

General Topics :: What about Simeon and Anna?

What about Simeon and Anna? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/7 19:12

Our Christmas traditions, such as the carols and nativity displays have enabled most people to know the main characters surrounding Christ's birth: Joseph, Mary, angels, shepherds, and Magi.

But what about Simeon and Anna? Should they not have been included? After all, they saw the Christ-child before the Magi did. And they didn't even need to leave home or fields to find him. He was taken to them right where they were - in the Temple. They recognized him immediately, without the aid of angels or stars. Simeon and Anna were the first within the Jewish religious community to see the Christ-child.

These two elderly servants understood, by divine revelation, the implications of this child's advent, even more than his parents did. Simeon foreshadowed "the rising and falling of many." He also warned Mary: "A sword will pierce your own soul too." Lk. 2:35

Anna "never left the temple, but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. She spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem"

Did you notice that! Anna got to proclaim the Good News firsthand! What an exciting role! She deserved it; after all, she was watching and praying, and prepared for his arrival.

I am convinced that Simeon's and Anna's intercessions over their many years of faithful fasting and communing with God prepared the way for the child Jesus, and helped protect his life from the hordes of demonic forces pitted against him. I am also convinced that Simeon and Anna wept many tears over the suffering he was to endure.

So, how did these two spiritual giants of Israel, these mighty elders of the faith, become secondary characters in our traditional Christmas story?

There is a reason why Simeon and Anna have not received the recognition they deserve: Their lives closely paralleled the life of Christ. He was not recognized in the religious establishment of the day. His prophetic indictments were no more attractive than Simeon's: "A...a sign that will be spoken against, so the hearts of many will be revealed." Lk. 2:35

Jesus said, "He who receives you receives me." Matt. 10:40 Just as with Simeon and Anna, Christ has been relentlessly forgotten and rejected by those who have freely taken his name. Naturally his followers bear the same reproach.

There is no need to make miniature replicas of Simeon and Anna, or draw pictures of them on Christmas cards. Instead, we honor them best by following their example: by looking only to Christ for our hope and salvation, and by waiting expectantly on him.

Isn't that what they were eagerly anticipating?

Diane

Re: What about Simeon and Anna? - posted by kdbutton, on: 2006/12/7 21:30

Great insights Diane!

May we all be taught by their example of persevering prayer with expectancy.

Re: What about Simeon and Anna? - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/8 0:12

Sis wrote;

Quote:
-----There is a reason why Simeon and Anna have not received the recognition they deserve: Their lives closely paralleled the life of Christ.

I believe that the teachings of dispensational theology blind many to what you have come to understand. You will hear many a teacher say that God ceased to speak to His people once the book of Malachi was written. Yet as you have pointed out, Simeon and Anna's life paralleled the life of Christ. Faith can lead no other place...

God Bless
In Christ
Jeff

Re: What about Simeon and Anna? - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/12/8 0:57

Diane!

Quote:
-----I am convinced that Simeon's and Anna's intercessions over their many years of faithful fasting and communing with God prepared the way for the child Jesus, and helped protect his life from the hordes of demonic forces pitted against him. I am also convinced that Simeon and Anna wept many tears over the suffering he was to endure.

Really these past couple of days are remarkable to me. It seems we are walking on the road to Emmaus discussing the scriptures...and the Lord is with us!

I would like to make a point about Simeon and Anna's regard towards prayer...at least what I'm seeing now.

Simeon and Anna, in the midst of a pretty hopeless time for their people, were undoubtedly aware of many prophecies of the Messiah. Indeed, many of these promises were also made when God's people faced seemingly hopeless situations ...

For example, consider the plight of the Jews living in Judah under the wicked idolatrous King Ahaz..over 700 years before Simeon and Anna. Could there still be a remnant of people faithful to God even as Ahaz was immolating his son through the fire to Molech? There is always a remnant...but overall the King and nation had earned the judgement of God.

In those days, Syria and Israel joined forces to wage war against Judah. With guilty consciences instead of faith, Judah began to shake as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. (Shaking like leaves I think is how we say it today! If only Americans had at least this much sense...)

Then Isaiah came to Ahaz with wonderful news from the Lord; Judah was going to be saved! Actually Isaiah didn't address Ahaz as Ahaz...but as the House of David, as if to indicate that this good news is not a measurement of Ahaz' worthiness,(sic) but a reflection of God's faithfulness to David.

Even so, Ahaz was still tempted to make a treaty with Assyria. (See the current thread on "What is Unequally Yoked?") So God promised that if Ahaz did trust in Assyria he would be destroyed...but the Lord also offered the wicked king a curious word of comfort.

Isaiah invites Ahaz to ask God for a sign to prove that He, the Lord, will deliver Judah from her enemies. Now apparently Ahaz suddenly gets religion and piously says...I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

Surely God would be impressed with such newfound humility and reverence. Ahaz knew that God was displeased with him...and here was Ahaz making up for it by lowering his head and playing the lowly and self-effacing king...

Ahaz still didn't get it...he should've known when God addressed him not as Ahaz, but as 'the house of David', that this deliverance wasn't based on Ahaz's meritorious behavior...but on God's promise to David! And so Ahaz' hypocritical piety was really nothing more than his typical disregard for the established Word of God.

And now I finally get to the point I am wanting to make about the way Simeon and Anna viewed prayer. Unlike the wicked hypocritical King Ahaz, these two saints weren't bashful about wanting to see a sign of God's deliverance. They didn't even seem to wait for an invitation from a prophet telling them to go. Believing the Word of God, they came every day, arranging their entire life around expectation.

Unlike the modern humanistic church, unbelief is not something God seems to feel sorry for. We reveal our own doubt in God's power and resentment for his holiness, as we soothe sinners and rebels with our high-minded pity...coddling their unbelief in God's salvation as a type of innocent weakness...but God sees all of it as arrogance and pride that doubts His character and power.

Unbelief wearies God! Consider this when we come to pray. Accordingly Isaiah rebuked Ahaz...Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Clearly Simeon and Anna were not doubters! They believed God and would not look anywhere else for their consolation and deliverance.

If only Ahaz would have been like Simeon and Anna, and honored God by expecting His sign of deliverance. When it comes to overcoming this world through the promises of God in Christ...do we remain in expectant prayer...or are we too 'humble' and 'pitiful' to expect any real move of God?

Incidentally what was the sign that God gave to King Ahaz, guaranteeing the survival of Judah? Well, it's familiarity today might make us miss just how strange it must have seemed centuries ago to a nation facing their own extinction.

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Blessings saints!

MC

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/8 5:53

Even though I have done some tweaking, I still don't like the ending. After all, it's about us, not somebody else. I would like to use this as a message for seniors on Sunday, but feel I still need the right closing. I know there is a word that applies for all ages. Does anyone see it?

Something in here, I believe (thank you MC):

Quote:

...a remnant of people faithful to God...

Clearly Simeon and Anna were not doubters! They believed God and would not look anywhere else for their consolation and deliverance.

...arranging their entire life around expectation...

