

VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



April 2006

Volume 13 Issue 4 NEGATIVE PEOPLE

DEAR CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Negative people are a negative influence on our lives. If at all possible, stay away from them but pray for a change in their lives. Perhaps you're wondering why I would choose such a topic. Negative people influence us more than we realize. If we are not careful, we get pulled into their web of conversation and misery. Negative people are unappreciative of everything that starts with the essentials of life to the necessities of life. They never see good in anything, only the bad. This negative outlook causes them to look for only the worst in life and they usually find it and tell you about it. They discuss solutions to problems with no knowledge of the problem. Negative people criticize our government, our leaders, doctors that sustain their life, medicine that keeps them alive, the food they eat and their transportation. They are a negative influence to the appreciative people of this great country. Thank GOD that you are not in that category and that the WORD OF GOD has taught you differently. Express your appreciation to others for this great country, the manifold blessings, and the gift of life granted to you and me.

I am sitting here studying, praying and praising—preparing for tomorrow because I will be preaching twice. My heart misses you and loves you so. I am so thankful to be a part of you and you to be a part of me and to know you are all here with me.

As I sit here, I am crying (imagine THAT!), just thanking God for all He has shown me. It has truly been an awesome experience here in India. When you read this, it will be Sunday night here and their services will be over. We have a women's ministry meeting Monday morning which will conclude our services in India. We will be leaving Tuesday to go to Malaysia and Singapore. We have many services scheduled, so continue to pray.

The Lord has opened the door for me here in India because of Miss Mary. Pastor Francis has invited me to return. He said he would have many village meetings set up for us. Melanie said she will return with me. She is an awesome woman of God herself. God has truly blessed me, in spite of the devil and his opposition.

I want to share with you a story about a little lady who cleans here at the church. She has hurt and pain written all over her face. We have prayed for her many times. She always looks so sad. Tuesday morning she knocked on my door. I prayed for her, and came back to my room. The Lord kept her in my heart. I opened the door, and she was crying, sitting on the stairs. She speaks no English. I walked over to the stairs and sat down beside her. I just began to pray in the Spirit, and then I began to praise. I don't know what all God did, but His presence was very evident. We just sat there, cried and praised for an hour. I anointed her with oil and she went back to work. Wednesday morning she greeted me with the most wonderful, big smile I have ever seen. I don't know what all God did on the inside of her, but I saw a sad, hurt face turn into a beautiful smile. Without saying a word, she understood. Our God is an awesome God and His love truly does overcome.

I have so much to share with you when I get home, and I feel it has only just begun. I will write you again soon. Just know I am still praying for you all and love you so much.

Much Love,

Your Missionary, Bess Graham

March 18, 2006

GOD'S COMFORT

“God is the Father who is full of mercy and all comfort. He comforts us every time we have trouble, so when others have trouble, we can comfort them with the same comfort God gives us. We share in the many sufferings of Christ. In the same

way, much comfort comes to us through Christ.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-5) I hope you have come to realize that God loves you, and He will not let more come upon you than you can bear. He also desires that you grow and mature in His Word and Spirit. His Word promised us that troubles would come, but that there would be an escape. These issues are to help us become stronger and better able to help others who have needs. You might say, “Why did this bad thing happen?” The Word tells us that all things work to good for those that love the Lord. We may not see the good, but we know that God is good, and He is good all the time. If we will focus on His goodness, and see that evil does not originate with God, then we will be able to see His divine plan for us in this life is only a proving ground for eternity. I see this life as a drop of water in the ocean of time. Whatever the trouble or situation, seek God's guidance and ask Him to show you His will. He will give you the peace and comfort you need to remain steadfast and faithful as you confront the problem and address it. Then, when you have gained the victory, it is our privilege and

COMMENTS FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH RICK WARREN, AUTHOR OF "A PURPOSE DRIVEN LIFE"

People ask me, "What is the purpose of life?" And I respond—In a nutshell, life is preparation for eternity. We were made to last forever, and God wants us to be with Him in Heaven.

One day my heart is going to stop, and that will be the end of my body—but not the end of me.

I may live 60 to 100 years on earth, but I am going to spend trillions of years in eternity. This is the warm-up act—the dress rehearsal.

God wants us to practice on earth what we will do forever in eternity. We were made by God and for God, and until you figure that out, life isn't going to make sense.

Life is a series of problems: Either you are in one now, you're just coming out of one, or you're getting ready to go into another one.

The reason for this is that God is more interested in your character than your comfort.

God is more interested in making your life holy than He is in making your life happy.

We can be reasonably happy here on earth, but that's not the goal of life. The goal is to grow in character, in Christ likeness.

This past year has been the greatest year of my life but also the toughest, with my wife, Kay, getting cancer.

I used to think that life was hills and valleys—you go through a dark time, then you go to the mountaintop, back and forth. I don't believe that anymore.

Rather than life being hills and valleys, I believe that it's kind of like two rails on a railroad track, and at all times you have something good and something bad in your life.

No matter how good things are in your life, there is always something bad that needs to be worked on.

And no matter how bad things are in your life, there is always something good you can thank God for.

You can focus on your purposes, or you can focus on your problems.

If you focus on your problems, you're going into self-centeredness, "which is my problem, my issues, my pain."

But one of the easiest ways to get rid of pain is to get your focus off yourself and onto God and others.

We discovered quickly that in spite of the prayers of hundreds of thousands of people, God was not going to heal Kay and make it easy for her.

