldees. "We will talk to you about religion" is the seemingly kindly offer people give us today. But then they add the disclaimer: "Just do not make religion personal."

"Christianity is all right," they assure us, "if you are willing to be tolerant and not try to make something exclusive of your Christian faith." Most people seem to have come to terms with an acceptance of religion if it does not have the cross of Christ within it.

But as soon as you begin to quote the words of Jesus and the Scriptures that declare there is only one mediator between God and mankind, as soon as you insist that Christ has given us the only way to God through His death and atonement, you are dead!

"That is bigoted, narrow dogmatism," they shout. "No more dialogue with you! You have no place on a panel where we are cooperatively interested in intellectual ferment!"

I lived on the farm long enough to know what happens when things are allowed to ferment. If that is what the modern intellectuals are trying to achieve, I am glad I have never had time to take part in their religious panel discussions! They have predetermined to agree only upon religious tenets that bring no offense to anyone.

But when God calls out men and women, their faith will be an offense to the world. It was so in Abraham's day, and it is so in our day.

God calls us out and into

But there is in Abraham's life another profound truth about the call of God. God does not just call us out, period. He is completely faithful to call us into something better!

I do not consider that Christian believers are fully on the right track when they proclaim, "We are separated! We have come out! We are paying the price! We are trying to endure! Pray for us that we can stick it out to the end!"

In his faith, Abraham was against idolatry and idol-making, but that was not his crusade. Because of his faith, God led him into a promised land, into possessions and into the lineage that brought forth the Messiah. The call of God is always to something better. Keep that in mind.

God calls us into the joys and reality of eternal life. He calls us into purity of life and spirit, so that we may acceptably walk with Him. He calls us into a life of service and usefulness that brings glory to Himself as our God. He calls us into the sweetest fellowship possible on this earth—the fellowship of the family of God!

I hope I never hear any Christian bragging even a little bit about what he or she gave up and how much it cost him or her to answer the call of God. Anything that we were or any abilities that we possessed were as nothing compared to what God has called us into as His believing children.

Why is it so difficult in our churches for us to be honest about our lives and our condition as sinners alienated from God? We did not give up anything when God in His love and mercy called us unto Himself and into the blessings of grace and forgiveness and peace.

I have been asked more than once what I gave up when I was converted and became a believing child of God. I was a young man, and I well remember that I gave up the hot and smelly rubber factory. I was making tires for an hourly wage, and I gave that up to follow Christ's call into Christian ministry and service.

As a youth I was scared of life and I was scared of death—and I gave that up. I was miserable and glum and unfulfilled—and I gave that up. I had selfish earthly and material ambitions which I could never have achieved—and I gave them up.

That forms the outline of the worthless things that I gave up. And I soon discovered that in Jesus Christ, God had given me everything that is worthwhile.

God gives us far more

If God takes away from us the old, wrinkled, beat-up dollar bill we have clutched so desperately, it is only because He wants to exchange it for the whole Federal mint, the entire treasury! He is saying to us, "I have in store for you all these sources of heaven. Help yourself!"

If Abraham had ever grumbled to the Lord about leaving the beggarly idols of Ur, God would have let him go back. We are free to do the will of God, but God never makes us His unwilling prisoners. God called Abraham out, God gave him the promised land and God said, "Abraham, from among your posterity will come the Messiah in the fullness of time!"

This is the gracious reason why we should tell people everywhere to hear and heed the call of God—so He can lead them into everything that is good and blessed and worthwhile.

We are called to share these matters of truth and life with a wider circle than we sometimes care to admit. On occasion someone has advised me not to accept preaching engagements with non-fundamentalist groups. A so-called liberal church invited me to speak for nearly a week at a Bible conference in Minnesota. They wanted to hear Bible exposition on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. When this was announced, I soon had a letter from a Christian brother warning me against going. "Don't you know that they are just using you?" he asked.

My reply was that I expected God to use me, for I intended to glorify Him—Father, Son and Holy Spirit! I intended to tell that conference of ministers and lay people what God the Holy Spirit can do in the lives of those who will answer His call.

Let me repeat: God wants to call us out into a more abundant and fruitful Christian life than we have ever known!

The late evangelist "Uncle Bud" Robinson well summarized all I have said. "Abraham went out not knowing where he was going, "Uncle Bud said, "but he knew Who he was going with!"

Abraham was interested in a dwelling place that would never decay. He looked forward in faith to a city with eternal foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is important to us that our Lord Jesus Christ confirmed Abraham's choice when He told the Jews, "Abraham saw my day, and was glad!"

Abraham in faith dedicated himself to eternal things. No writer needs to spend time making a case for that. The long, glory-studded history of faithful Abraham is its own justification.

In simplest terms, God blesses anyone and everyone who will believe and trust and obey. And He speaks to everyone of us with a heavenly call.

If we are genuinely and irrevocably committed to our Lord Jesus Christ, if we are willing to follow Him at any cost, we dare to pray, "Oh God, make me like Abraham in faith and obedience, with spiritual vision of the eternity to come!"

Streams In The Dessert: Mrs. Cowman

Delayed

"Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners a land that is not theirs; . . . they shall afflict them four hundred years; . . . and afterward they shall come out with great substance" (Gen. 15:12-14).

An assured part of God's pledged blessing to us is delay and suffering. A delay in Abram's own lifetime that seemed to put God's pledge beyond fulfillment was followed by seemingly unendurable delay of Abram's descendants. But it was only a delay: they "came out with great substance." The pledge was redeemed.

God is going to test me with delays; and with the delays will come suffering, but through it all stands God's pledge: His new covenant with me in Christ, and His inviolable promise of every lesser blessing that I need. The delay and the suffering are part of the promised blessing; let me praise Him for them today; and let me wait on the Lord and be of good courage and He will strengthen my heart. --C. G. Trumbull

Unanswered yet the prayer your lips have pleaded

In agony of heart these many years?

Does faith begin to fail? Is hope departing?

And think you all in vain those falling tears?

Say not the Father hath not heard your prayer;

You shall have your desire sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Nay do not say ungranted;

Perhaps your work is not yet wholly done.

The work began when first your prayer was uttered,

And God will finish what He has begun.

If you will keep the incense burning there,

His glory you shall see sometime, somewhere.

Unanswered yet? Faith cannot be unanswered,

Her feet are firmly planted on the Rock;

Amid the wildest storms she stands undaunted,

Nor quails before the loudest thunder shock.

She knows Omnipotence has heard her prayer,

And cries, "It shall be done" -- sometime, somewhere.

--Miss Ophelia G. Browning

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 810-812)

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