Diane

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/8 6:11

Brother Mike wrote:

Quote:
-----Incidentally what was the sign that God gave to King Ahaz, guaranteeing the survival of Judah? Well, it's familiarity today might make us miss just how strange it must have seemed centuries ago to a nation facing their own extinction.

Is. 7:13 Then he said, "Hear now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will you weary my God also? 14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. 15 Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings. 17 The LORD will bring the king of Assyria upon you and your people and your father's house—days that have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah."

Isaiah 8:

8 He will pass through Judah,
He will overflow and pass over,
He will reach up to the neck;
And the stretching out of his wings
Will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.
9 "Be shattered, O you peoples, and be broken in pieces!
Give ear, all you from far countries.
Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces;
Gird yourselves, but be broken in pieces.
10 Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing;
Speak the word, but it will not stand,
For God is with us."

Have you ever gone a little further in this section of Scripture, that is, who is this Child that eats Curds and honey? This was a sign for Ahaz in his day also for it was Immanuel's land for those who were the remnant...

Christ is all in all outside of the constraints of human thought and doctrine...

In Christ
jeff

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/8 6:53

Rookie said:

Quote:
----- teachings of dispensational theology blind many to what you have come to understand. You will hear many a teacher say that God ceased to speak to His people once the book of Malachi was written

I never thought about this. Actually, I thought that the dispensationalists put John the Baptist in the old dispensation, and so would have no trouble slipping Simeon and Anna in there also. After all these two were much older.

Diane

Re:, on: 2006/12/8 8:12

Good piece, MC. Thanks. It answered something for me.

When considering JTB, I have been using the word "empty",--- of the world, totally separated unto God for God to reveal His word; Himself and the soon to appearing, "Lamb of God". I mean, how could John speak the way he did concerning Him who was "coming after him yet was preferred before him"? They weren't his words he spoke. They were from God by revelation. Using this from you explains it in a more practical spiritual way:

Quote:
-----They didn't even seem to wait for an invitation from a prophet telling them to go. Believing the Word of God, they came every day, **arranging their entire life around "expectation"**.

I see the three of them experiencing a type of Pentecostal experience with manifestations following. And we can see what was required for the experience; separation/emptiness - purity and "expectation". We see the same thing just prior to Acts 2.4. God will not give to His own a stone when they ask for bread.

Is this not the day for us to examine ourselves that we be found in the Lord? With all that is a distraction in our lives, can we say we are separated unto Him and wait, "expectantly"?

Orm

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/12/8 13:56

Diane, there is something here for us...last night I left my prayers and readings of Isaiah 7 and was able to minister to my wife with renewed power. You know we fathers are like rulers in our households...how many Christian husbands and fathers are loveless and faithless towards God like Ahaz...adopting pagan idols and customs while still maintaining some hypocritical traditions of the law?

I am looking forward to hearing what the Lord would share with you from the scripture you highlighted Diane...

Quote:
-----They believed God and would not look anywhere else for their consolation and deliverance.
...arranging their entire life around expectation...

Ormy mentioned a "Pentecostal" experience...or at least state. Well I've never heard it put that way before but I hope the Lord is bringing me there. (and others as well!) My hope isn't some working up...in fact it's exhaustion. I am growing truly tired of a lifetime of human devices and solutions...

Perhaps the greatest dispute I have ever had to settle with God is the arrogant unbelief I hide...betrayed by my lack of regard for the importance of real prayer. It may be a fair statement, that for me, prayer is the great dispute I secretly harbor.

There are too many channels in the church competing for allegiance...pulpits are spewing confusion...politics, social causes and compassionate enterprises, entertaining and strange fire, deadness and self-absorbed pursuits. If we give our zeal over to these things they exhaust us and might even leave us doubting God...because they are all only a cheap imitation of Godliness but not the power.

Rookie, this is awesome...

Quote:
----- He will pass through Judah,
He will overflow and pass over,
He will reach up to the neck;

And the stretching out of his wings
Will fill the breadth of Your land, O Immanuel.

I believe and understand it's national implications, but how I feel these words in my own being right now. Oh that I could stretch out my arms in surrender, and that Immanuel would pass through me, overflow me and over me...that I could abide in Him even as He dwells in me, to stretch out his wings and fill the breadth of my being.

How long it takes to lay our devices down.

Quote:
-----Take counsel together, but it will come to nothing

Quote:
-----Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

There is richer, and fattier food out there in the world for sure, but that we may follow Jesus and refuse the evil, to choose the good, we do not eat what the world eats. We do this because we live expectantly that the Lord is with us. Otherwise we would be like Ahaz who was unable to hear the Lord even when God was speaking plainly to him.

Quote:
-----Is this not the day for us to examine ourselves that we be found in the Lord? With all that is a distraction in our lives, can we say we are separated unto Him and wait, "expectantly"?

MC

Re: What about Simeon and Anna?, on: 2006/12/8 15:23

This is a splendid thread, all of you posters.

Here is a lazy question from me, based on my eye being caught by the phrase 'both her kings'.

Quote:
-----the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.

Who were they, which 'land' had **two** kings, and why?

My thanks in advance.

Re: Prayer - my thoughts - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/8 15:37

Quote:
----- I am looking forward to hearing what the Lord would share with you...

Here it goes... the long way round - and still no closing statement. It seems like everything these days is pulling toward a vortex: the subject of prayer. There is something about prayer that God is trying to get through this sleepy mind. And I am determined to break through.

Some rough thoughts so far:

Prayer is not a theological or religious phenomenon. It is simply: direct access to God. Prayer is the ultimate expression of our second-birth relationship with God. It is the fulfillment of the New Covenant promise. Prayer is a gift that comes with the New Life:

"This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel
after that time," declares the LORD.
"I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.
I will be their God,
and they will be my people.
No longer will a man teach his neighbor,
or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,'
because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,"
declares the LORD.
"For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more." Jer. 33,34

This is so totally awesome, amazing!!! To KNOW God; to be able to hear him for ourselves - to learn from him directly, to receive guidance for life, our sense of identity (as a child of God), calling, comfort, assurance, hope, joy, prophecies, etc.... and, oh, yes, FORGIVENESS. Through prayer we deepen our oneness with Christ. The blessings and answers (as I have learned anyway) come only through interacting with God, seeking and apprehending. It means talking to God honestly, as well as waiting on God. "Ask and ye shall receive" "Ye have not because ye ask not."

Without prayer we cannot become truly conscious of God, his answers, and his blessings, and his work - I mean, really conscious! Apart from personal revelation, it's all second hand. And that is not enough to sustain us, or help us endure to the end.

Without prayer, Christ remains aloof to us - like in an unwrapped gift. We may have an idea what's in it, but really we don't know.

Without prayer we cannot cooperate with God - in the fulfillment of his Covenant. We cannot know where and how he is moving.

Prayer is the process of growing up - abandoning our childish dependencies on man, leaving "home", and cleaving to the Lord.

Anna had cultivated a life of prayer, and so she was able to recognize the movings of God. "His sheep know my voice" (Still, we must acknowledge that Anna had a prophetic calling on her life.) We can be sure that all those who missed the advent did not live a life of prayer.

