

VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2006

Our Father in heaven has a plan for our lives. That plan was formed at creation and is specific to each of us. Yes, that means He knew us before we were ever born, and He has an ideal outline for our lives that will mean abundant blessings and a life filled with His presence. The problem with this scenario is our own will to be little flesh creatures, doing our own thing and finding pleasure in the sins of this flesh. Why do we disobey the Word of God and seek after the things of this world? It is because the enemy, satan, is continually tempting us to sin. It is because there is a sin nature that will lead us to sin if we allow it. It is because there are pressures in life that the weakness of our flesh uses as its excuse to falter and fail, and deny God's love.

God has His best in store for those that will faithfully serve Him. We know that those that are disobedient and sinful will not exist in His presence. Jesus died that we may live, now and throughout eternity. God's plan is for us to live a Christ-like life now, and be with Him for eternity. Today is the first day of the rest of your eternity. Why not choose to live it with Christ as Lord of your life? Why not do

For surely
I KNOW THE
plans
I have for
YOU,
says the
Lord...
TO GIVE YOU A
future
WITH
Hope.
Jeremiah 29:11, NRSV

DEAR CHURCH, BRIDE OF CHRIST,

Glory! Church, we are starting a new year in our engagement to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is exciting to know, just like with a natural wedding, each day and preparation that is accomplished brings us closer to the big day, the day of the ceremony. We do not know the exact day of the ceremony, but God tells us to be ready. He gives us signs in the Word to tell us the time is getting closer. Read Matthew 24:4-14, Mark 13:5-13, and Luke 21:8-11. Some of the signs in the scriptures are wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines, nations against nations, kingdoms against kingdoms. As we can tell by things that are happening on earth, these signs are coming about.

Everything is in God's time, not ours. His time is different from ours. He reminds me of 2 Peter 3:8-18, "**Never the less, do not let this one fact escape you, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. The Lord does not delay and be tardy and slow about what He promises according to some people's conception of slowness, but He is longsuffering (extraordinarily patient toward you), not desiring that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, and then the heavens will vanish (pass away) with a thunderous crash, and the material elements of the universe will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up. Since all these things are thus in the process of being dissolved, what kind of person ought each of you be, in the meanwhile, in consecrated and holy behavior and devout and godly qualities? While you wait and earnestly long for—expecting and hastening the coming of the day of God by reason of which the flaming heavens will be dissolved, and the material elements of the universe will flare and melt with fire. But we look for new heavens and a new earth according to His promise, in which righteousness (uprightness, freedom from sin, and right standing with God) is to abide. So, beloved, since you are expecting these things, be eager to be found by Him (at His coming) without spot or blemish, and at peace, in serene confidence, free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts. And consider that the long suffering of our Lord (His slowness in avenging wrongs and judging the world) is salvation, (that which conduces to the soul's safety.) But grow in grace (undeserved favor, spiritual strength) and recognition and knowledge and understanding of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Messiah. To Him be glory (honor, majesty, and splendor) both now and to the day of eternity.**" Amen—so be it!

This Word is life unto us, we know we have victory in Him because of all the promises He has made to us in His Word. We know we are going to spend eternity with Him. But He also wants us to be excited because of all He has died to give us now. He wants us to walk in victory now, to be more than conquerors, to tread upon the enemy—to show forth His light—to be so full of Him and His love.

This world needs to know about the hope our Pastor taught on last week. Our hope is in our Lord and Savior. When Brother George asked, "What is hope to you?" I thought for a moment, and my hope is for God's Word to be so manifested in us that people will know how real our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is. The Word is

us to give ourselves to Him so He can use us to show others He lives and they can have that same eternal life.

I am going to share some things with you that our loving Father has done in my life. In so doing, I hope it brings excitement and expectation from our Lord and His Word. I heard Creflo Dollar say in a teaching one day, "An atmosphere of expectation is a breeding ground for manifestation!" As I meditated upon this, it excited me because we want a manifestation of God's Word and power. As I share with you what God has in my heart, I pray that it creates in us an atmosphere of expectation in all that God desires for us as the church and it becomes a breeding ground for the manifestation of all He desires for us to have now.

In August of 2001, I told Brother George I was ready to be ordained and licensed as a minister. He said O.K., and started praying to see what God wanted us to do. On November 12th, he had a dream and called me on the 13th. He asked me to meet him at the prayer room that morning and he shared the dream with me. He saw me on a white horse, dressed in white. At first, he thought I was in a wedding dress, but as he looked he saw it was a prayer shawl on my head, not a veil. Brother George said the Lord told him that He had ordained me. He said I had a beautiful big gold sword and written on it was "Intercessor." God has ordained me as the intercessor of the church. It was truly an awesome experience. The horse represents strength and the shawl represents my covering, which is my Lord and my submission to Him. Any time the Lord has shown me myself on the white horse dressed in white, it always has to do with the church.