It has been very difficult for her, and yet God has strengthened her character, given her a ministry of helping other people, given her a testimony, drawn her closer to Him and to people.

You have to learn to deal with both the good and the bad of life. Actually, sometimes learning to deal with the good is harder. For instance, this past year, all of a sudden, when the book sold 15 million copies, it made me instantly wealthy.

It also brought a lot of notoriety that I had never had to deal with before. I don't think God gives you money or notoriety for your own ego or for you to live a life of ease.

So I began to ask God what He wanted me to do with this money, notoriety and influence. He gave me two different passages that helped me decide what to do—II Corinthians 9 and Psalm 72.

First, in spite of all the money coming in, we would not change our lifestyle one bit. We made no major purchases.

Second, about midway through last year, I stopped taking a salary from the church.

Third, we set up a foundation to fund an initiative we call "The Peace Plan" to plant churches, equip leaders, assist the poor, care for the sick, and educate the next generation.

Fourth, I added up all that the church had paid me in the 24 years since I started the church, and I gave it all back. It was liberating to be able to serve God for free.

We need to ask ourselves, "Am I going to live for possessions? Popularity? Am I going to be driven by pressures? Guilt? Bitterness? Materialism? Or am I going to be driven by God's purposes (for my life?)"

When I get up in the morning, I sit on the side of my bed and say, "God, if I don't get anything else done today, I want to know You more and love You better."

God didn't put me on earth just to fulfill a to-do list. He's more interested in what I am than what I do. That's why we're called human beings, and not human doings.

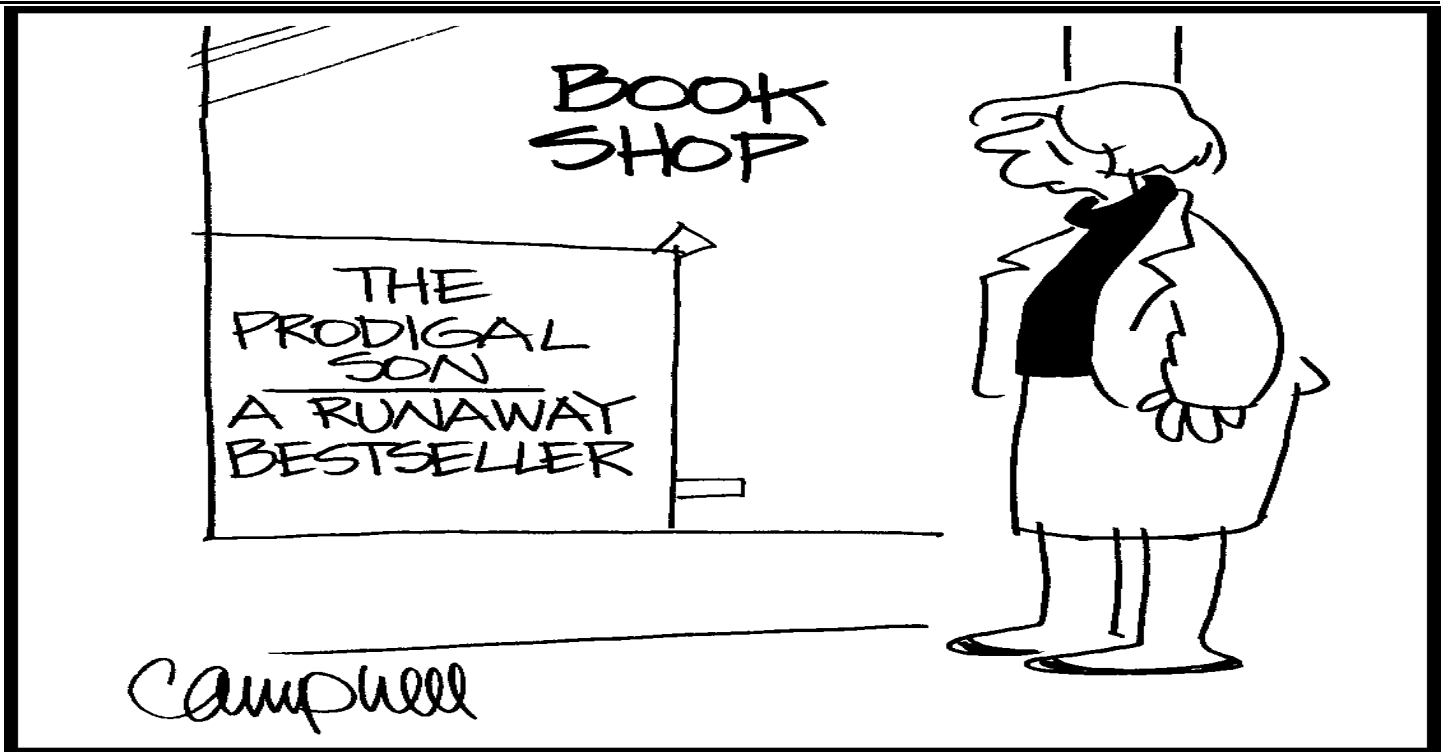
Happy moments——PRAISE GOD.

Difficult moments——SEEK GOD.

Quiet moments——WORSHIP GOD.

Painful moments——TRUST GOD.

Every moment——THANK GOD.



CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
994 Willie Hill Rd
Gilbert, La. 71336

*For God so loved
the world that he gave
his only Son.*

John 3:16, NRSV