It is intensely tragic that we are so often robbed of this endowment. Fellow Christians and leaders are quick to play God and dispense their opinions in response to questions or concerns that ought to be directed to the Lord in prayer. (I am guilty +++)

Opinions are as abundant as fast-food joints - and as tempting. Even offering correct opinions can be a form of robbery, because it robs the seeker of the process of wrestling through with God. That is just as evil as a parent doing his child's science project for him. It's cheating! It deprives the student (disciple) of the rugged, uncertain process of growth. It keeps him in his dependency state - which, of course, is much more controllable and efficient.

What else can hinder us from surrendering to God in prayer? - within us... without us?

Edit: The need to SEE clearly was made most evident yesterday in a near-auto-collision in a blinding snowsquall. A driv

er was travelling too fast, had no lights on, and had a white truck. By the grace of God, I am here.

Alas, that's the way life is - it happens faster than we can see with our natural eyes. We need constant communion with our Lord.

Diane

Re:, on: 2006/12/8 16:00

1 Cor. 14:2,4 (KJV)

For he that speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not unto men, but unto God: for no man understands him; howbeit in the spirit he speaks mysteries..... He that speaks in an unknown tongue **edifies himself**; but he that prophesies edifies the church.

If Paul experienced this for his benefit and for the sake of Christ, should we not also experience it for the same reasons?

Orm

Re:that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/12/9 2:40

Diane,

Quote:

-----o longer will a man teach his neighbor,
or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,'
because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,"

Without prayer we cannot cooperate with God - in the fulfilment of his Covenant. We cannot know where and how he is moving. Prayer is the process of growing up - abandoning our childish dependencies on man, leaving "home", and cleaving to the Lord.

it happens faster than we can see with our natural eyes.

Sister, this is why I have moved from cynicism towards belief in revival. God is changing our hearts...even as we pray over these things. How is it that the words of a thousand sermons and books on prayer can bounce off our skulls :-o - but when God speaks just the word "prayer" into our hearts we faint to our faces in both shame and gratitude?

A little story...a few years ago, I was alone one fall midnight, praying in deep despair on a beach in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. That week I was facing one of the most grievous trials I can ever remember, but that evening I was swept away in the goodness of God. The Lord walked with me along the surf, recalling many past times when He had been watching over me, and my heart was greatly warmed - even as storm clouds were forming overhead and a light rain began to fall. (I should have posted this bit in Christopher's precious "eventide" thread...) For at least an hour I walked in the drizzle. There were no stars or moon and so I could see only a few yards off the beach... but the roar of the unseen waters, and the sudsy foam washing my feet let me know I was standing on the edge of a vast ocean...

The night really seemed endless...yet in that blessed hour I could really sense that God was still more endless. Rather than feeling alone in the black windy air...I was embraced and strengthened, as if God had wrapped a blanket around me from the surrounding brume.

Well, after about an hour of blessed prayer, I had become satisfied that God had finished showing me what he wanted that night...my heart was filled with comfort over my own crisis and so I started thinking about walking back to the rental house. Having found peace, I was looking forward to putting on new clothes and going to sleep.

At that point I saw that the sky in the far distance over the ocean...perhaps miles away, began to flash. Suddenly for br

ief seconds it seemed the entire world was illuminated. I could see the cavernous ceiling of billowy clouds breathing over the waters, an endless and sleepless landscape of twisting striving ocean waves. There were no tall mountains or man-made structure to obstruct the view...so I just stood there shrinking more and more...overwhelmed by the expanding horizon that was beginning to flash everywhere as far as the eye could see. Long fingers of lightening touched down into the waters...there was no predictability to it except that it was persistent. Soon the roar of the waters became drowned out by the approaching thunder.

Now just a few moments earlier in the quiet darkness I was feeling wrapped in a blanket of God's love...yet now, before this vista, I felt small and insignificant before the rolling thunder and seething waters. I wanted to confess my all my sin and weakness, seeing that judgement can overtake you at any moment! Being dwarfed by such power also brought a peace...what peace there is when we repent from wanting to be the center of the universe!

Yes, only a few moments earlier I was receiving comfort for my own problems...but in that moment, God was letting me feel what's it like to want salvation for the world. The Spirit of God is moving upon the face of the waters. He will save many people who are now tumbling in their sin...and gather them in one place around His throne like an ocean pouring in from all the corners of the Earth...their collective praise will sound like the roaring waves throughout a great hall, rising to ceilings as boundless as clouds where the holiness of God will charge even the atmosphere!

Only when the rain became a solid downpour did I realize I was shivering from the cold. I left the beach as the storm became too strong...but I left overjoyed at the goodness of God.

Tonight I am back at that night...our conversations have taken me back to that beach...and I realize God was showing me the difference between my lesser purpose for prayer and His greater purpose for prayer.

When the lightening and thunder appeared, I became aware of so much more than myself...I was astonished at the terror and wonderfulness of God. I felt He was inviting little me to witness...and even participate in what He alone was going to do in the Earth. If this offends our sense of piety and causes us to hesitate...then we have come to the shoreline where man's limited energy ends and God's limitless power begins.

Quote:

-----We can be sure that all those who missed the advent did not live a life of prayer.

Indeed! Likewise in our lifetime, expecting a great event of God is not evidence of childish optimism, but childlike sorrow...it is repenting of our bankrupt enterprising, to have nothing but prayers of faith...which is everything. George MacDonald once said, if we rely on preaching we will see what preachers can do, and if we rely on prophecy we will see what prophets can do, but if we rely on prayer we will see what God can do.

I read this today from Andrew Murray...

Most Christians are content if they have some blessed experience of what prayer can do in bringing down blessing for their own needs or maybe for the needs of others. Yet how seldom it is realized that prayer covers the whole divine mystery of man being in partnership with the triune God in working out the counsel of His will and grace.

Well, I might be able to understand the concept in those sentences...but if I said I understood their reality...well, I don't. I am like Ahaz, making God weary with pious confessions of humility and weakness. In truth I just wanted to go back to sleep.

Yet praise God from whom all blessings do indeed flow; Jesus is the master teacher of prayer... and indeed if the very teacher of prayer still intercedes in Heaven then surely we must too! Can you imagine if we continued to encourage each other's faith in Almighty God...if I repented to God over my own lack of believing prayer? Such praying Christians would be quickened by visions of what God will do here and among the nations!

We are standing on the shore of a vast ocean....

Re: - posted by chadster, on: 2006/12/9 11:01

What eloquence!! I'm reluctant to share...I can't hold a candle to you guys in my ability to articulate truth! While admittedly I quickly peruse most threads and don't read them carefully (especially the longer ones :-), this one has been such a treasure and I'm so glad I haven't glossed over it. You dear saints of God who contributed to this thread have mined such riches! I was listening to a message by Bob Sorge recently and he spoke of the faithful and tireless intercession of Anna (year after year after year...for decades!) and God's Reward to her. What a powerful Word!! Oh that God would find us faithful and persevering in that place of prayer. He IS a REWARDER of those who diligently seek Him.

Praying Christmas Presence in fuller glory upon all my dear fellow SI brothers and sisters.

Chad

Re: Simeon and Anna - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/9 11:44

Many thoughts here to help wake me out of my slumber.