In this call on my life, God joined me with the elders a lot of times. At a meeting one night in the prayer room God gave us three things He wanted us to do. They were as follows: 1) Make straight the crooked, 2) Be holy as I am Holy, and 3) Desire to do my will above all else. I wrote these down that night after I got home. This was over two years ago.

Last year, I don't remember the exact date, but it was at the first of the year, I had a dream. In the dream, I saw myself on the white horse. I was walking down a highway that was going through the desert. As we walked through the desert, I could see a town on the horizon. It was a ghost town. As I came up the street, to my left was an old saloon. I could see boots under the swinging doors. I did not see a face but I knew it was satan. When I woke from my dream, I started praying. It was so real to me and I knew God was showing me something very important. I asked the Lord to show me in the Word what He was saying.

He took me first to Isaiah 40:3-5, "**A voice of one who cries, Prepare in the wilderness the way of the Lord—clear away the obstacles—make straight and smooth in the desert a highway for our God! Every valley shall be lifted and filled up, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked and uneven shall be made straight and level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory—majesty and splendor—of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.**" Remember the three things God told us in the elders meeting. Make straight the crooked was the first one.

Next God took me to Isaiah 35, "**The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose and the autumn crocus. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellency of Mount Carmel and the plain of Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty and splendor and excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble and hasty heart. Be strong, fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing for joy; for waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. And the burning sand and the mirage shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lay resting; shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for the redeemed; the wayfaring men, yes, the simple ones and fools, shall not err in it and lose their way. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come upon it; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk on it. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**"

The second thing He said in the meeting was, "Be Holy as He is Holy."

The third scripture He took me to was Isaiah 62:1-12, "**For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. And the nations shall see thy righteousness (not your own, but His ascribed to you), and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be (so beautiful and prosperous as to be thought of as) a crown of glory in the head of the Lord, and a royal diadem (exceedingly beautiful) in the hand of thy God. Thou (Judah) shalt no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah (My delight is in her), and they land Beulah (that is, married); for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married (owned and protected by the Lord). For as a young man marrieth a virgin (Jerusalem), so shall they sons marry thee; and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, who shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that (are His servants and by your prayers) make mention of the Lord (of His promises), keep not silence, And give Him no rest, till He establish, and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. The Lord hath sworn by His right hand, and by the arm of His strength; Surely I will no more give thy grain to be food for thine enemies; and the sons of the aliens shall not drink thy wine, for which thou hast labored; But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it (at the feasts**"

Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth, say to the daughters of Zion, Behold, your salvation comes (in the person of the Lord); behold, His reward is with Him and His work and recompense before Him. And they shall call them, the Holy people, the redeemed of the Lord; and you shall be called, sought out, a city not forsaken.” The third thing God told us in the Elder’s meeting was “desire to do His will above all else.” He wants us to pray and believe for the church, the body. Remind Him of His Word in verses 6 and 7. Give Him no rest, intercede for the church, and see in His Word all the things He is doing for us.

All of this excited me, as God revealed it to me. It was so awesome how over a period of four years He put this together. There is one more thing. On May 8, 2005, my Mom and Dad would have been married fifty years. My sister and I wanted to take Momma somewhere, because we knew if Daddy were still here, he would have. So I prayed and asked God where to go. Yosemite came to me. I was not sure where it was, so we got the atlas and found it in California. As I was looking for a place to stay on the atlas, the Mojave Desert jumped out at me. It was below Yosemite. I knew on this trip one day we would go to the desert. So we set off for California. We flew into San Francisco and drove on to the mountains. It was so beautiful. We love to see the beauty our Lord has made. A few days after getting to the mountains, Momma and I took off for the desert. We did not know where we were going, I was just following what the Lord put in my heart. We listened to praise music and enjoyed the beauty of the country side. I saw an exit that said Mojave, so I told Momma I think this is where we need to go. We took the exit and passed a big airport and came up to a truck stop. I got out of the car and went in to get information on the sites in the area to see. The clerk told me I was looking at it, all there was was an airport and truckstop. I thanked her and went back to the car. I told Momma I missed it because there was nothing else there. As we were about to leave, a man knocked on my window. He told me to go see Red Rock Canyon. It was beautiful and worth the drive. He told us to go back the other direction but not to get on the freeway. We set out. On the way, we passed the rest area with a tourist information center. I told Momma I felt we needed to go back. We turned around and went back. There was a very sweet lady in there. She gave me a map and started drawing a route for me to take. All of a sudden, she stopped and said, “Have you had lunch?” We told her that we had not, so she sent us another way. When I turned off of the main highway and onto the side road, I knew I was on the road in the dream. I said, “Oh, my God!” I told Momma we were on the road in the dream. As we traveled down the road, I just prayed. When we arrived in the town, it was the ghost town in the dream. I was in total awe. God had led me to the place in the dream, through a chain of events that He had orchestrated. We had lunch in the saloon, that is also a restaurant, and walked around a little bit and left. I bought some gold that was mined in Randsbury, from a little store there. We left after that. I told Momma that God was doing something, I didn’t know what, but I knew this was important.

