

#41 THE DREAM.....

I am in the midst of many waters---waters from streams, waterfalls, rivers and fountains. Abundant, refreshing and beautiful is this ocean of waters.

Christ and the Holy Spirit are often likened to life-giving waters. Water means life to us; we must have it to live. Christ said He would give waters that would cause persons never to thirst, but He did not say that they would never drink again. He meant that having Him would guarantee a source of water always, as long as we drink from Him continually. Just as the body needs water throughout the day, so the spirit needs spiritual water throughout its lifetime.

We would consider it absurd for one to say that he drank water once a long time ago, yet some Christians seem to imply this when they say they once were saved from their sins. They once had an experience. They once were sanctified. My friends, salvation had a beginning in us, but let us not forget that salvation is also a Person. Jesus is made unto us salvation and sanctification and all things. We are being saved and sanctified! We are growing by that living spiritual water. Salvation has a beginning and a present and an end. All these are found in the Person of Jesus Christ.

My friends, your past experiences are of little value if they are not current also. What good is a past experience if we have no present ones to live by? Yes, I know it is not very popular to say this, but it needs to be said. I do not care how many souls you brought to the Lord in the past. If your walk with God is not up to date today that past will not carry you through to the future. God is a God of the now! He lives in the eternal present as far as we are concerned.

I have sadly come across many professing Christians living in open gross sin. Call them backslidden, carnal, worldly or lukewarm, God has a message for them. They must repent or He will remove their light and they will be forever lost! My friends, God offers no fire insurance and false eternal security to the rebellious, self-seeking soul. We had better examine ourselves by His Word and not by men's distorted interpretation of Scripture. Remember, it is not the hearers only but the doers of God's words! It is not the professors only but the possessors of Christ's life that truly please God.

Moving on to more pleasant things, look up Ezekiel 47:3-5. I will paraphrase as you read in your Bibles.

“...the man measured...he brought me through the waters; the waters were to my ankles...Again he brought through the waters; the waters were to my knees...Again he brought me through; the waters were up to my loins. Afterwards he measured...and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.”

One of the most revealing Scriptures concerning our spiritual walk and progress is found here in these words. We all start our spiritual walk as babes, newborn in Christ. We feed on milk and we grow but, sad to say, most Christians are just like children on the beach---young and immature. We watch as they run up and down the shoreline playing and kicking up the surf with their little feet. They make a big splash, but little more. New Christians are supposed to grow on the milk of the Word and move on to the meat of maturity. However, some refuse and some are unable to receive the meat, yet these babes attempt to take on ministry and leadership roles. This service will be of little value to God's kingdom and may even be a hindrance. Look around and you will see a multitude of ministries, seminaries and churches that are run and maintained by immature Christians. Some have growth, yes, but is it fleshly or spiritual?

Once I heard of a church in a city that had over a thousand children in their Sunday School program. I was curious to discover their secret. My friends, to my horror I learned that the Sunday School teacher had promised to swallow goldfish if the students brought a certain number of kids from their neighborhood. How foolish, how insulting to God! My friends, I can tell you another thing. That leader will have to keep swallowing goldfish to keep those kids coming. Gimmicks of any sort will not produce spiritual results. Yes, the little babes and children make a big splash and create much activity which seem to impress many, but will never produce any real lasting fruit.

Now some on the beach venture further into this river---they go up to their knees. At that level it is harder to walk, yet one still has quite enough control of his movements. The soul who goes deeper into the waters up to his thighs is surprised to find that the current pulls stronger at his body. He almost panics as the undercurrent draws him out, his feet skimming the sand under the waters. Now, here is the place where many stop in their spiritual walk. Why do they stop? Because they begin to realize that they can no longer have much control over their practical life in God. They wish to serve on their own terms. They are torn between their desires to go all the way with God and their desires to know and control that going. As long as they keep their feet on the sands of the river they can run back and forth and limit God's control over their movements. What a sad state, for that soul has enough vision to know what God wants, but is not willing to submit himself to go deeper. That soul will never know God's best for him. He will always be wondering what He missed by limiting the Holy One of God.

Some will ponder and count the cost, and decide it is time to launch out into the deep. As that soul steps forward into the moving river, he feels it tugging at him. As he goes further lifting his feet in faith, he discovers to his amazement that he is no longer feeling the hard pulling of the current, but is flowing and floating with it. He is in waters now in which he can swim. The Bible tells us, my friends, that God is this river that can not be crossed. The more we move out into this wonderful river of the Lord the less control we have over our own lives, and the more we become controlled by His Holy Spirit. As we flow with this current we go much further and faster than when in those shallow waters.

Let us read one more wonderful portion of Scripture in Isaiah 33:21-23:

“But there the glorious LORD will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us. Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast; they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey” (KJV).

This, my friends, describes that river we have been discussing. Do you understand? No oars, no tackle, no sails! Why? Because these imply human control and guidance. We do not need these human labors in the river of God. We cease from our own works and let Him work through and in us. We are to be lame! We must become weak to be strong in Him. We must learn to let the river move us. We do not lead it! In doing this we are given power of the Lord to overcome our enemies, to take spoils for the Lord. Then we are building up the body of Christ and building with gold, silver and precious stones---not as the novice and immature who often build with wood, hay and stubble.

We can move into this river by way of yielding to God's will and ways. Jesus foreran those waters for us and bids us to come in! Let us stop our wavering and vacillating and swim out into that vast river.