Quote:
----- When the lightening and thunder appeared, I became aware of so much more than myself...I was astonished at the terror and wonderfulness of God.

I suspect that creation is one of God's favorite means of manifesting his glory to us, and correcting our self-perspective: "...God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen." Rom. 1:19 "The heavens declare the glory of God."

Quote:
-----if we rely on preaching we will see what preachers can do, and if we rely on prophecy we will see what prophets can do, but if we rely on prayer we will see what God can do.

Here is a reminder that prayer is the magnificent privilege of entering into the Royal Courts and having our own personal appointment with the King - no intermediaries, no crowds blocking the view, no police guards with shields - just me and him - face to face, directly - vulnerable and yet trusting. This is so humbling that we fall to the ground. But here we discover what GOD can do.

Quote:
----- prayer covers the whole divine mystery of man being in partnership with the triune God in working out the counsel of His will and grace.

Of course, seeing the bigger picture is the outcome of perseverance in prayer and expectancy.

Quote:
-----I realize God was showing me the difference between my lesser purpose for prayer and His greater purpose for prayer.

A great testimony, MC. Praise God for the gift of memory!

(there are some key points yet to be drawn out, but will have to wait till next week)

Do you think Simeon and Anna foresaw Pentecost - some thirty + years later?

PS:

Possible closing thought for article:

"We do not need to make miniature replicas of Simeon and Anna, or draw pictures of them on Christmas cards. IÂ'd say, we honor them best by following their example: by looking only to Christ for our hope and salvation, and by waiting expectantly on him.

Isn't that what they were eagerly anticipating?

Diane

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/9 12:15

Sis wrote:

Quote:
-----Prayer is the process of growing up -- abandoning our childish dependencies on man, leaving "home", and cleaving to the Lord.

This last Tuesday night, was my first time attending a church prayer meeting in 3 years. Before I left the fellowship where I had grown so much, I attended a men's retreat. The section of Scripture that the Lord brought to my mind that weekend covered the episode of Jesus walking on water and Peter getting out of the boat to meet him. At that time, I knew that when Peter began to sink in the midst of the tossing waves, that particular picture was meant for me to unravel. At that meeting I thought I understood what the Lord was showing me. Well three years later I am still seeing the workings of that picture in my life. We are often given visions of where we are about to go, but we have no idea of the depth of what we learn along the way.

At the prayer meeting, I began to ask for forgiveness for taking my eyes off of Him. I asked that this would be the end of the wilderness. It was a good moment. I then began to pray for the new fellowship and its leaders. I then began to pray for some of the personal issues within the congregation. I started to cry when praying for a marriage where there seems to be no hope. It was there, that the burden of sin, caused me great sorrow. It is sin that separates us. It is sin that causes us to hurt one another.

This burden of sorrow brings with it an understanding of how our Lord feels about his sheep. This burden I ran away from back 3 years ago. This burden is before me once again, if I choose to follow my Lord. It is not about organizations and the methods used by men to appeal to the world to enter His church. It is about opening ourselves up to what the Lord brings to us in prayer, and hearing the vision that He has placed before you.

Cleaving to the Lord is the beginning of knowing the Lord and understanding His heart for our brothers and sisters now; and for our future brothers and sisters who have not yet believed...

Pray for me that I would no longer run and fret over the boiling seas around me, but that I would cast my eyes upon Jesus..

God Bless

In Christ
Jeff

Re:, on: 2006/12/9 17:18

Quote:

chadster wrote:

What eloquence!! I'm reluctant to share...I can't hold a candle to you guys in my ability to articulate truth! While admittedly I quickly peruse most threads and don't read them carefully (especially the longer ones :-), this one has been such a treasure and I'm so glad I haven't glossed over it. You dear saints of God who contributed to this thread have mined such riches! I was listening to a message by Bob Sorge recently and he spoke of the faithful and tireless intercession of Ana (year after year after year...for decades!) and God's Reward to her. What a powerful Word!! Oh that God would find us faithful and persevering in that place of prayer. He IS a REWARDER of those who diligently seek Him.

Praying Christmas Presence in fuller glory upon all my dear fellow SI brothers and sisters.

Chad

Is Bob speaking these days?

Orm

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/12/11 9:28

I have been looking forward to hearing more of Diane's plowing along this stream, :-) but in the meantime wanted to add to this...

Quote:

-----It was there, that the burden of sin, caused me great sorrow. It is sin that separates us. It is sin that causes us to hurt one another.

This burden of sorrow brings with it an understanding of how our Lord feels about his sheep. This burden I ran away from back 3 years ago. This burden is before me once again, if I choose to follow my Lord.

Jeff, I was affected and blessed by this all of this over the weekend...couldn't help but muse over how such a sorrowful burden would make a fine Christmas gift from the Lord for our benefit. I say this because clearly this burden is a dear fellowship with Jesus, himself a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

Not much else to say...your transparency has blessed me greatly.

Quote:

-----Pray for me that I would no longer run and fret over the boiling seas around me, but that I would cast my eyes upon Jesus.

I have truly learned some eternal things from you over the past two years. Perhaps one day, over a cup of coffee I will share the details with you. On a practical note if I may offer something small in return...it has helped me greatly in recent months to turn off the news media in my home, car, and especially in my head. Enough stuff gets through anyways...and I have more of my heart to meditate on the Lord's precepts. The oceans of the world churn and froth with war and greed, so unless the living waters flowing through our souls are allowed to be still, how will we see the face of Jesus reflected therein?

...He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul...

...As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.

...The Lord is just and loves just deeds; the upright shall see his face.

Thanks so much brother...your post is a treasure.

MC

Re: Anna: The First Lady Preacher - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/13 8:56

“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.”

“Anna ... spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem” Lk. 2:38

Not only was Anna the first lady preacher, but also the first to announce the good news within the Jewish religious establishment - a patriarchal institution where only males were taught the Torah and the Prophets. And these males had indeed been studying it - for centuries. They had searched intently for clues about the coming Messiah. But they couldn't see for looking; so God helped them out: One day an elderly woman burst from the shadows of the Temple and disclosed the news. Of course, it was necessary that Israel be the first to hear about the birth. After all, He came first to his own.

You'd think the Temple would have been a-rocking!

Anna would never have been allowed in the inner sanctuary or the Holy of Holies behind the curtain. Yet really, in spirit, that is where she dwelt. Anna “never left the temple, but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying.

Anna did not need pulpit, credentials, or position. Nor did she need permission from the authorities. She had all she needed: a little obscure corner, with the Word and the Spirit. She had been thoroughly trained by God in the place of prayer, and that was enough. At 90 yo, she was a seasoned prophetess. In the fullness of time God opened the door for her ministry. And no man could shut it!

“I will pour out my Spirit on your sons and daughters” Joel 2:30

God had poured out his Spirit on Anna, even though Pentecost was not for 33 years.

Something in all this is very healing for me - having understood for the better of my life, directly or indirectly, that God speaks first through the church leaders - the pastor, the men - the heads, and we receive divine truth from them. And anyone else's words couldn't possibly hold as much weight. I have been sensing new paths ahead - and so, suspect that this is a divinely ordained stopping-place for me.