When I got home, I had my daughter look up the town on the internet, and print the information. It was a mining town. It was passed by, by many until three prospectors discovered that one of the peaks of the little mountain range was a mountain of gold. This find became one of the biggest in the Mojave. It is known today as the oldest mining community in south land history.

I asked the Lord to reveal to me what He wants me to tell His church, His bride to be. He showed me a chain of events He had done in a period of time, His time. He called me and ordained me as an intercessor on a white horse. It has been an awesome experience of being taught by the Lord how to be an intercessor. To get to really know Him and His love so I can pray for people with that same love. He also taught me that intercession is not only standing in the gap, but it also entails joining people to the love of our Father. Letting God’s love flow through you to other people. Then He put me in the Elder’s meeting and gave us the three things He wants us to do. Next, He gave me the dream of the desert, the white horse, the highway, and the ghost town. And then my Lord showed me in His Word what He has shown me in the Spirit. In Isaiah 40, He said, **“Prepare ye the way, make straight the crooked, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.”** In Isaiah 35, He said He will make the desert bloom, to strengthen the weak hands and the feeble knees. He said encourage His church and then the blind eyes shall be opened, deaf ears unstopped, lame men leap, the tongues of the dumb sing for joy, the burning sand becomes springs of water, and a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way. Oh, glory church, He wants us to be encouraged. He wants all of those things manifested in the church now. The things in these scriptures are the visions of old that He gave us in the beginning of the church. God told me a long while back that the visions of old are coming to pass. How much better can it get. That is so exciting. And then in Isaiah 62, He wants us restored. God wants us to do His will above all else, for us to remind Him as watchmen of all the promises He has made us and give Him no rest until we see it manifested. And last, but certainly not least, He showed me in the natural the place He has shown me in the spirit, in the dream and then in the Word. It was truly awesome to be led by the Spirit to the place my Lord had shown me in the dream and the Word. I truly had no idea that Randsbury, California existed, much less that it was the ghost town in the dream. Church, bride of Christ, He is truly an awesome God. He said in Ephesians 3:20, **“He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we can ask or think according to the power that worketh in us.”** We just have to trust Him and let our Lord lead us where He wants us to go.

As I asked the Lord, “Why Randsbury?” He began to reveal some things to me. It was in the middle of the desert. As Momma and I rode through the desert, we saw much beauty. The desert flowers were blooming, cactus was blooming, the sky was so blue and there were beautiful rock formations. The Lord said to me, **“Even when you are in the hot, dry desert, you will behold beauty; if you keep your heart focused on me.”**

Randsbury was a mining town. There were three precious metals—gold, silver and tungsten—found abundantly there. The town flourished in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. Three fires broke out in this town; the first was stopped before much damage was done, the second was more debilitating, and the third was devastating. But the town was rebuilt. The enemy was trying to stop

In the dream, the enemy was standing in the saloon, when Momma and I were there eating. You know that is just like satan. He wants to stop us from taking in food. He would rather see us weak and hungry, looking at what he is doing rather than stomping on him and taking strength from the food our Lord has given us in Him and His Word.

In the beginning, the church was flourishing. We were all so excited to be in His presence. We could not hardly wait for a service, so we could come together with Him. We were seeing miracles and the power of God was awesome. The enemy came to stop us. He has caused fires and storms in our lives, but we are still here. The church will prevail because God said so. Not only will it prevail but it is victorious. He is pouring out His Spirit to us. Get excited! Make the breeding ground for manifestation by having an attitude of expectation.

Church, bride of Christ, I hope you meditate upon this Word. I know there is a lot here, but it is nourishment to your spirit. Let your loving Father talk to you with this and make alive to you everything He wants to give us.

In closing, I give you Hebrews 12:12-15, **“So, then, brace up and reinvigorate and set right your slackened and weakened and drooping hands, and strengthen your feeble and palsied and tottering knees. And cut through and make firm and plain and smooth, straight paths for your feet (yes, make them safe and upright and happy paths that go in the right direction), so that the lame and halting (limbs) may not be put out of joint, but rather may be cured. Strive to live in peace with everybody and pursue that consecration and holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look (after one another), to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God’s grace (His unmerited favor and spiritual blessing), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it.”** Let’s follow God’s Word. Let’s become one bride. Lift each other up, encourage one another, build up the body. Don’t follow satan’s plan and tear down by separation and division. Let God’s love flow through us and strengthen His body. Be blessed in Jesus Christ.

Your loving sister, Bess Graham

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