Much could have been written about the lady saint. Oh, what revelation she must have received over the course of 85 years communing with God! I admit, I am most curious to know more about her. I understand so little. Yet, God chose to give only the details we need to know.

“...of the tribe of Asher” 2:35

This is interesting. Anna was not from the House of Judah, not a Jew, but of the House of Israel. She was a true Israelite by heredity. Had not the northern tribes all been dispersed among the Gentiles (nations) and Samaria...? Last recorded, the two Houses had been archenemies of each other. Is Anna's calling perhaps a prophetic foreshadowing of God's covenant promise to Abraham and the other OT prophets? I am not sure if I understand correctly? Can someone help me out ... Jeff? Mike?

“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy” Rev. 19:10

Anna's proclamation was about a person - not a theology. It was about an incarnation, not a system of laws. It was about the One whom she saw for herself - in the flesh, but long before that, in the spirit. Anna was filled with the Spirit of Christ; and her simple message was none other than this One Person. That was the Good News for Israel! So simple!

“We do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord” 2 cor. 4:5

It seems that in our day there is no lack of fledgling prophets, just chompin' at the bit to disclose their special revelation in a public forum. And they get frustrated when the door closes on them. But it may be that God is the one who is resisting them. He is still forming Christ in them... in the fullness of time they will burst forth with a purified message of the Good News: Christ. I say, prophesy that fails to put Christ in the center is incomplete – at best.

“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy” Rev. 19:10

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2006/12/13 9:43

Just got to reading through this thread and I really appreciate the thoughts expressed here. In particular this caught my eye...

Quote:
-----Unlike the modern humanistic church, unbelief is not something God seems to feel sorry for. We reveal our own doubt in God's power and resentment for his holiness, as we soothe sinners and rebels with our highminded pity...coddling their unbelief in God's salvation as a type of innocent weakness...but God sees all of it as arrogance and pride that doubts His character and power.

This unbelief, smoothed over as something else, is something the Lord brought home to me recently.

I believe that what happens in the Church is very similar to what happened with Israel in the wilderness when the bad report came back from the spies. They saw themselves as grasshoppers when compared to the enemies in the land, and that step of seeing themselves as they truly were was important. But they didn't take the next step of faith that was necessary. It is an important stage of our growth to learn that "without Him I can do nothing", but then we must move to the next stage. Sometimes in Christian circles a false humility of diffidence, timidity, and shyness can pass as a virtue but God has a different name for it.

The Bible says that Israel's inaction, as a result of fear, was rebellion against God (Numbers 14:6-9). Thank you for the clear, battle-cry voices in this thread to urge us on so that we might not brood instead of acting and allow depression to block out the face of God, then we are left with ourselves...wounded grasshoppers.

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by Chariot, on: 2006/12/13 11:51

Quote:
-----What eloquence!! I'm reluctant to share...

I feel the same way as you Chad. Not to sound redundant, but this thread has been a blessing and most edifying - kudos to all the posters here ;-)

Normally on a thread like this one I would just sit back, listen in and marvel at the thoughts these vessels of God share, who tipping slightly over pour streams of godly wisdom on the rest of us - myself, soaking up the many scattered gems.

Yesterday at work, while on break, I was reading through the opening chapters of Luke, and I just kept musing over Luke 2:11-12 - our Lord's birth, a baby wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger. Then I caught eye of Ron's signature, a quotation from Murray, "The measure of His sacrifice for you will be the measure of your willing surrender to Him in all things

."

This sharp juxtaposition of our Lord's humble birth and his harrowing death...and our surrender to Him in all things has begun to prick my mind. Alongside this thread, it has jolted me from a subtle complacency that has crept over me these past few months in serving God and has sharply brought to mind my woeful laxity in prayer.

off to thumb through and reread Murray's 'With Christ in the School of Prayer'

Blessings Saints
Rob

Re: Simeon: a man filled with the Spirit - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/14 6:22

"...the Holy Spirit was upon him."

"It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit
that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ."

"Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts." (in other words, the Spirit revealed to Simeon that the child would be coming to the Temple that day)

These three references about the Spirit's work in Simeon's life have probably been much ignored and discounted because this doesn't fit well into certain theological systems. A footnote in the Study NIV presents an unnecessary caution regarding the Spirit upon Simeon: "Not in the way common to all believers after Pentecost". What hogwash! - no doubt a residual of Dispensationalism. I also suspect that it doesn't fit well into the modern charismatic view of the Spirit.

We must break through these theological roadblocks before we can appreciate the significance of the Spirit in the life of Simeon, and translate it to our own lives and the life of the Church - and also the broader society.

"He was waiting for the consolation of Israel " Lk. 2:25

Consolation G3874
comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty;
encouragement, calling to one's aid

What is this consolation?
Where in the New Testament do we find other references to the "consolation"
How can we proclaim it today?

Diane

Re: The Comforter has Come - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/14 6:56

O spread the tidings 'round, wherever man is found,
Wherever human hearts and human woes abound;
Let every Christian tongue proclaim the joyful sound:
The Comforter has come!

The Comforter has come, the Comforter has come!
The Holy Ghost from Heaven, the Father's promise given;
O spread the tidings 'round, wherever man is found—
The Comforter has come!

The long, long night is past, the morning breaks at last,
And hushed the dreadful wail and fury of the blast,
As o'er the golden hills the day advances fast!

The Comforter has come!

Lo, the great King of kings, with healing in His wings,
To ev'ry captive soul a full deliverance brings;
And through the vacant cells the song of triumph rings;
The Comforter has come!

O boundless love divine! How shall this tongue of mine
To wond'ring mortals tell the matchless grace divine—
That I, a child of hell, should in His image shine!
The Comforter has come!

Text: Frank Bottome

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/15 5:04

Brother Mike wrote...

Quote:
----- I may offer something small in return...it has helped me greatly in recent months to turn off the news media in my home, car, and especially in my head. Enough stuff gets through anyways..

I may have written about this at some point in the past. My sharing seems to go in seasons. That is, I will share about the things I see in Scripture, and then there are seasons where I am consumed, as you have witnessed in what you have wrote above, in the boiling seas of this world.

There was a season about 7 years ago, where I was consumed in the events of history and this world. At one point, one moment, I thought to myself, this emersion in the worldly affairs is taking away from my joy that I find in Scriptures. I prayed out of desperation, "Lord, am I wasting time and effort in this endeavor?" A moment passed, and then the word "linked" appeared in my mind. This word "linked" brought together two points which before seemed like two distant thoughts totally unrelated to each other. I had been studying the U.S. policy of containment of Communism, developed in Eisenhower administration and also the policies of the Regan administration. There is too much to write here, but when the word "linked" appeared, I understood the whys behind the events. I saw a little bit about what motivates men. I saw a little about the nature of this fallen world. And after a while I understood where Solomon's wisdom came from.

Brother, I thank you also for what God is working in your heart and mind. We learn, as time goes on, how the "church" is ordained by God, as the means by which we are to share the grace of the gifts given to us by Him who is over all things. Unity comes as we are separated from the hopes of this world.

I have much to learn about what it means to love my family, and my brother and sisters in Christ. My carnal nature is prone to seek isolation from people and their "problems." But Jesus told His disciples, come and I will make you fishers of men.

God Bless
Jeff

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/15 5:23

Sis wrote:

Quote:
-----Anna did not need pulpit, credentials, or position. Nor did she need permission from the authorities. She had all she needed: a little obscure corner, with the Word and the Spirit. She had been thoroughly trained by God in the place of prayer, and that was enough. At 90 yo, she was a seasoned prophetess. In the fullness of time God opened the door for her ministry. And no man could shut it!

Luke 9:48 and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great."

I've started reading the thoughts of George Warnock. His work is on this site. He seems to be like Anna. His calling seems small compared to the leaders who stand before the crowds. But I suspect that George has lived a much fuller life like that of Anna.

Quote:
-----This is interesting. Anna was not from the House of Judah, not a Jew, but of the House of Israel. She was a true Israelite by heredity. Had not the northern tribes all been dispersed among the Gentiles (nations) and Samaria

The faithful of all tribes were drawn back in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin.

Ezek. 37:19 say to them, "Thus says the Lord GOD: 'Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'" "

I believe this Scripture speaks of what God would do when He called His people back after the 70 years of the dispersion.

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/15 5:28

Sis wrote:

Quote:
-----We must break through these theological roadblocks before we can appreciate the significance of the Spirit in the life of Simeon, and translate it to our own lives and the life of the Church - and also the broader society.

Life is filled with "roadblocks." The Scriptures will make straight the way if we submit to what we hear.

Keep preachin Sis...

God Bless

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/15 5:40

Brother Rob quoted...

Quote:
-----"The measure of His sacrifice for you will be the measure of your willing surrender to Him in all things."

Living this kind of life, is living on the edge of what is not known. I shrink back from that edge, and it becomes foolishness.

Prov. 1:32 For the turning away of the simple will slay them,
And the complacency of fools will destroy them;

Prov. 3:35 The wise shall inherit glory,
But shame shall be the legacy of fools.

It is wise to be "jolted" from complacency.

God Bless you Brother Rob

Jeff

Re: - posted by kdbutton, on: 2006/12/15 11:18

Quote:

-----"The measure of His sacrifice for you will be the measure of your willing surrender to Him in all things." Murray

This is one of those quotes that takes your breath away.

Silences all argument or excuse.

There is no retort no response, only a crying out,

"Lord I surrender, help thou my surrendering!"

Blessed be His Name! KDB

Re: encouraging one in the faith - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/15 12:12

MC:

Quote:

-----coddling their unbelief in God's salvation as a type of innocent weakness...

Ron:

Quote:

----- Thank you for the clear, battle-cry voices in this thread to urge us on so that we might not brood instead of acting and allow depression to block out the face of God, then we are left with ourselves... wounded grasshoppers.

Rookie:

Quote:

----- Pray for me that I would no longer run and fret over the boiling seas around me, but that I would cast my eyes upon Jesus..

No sin is more difficult to detect than this insidious, but devastating sin called "unbelief" – at least, I can say that for myself. It is easy to slip without knowing it. I would even suggest that it is virtually impossible to detect in ourselves. Checking each other for this one particular sin is perhaps one of the most important functions of fellowship.

"See to it brothers,
that none of you has a sinful,
unbelieving heart
that turns away from the living God.
But encourage one another daily ,
as long as it is called Today

so that none of you may be hardened
by sin's deceitfulness." Heb. 3:12

The responses of this thread have been food for my soul, and a powerful check against my own tendency to drift into unbelief. I see the following scriptures being practised:

"And let us consider
how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.
Let us not give up meeting together,
as some are in the habit of doing,
but let us encourage one another -
and all the more as you see the day approaching." Heb. 10:24,25

MC said:

Quote:

----- I have moved from cynicism towards belief in revival.

Of course. It is not about man's impotence, but about God's omnipotence. Can we trust that he will fulfill his promises?

"Comfort ye." Is. 40:1

"... the consolation of Israel." Lk. 2:25

What is the relationship between this promised "comfort" and "belief"?

Diane

Re: - posted by Chariot, on: 2006/12/15 14:32

Jeff

Quote:

-----Living this kind of life, is living on the edge of what is not known. I shrink back from that edge, and it becomes foolishness.

I nod in agreement. Like Peter asking Jesus to call him out onto the water, so are we when we first come to know our Lord, eager to meet him where he is. But as can happen over time, we no longer even want to come to the edge of the boat.

God Bless you to Bro Jeff

KDB

Quote:

-----This is one of those quotes that takes your breath away.
Silences all argument or excuse.

My sentiments exactly. The only thing left to do is surrender - in faith.

Diane

Quote:

-----It is not about man's impotence, but about God's omnipotence. Can we trust that he will fulfill his promises?

That such a small shift in perspective can have such a profound effect - to spur one on toward rest in Jesus.

To be like Martha, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. She had chosen what is better, the one thing need ed.

Blessings,
Rob

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/12/16 0:48

Still warming my hands here...

Blessed and humbled to be fellowshiping with the saints at SI. I learn so much here, that quite often I come to the place saying..."Oh so this is being born again!" It seems that all I am learning is how little I know about things I presumed to know. The Person we presumed to know...

I should be stopping now and learning to pray...learning to move from inspiration to discipline.

Quote:

-----What is the relationship between this promised "comfort" and "belief"?

I suppose there could be many good answers...belief is when I hold onto God, but comfort is when he holds on to me. Comfort is when the Red Sea parted for Moses...but belief is when Joshua had to step into the river before the waters would part. Belief is when I abide in Christ, and comfort is when He wonderfully abides in me.

We are so blessed to be here,

Mike

Re: - posted by kdbutton, on: 2006/12/16 10:35

Quote:

-----Still warming my hands here

Quote:

-----I should be stopping now and learning to pray

Good words Compton, may these verses of prayer and abiding then be like a steaming hot cup of my grandmother's wa ssail for you!

Quote:

-----Belief is when I abide in Christ, and comfort is when He wonderfully abides in me.

If ye abide in me,(belief) and my words abide in you, (comfort) ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.(H e is glorified)

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:7-8

Pray Pray Pray! Compton...pray away!!!! And we will too so he may be glorified in the fruit we bear through it :-D KDB

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/24 22:01

Quote:

-----To be like , who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. She had chosen what is better, the one thing needed.

I have been pondering these words in the light of the life of Anna, a women who also chose what was better.

Here were two women who entered the "inner sanctuary" directly - with no priestly intermediary, no credentials, no human "covering" - but simply by faith. If they had waited for the religious authorities to grant them a "pass", they would never have qualified. (Isn't that so much like religion even today)

In these women we see the wonderful promise of the blessed advent of our Lord: He came that we might have direct access to him, restored in covenant relationship.

Truely amazing. No wonder the angels rejoiced.

Diane

Re: When Christ is the HEAD - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/25 4:24

Just yesterday I had an extended conversation with a woman who is a deep thinker, and hungry for spiritual truths. For years she has been looking to man for answers— especially through books on spiritual topics. In her search, this lady has even gone to Bible School and graduated from Seminary. Yet deep down she still feels the emptiness in it all. For some time I have been concerned that, in her hunger, she is looking in the wrong place — new age teachings.

God opened the way for me to explain the Biblical teachings on the function of the Spirit and the Word in our lives, and that we can TRUST God to speak to us directly, without needing to rely on "second-hand" information. After a delightful conversation, she closed with, "Well, I guess I need to put away my books and start seeking God myself." And she thanked me for challenging her.

It is so tragic that many who are spiritually hungry do not even consider the possibility of seeking God directly. Even those who have been immersed in a Christian environment do not consider it — most likely because they have not seen it modeled. Man seeks man for answers. Man (esp spiritual leaders) exalts himself as the one who must give all the answers. He feels he must be the intermediary between God and man. This leaves people with no "muscle" of their own. They never grow up. They must rely on pre-digested spoon-feeding because they do not have the strength to chew solid food.

The body of Christ must be built up, so that "we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the HEAD, that is Christ." Eph. 4:14

I praise God for examples in the Bible of godly women (as well as men) who made Christ their HEAD. As a result, they were connected with God and they knew God. These were the ones who were in step with the Spirit. They were able to "speak truth" that would ultimately produce strength in the Body.

Anna did not receive her revelation from man, but she placed her entire life in a position to receive directly from God. And as a result, when he arrived, she had a message. She boldly shared the Good News. She was not afraid of being "out of order".

There is no Biblical record of any who even considered Anna's message and sought to see the Christ-child for themselves. Surely, if some had, it would have been recorded. Probably the Temple gang simply continued in the old ruts: preferring to rely on the "voice" of their established religious "expertise". How tragic.

Â... since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith Â... Â“Heb. 10:22

Diane

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2006/12/25 11:09

Quote:

-----she closed with, Â“Well, I guess I need to put away my books and start seeking God myself.Â”

A fitting reminder for Christmas morning Diane. Though we have the Lord, it seems our hearts are still distracted with lesser stuff...whether it be temples filled with tradition, churches filled with activities, or living rooms filled with torn paper and boxes.

I came across this short poem last night from A.B. Simpson:

Himself

Once it was blessing; now it is the Lord;
Once it was feeling, now it is His Word;
Once His gifts I wanted, now the Giver own;
once I sought for healing, now for Himself alone.

Once 'twas painful trying, now 'tis perfect trust;
Once half a salvation, now the uttermost;
Once 'twas ceaseless holding, now He holds me fast;
Once was constant drifting, now my anchor's cast."

Merry Christmas morning to you and your families dear saints,

MC

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/12/25 12:23

Amen, Diane. I could not have said it any better! ;-)

Quote:

-----Anna did not receive her revelation from man, but she placed her entire life in a position to receive directly from God.

And I believe this principle is still operational today. If we stay in a place where the Holy Spirit can and will speak to us we will do that regardless where we are. We do not need to be 'sent' or 'ordained' by the church to prophesy as Anna did. She concentrated on exalting God. How much could God accomplish through people if they concentrated on doing so instead of working to exercise power or dominion over others?

My thoughts on this Christmas day!
ginnyrose

Re: - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/25 14:28

Quote:
-----How much could God accomplish through people if they concentrated on doing so instead of working to exercise power or dominion over others

Ginnyrose, ever since the conception of the Christ-child, the enemy has been continually trying to snuff out the Son, and along with him, the Church. Satan readily finds willing accomplices among those who want to maintain control rather than surrender to God. They use their power and dominance to quench the outward expression of Christ's Spirit at work in God's children.

Consider Mary who poured perfume on Christ. She was chastised. Yet, Christ was pleased.

God's Spirit cannot be contained or controlled. Once the flask of perfume is broken, the perfume pours out and the aroma fills the room. No one can contain it.

Quote:
-----Himself

Once it was blessing; now it is the Lord;
Once it was feeling, now it is His Word;
Once His gifts I wanted, now the Giver own;
once I sought for healing, now for Himself alone.

Once 'twas painful trying, now 'tis perfect trust;
Once half a salvation, now the uttermost;
Once 'twas ceaseless holding, now He holds me fast;
Once was constant drifting, now my anchor's cast."

This song brings back warm memories. I sang it in church about 10 years ago as an expression of God's work within me. It was during a time when women were not free to speak. I praise God, he led me to this song. Actually it expresses my experience better than I could have. (I used the tune, "Like a River Glorious", as AB Simpson's tunes are unsingable.)

"So I say, live by the Spirit,
and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature....
But IF you are led by the Spirit,
you are not under law....

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Since we live by the Spirit,
let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying one another."
Gal. 5

Where the Spirit is allowed to work freely the Body flourishes, but where the Spirit is quenched, spiritual maturity is inhibited.

The best Christmas gift we can give each other is the freedom to approach God, and enjoy a trusting relationship with him.

Christmas Blessings to you all!

Diane

ginnyrose has a point - posted by DoulosQuinn, on: 2006/12/26 0:55

Jesus Christ hates Nicolaitins (nico-to conquer over, Laity- common believers)

In the forum "Santa - did you know"

A clip from what I wrote said

"Constantine, even though possibly well intentioned, legitimized the church to present it as an authority among the world . A big step down from our real authority from/in Christ which is eternal. The glamorous moment of recognition probably came with the same fan fair, and empty celebration of political campaign. It was as if Satan had sold some pompous fool the title to "the Brooklyn Bridge" flattering their sense of self-importance, locking them into folly. Which resulted in a thinning of the laity (the common active believer), more like evaporation, as the newly found establishment had a worldly appeal, even pride of life potential causing shame to rise to the top like foam. "Leaders" not servants, lording over the faith, subjugating, or eliminating any challenge to position, influence. Nicolaitinism, which Jesus hates. (Revelation 2:6, 15) This effectively marking Satan's scramble to not be overcome by the church. Retreating a couple of steps to pave a path by adjusting the perception of what the church is, how it finds unity, is unified and submitted to The LORD Christ Jesus, making it possible to work on the inside undercover. Thus the Dark Ages, and "church" history, which was not the church at all, The Greek word for church is ecclesia which means "called out" it's not a building down the street with "officialized", "ordained", titled and certified clergymen who are always appropriately "representing GOD". Our chief servant's serve the body, not exercise dominion."

We must submit to the infallible WORD's of GOD though. Not didactically, but exegetically.

Re: - posted by Yeshuasboy (), on: 2006/12/26 1:10

Quote:

roadsign wrote:

The best Christmas gift we can give each other is the freedom to approach God, and enjoy a trusting relationship with him.

Christmas Blessings to you all!

Diane

Praising the Lord for you sister and others of the flock in Christ Jesus. May the Lord continually be blessed by the talents He has given you, as you work obtaining interest for the glory of God.

richie

(PS....Please forgive me for butting in... Just compelled to praise the Lord for His work through His Body)

richie

Re: ginnyrose has a point - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/26 2:11

Sister Diane wrote:

Quote:

-----It is so tragic that many who are spiritually hungry do not even consider the possibility of seeking God directly. Even those who have been immersed in a Christian environment do not consider it -- most likely because they have not seen it modeled. Man seeks man for answers. Man (esp spiritual leaders) exalts himself as the one who must give all the answers. He feels he must be the intermediary between God and man. This leaves people with no "muscle" of their own. They never grow up. They must rely on pre-digested spoon-feeding because they do not have the strength to chew solid food.

The people near Mount Sinai were fearful of hearing God speaking directly to them. Instead they asked Moses to intercede.

I believe this same fear exists today.

Brother Quin wrote;

Quote:

----- The Greek word for church is ecclesia which means "called out"

The result of hearing and then doing what God's voice commands destroys one's hope in man and separates that individual from the many who fear man more than God. To be "called out" as Simeon and Anna became implies a style of life not centered in the hopes of this world. The fear of living for different hopes keeps many from searching beyond what is only superficial and vain.

Jer. 6:9 Thus says the LORD of hosts:

"They shall thoroughly glean as a vine the remnant of Israel;
As a grape-gatherer, put your hand back into the branches."

10 To whom shall I speak and give warning,
That they may hear?

Indeed their ear is uncircumcised,
And they cannot give heed.

Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them;
They have no delight in it.

13 "Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them,
Everyone is given to covetousness;
And from the prophet even to the priest,
Everyone deals falsely.

14 They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly,
Saying, "Peace, peace!"
When there is no peace.

Most only want to be "healed....slightly..."

But what does the Lord say?

Jer. 6:16 Thus says the LORD:

"Stand in the ways and see,
And ask for the old paths, where the good way is,
And walk in it;
Then you will find rest for your souls.
But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'"

As for myself...I fail from unbelief also...I still waste much of my time on vain things.

In Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/12/26 2:58

Brother Mike wrote a long time ago...

Quote:
-----I have truly learned some eternal things from you over the past two years. Perhaps one day, over a cup of coffee I will share the details with you. On a practical note if I may offer something small in return...it has helped me greatly in recent months to turn off the news media in my home, car, and especially in my head. Enough stuff gets through anyways...and I have more of my heart to meditate on the Lord's precepts. The oceans of the world churn and froth with war and greed, so unless the living waters flowing through our souls are allowed to be still, how will we see the face of Jesus reflected therein?

I began to respond to this encouragement a couple weeks ago...then erased what I had wrote. Then I got busy moving into our new home. I am still not finished with that endeavor. This year has been filled with this world as you have noticed.

At the beginning of the year, my father died from a fall. One of the reasons we were moving to PA was to help him because of Parkinson's disease. Then I turned 50 and retired from UCLA. Then I moved all our belongings across country by myself. Then I drove our family across country. Then we rented a home. Then I got a new job working 12 midnight to 8am. Then we bought a home and now it is the end of the year.

And on top of that I have spent a lot of time reading about related to government, history, and economics.

Again you wrote:

Quote:
----- The oceans of the world churn and froth with war and greed, so unless the living waters flowing through our souls are allowed to be still, how will we see the face of Jesus reflected therein?

I look forward to this new year searching for those still waters. I need Him.

Love you brother

Jeff

Rookie - posted by DoulosQuinn, on: 2006/12/26 5:36

Brother you couldn't even know what I just posted in "women shouldn't teach" I am really hurting and the LORD had you quote me and say

Quote:
----- Brother Quinn wrote;

Quote:
----- The Greek word for church is ecclesia which means "called out"

The result of hearing and then doing what God's voice commands destroys one's hope in man and separates that individual from the many who fear man more than God. To be "called out" as Simeon and Anna became implies a style of life not centered in the hopes of this world. The fear of living for different hopes keeps many from searching beyond what is only superficial and vain.

thanks brother,

Re: Rookie - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/12/26 7:25

Quote:
-----you couldn't even know what I just posted in "women shouldn't teach"

DQ, What a blessing to see out threads weaving together. A divine tapestry in the making, yes?

Diane

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2007/1/4 1:38

Jeff,

I have been blessed richly reading your last post in this thread.

Quote:
-----I look forward to this new year searching for those still waters. I need Him.

How precious it is to find a few like-minded saints to be honest with one another: we do need him. All around me are practical and urgent concerns competing for my earnest attention. In the midst of so much clamor and noise I rejoice at this most 'impractical' instruction...

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory

I need to believe that brother!

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life...1 John 5:11,12

This is the fellowship that I so desire with one another. Not a bunch of us talking about this problem or that solution...but preparing our hearts always for heaven. For...

...we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness...or under the sway of the wicked one. 1 John 5:19

Yet, having accepted this knowledge hardly brings us comfort...unless God himself comforts us through His Spirit. I mean it is good to talk about discerning the times...but like you said we need Jesus. Oh how I love the literalness of the statement you made. I need Him...more than investigating ideas about him, we need to Him. What kind of exchange is this that exists between our sorry hearts and the living God?...

And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.1 John 5:20

And again...

any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

If indeed there is little time left in this world (I am not saying so)I just want to break my fixation with it's evil once and for all and spend my remaining days knowing the Lord.

There are those who don't have this desire...even in the church I have been criticized as if waiting on the Lord needs to be put off until more urgent things are accomplished. Yet when are the urgent things ever finished 'being accomplished?'

Urgent indeed! For I still live in corruptible flesh...and I know that the closer I draw to the light the more painfully I am aware of the great difference between myself and Jesus. Yet this pain is part of being raised from unfeeling death to fullness of life...it is the searing and penetration that must come from the Light. Finally Someone in this deceptive and shadowed world is telling me the truth about myself. It is utterly astonishing that I am not struck dead by such a Holy gaze into my proud and conniving heart, but still more amazing is how He shows me abundant mercy and love...and more importantly, shows me a glimpse of the true God.

This is what my broken soul needs...not information about how to make money, or about how to defeat Islam, or any number of other practical concerns....no, my weary inner man needs the True God to live.

This is the true God, and eternal life.

Along these lines of being close to God...how wonderful you would encourage me with this...

Quote:

-----Love you brother

...If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Bless you brother for drawing me closer to the Lord with your graceful speech.

MC

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2007/1/11 5:13

Sister Dorcas asked a long time ago...

Quote:

-----Here is a lazy question from me, based on my eye being caught by the phrase 'both her kings'.

The two kings are Rezin of Syria and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel.

The Child who is born of the virgin, is Ahaz's son Hezekiah.

2 Chronicles 29:1...

Hezekiah became king when he was twenty-five years old, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah the daughter of Zechariah. And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David done.

Notice here in Scripture that Hezekiah did what was right, "according to all that his father David done."

Hezekiah's earthly father was Ahaz, yet Scripture says that David was his father...

3. "In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them...

Listen to his heart's desire...

10. "Now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel, the His fierce wrath may turn away from us. My sons, do not be negligent now, for the Lord has chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister to Him and burn incense."

Hezekiah from the moment he became king set out to do the Lord's will. I imagine that his earthly father king Ahaz witnessed

ssed his son's desire for the Lord God of Israel long before his death.

Isaiah 7:14...

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign; Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings...."

I believe the Child, that is given by God as a sign to Ahaz is his son Hezekiah, born from the Root of Jesse...

In Christ
Jeff