



THE GOOD NEWS MESSENGER

Volume 8, Issue 3

A publication of the Church of God in Moore, Oklahoma

May / June 2007

Blighted Blossoms

Excerpt from *Heart Talks* By: C. W. Naylor

In our yard, a few feet from the door stands an apple tree. In the early spring I watched its swelling buds from day to day. Soon they burst forth into snowy blossom, beautifying the tree, and filling the air with fragrance. There was the promise of a bountiful crop of fruit. In a few days the petals had fallen like a belated snow. As the leaves unfolded and grew larger, there appeared here and there a little apple that gave a promise of maturing into full ripened fruit. But, alas! how few apples there were compared with the number of blossoms with which the bough had been laden! Most of the blossom had been blighted, and had fallen to the ground leaving nothing behind.

"Ah," thought I, "How like these blighted blossoms are so many of the desires and hopes and plans of our lives! How many of our aspirations are never realized! How many of our plans fail! How scanty the perfectly matured fruit in our lives, when compared with the blossoms!" When we consider this, how barren our lives often seems! How little we seem to accomplish! How little our lives seem to amount to.

Every truly saved heart longs to serve. The redeemed heart loves, and love finds its joy in service. How much there is to be done all around us! and how eagerly we would take up the task of doing it! How much we want to accomplish for the Lord! but ah, how little we do really accomplish! How many blossoms of desire we possess! but how little fruit of real accomplishment! Seeing this, we sometimes become discouraged. It does not seem worth while to try to do the few little things that we actually can do. Do the best we can, so many of our blossoms will be blighted- so many of our plans will fail; so many of our hopes will not be realized; so many of our desires will not be fulfilled. We can rejoice in those that are brought to fruition; we can rejoice in those that do mature; but how about the blossoms that fall and seem to leave nothing behind them? Do they bud in vain? The blossoms on that apple-tree which were blighted, and died, were just as beautiful and just as fragrant as those which bore fruit.

They served a very real purpose, and so do the hopes and purposes that we cherish in our hearts, even though we never see their fruitage.

David was a man who loved the Lord, and out of that love came a desire to build the Lord a house. That desire was never realized by David. Making it a reality was left to others. Nevertheless, David's purpose was pleasing to the Lord. In his prayer at the dedication of the temple, Solomon said: "And it was in the heart of David my father to build an house for the name of the Lord God of Israel. And the Lord said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart" (Kings 8:17-18). God did not despise the desire, even though he did not permit David to carry it out. As God was well-pleased with the desire of David to build him a house, so he is well-pleased with those worthy desires and purposes of our hearts that are never carried out. Whether it be circumstances or surroundings that hinder us, whether it be a lack of wisdom or of ability, whether if be the pressure of other duties, or even if God gives the task to someone else, there is, nevertheless, beauty and fragrance in the desire that is in our heart to do him service.

We must not become discouraged and give up hoping and desiring and planning to do something for the Lord, even though so many of our plans fail and our hopes become blighted. We know that it is the sap flowing upward through the tree that produces the beautiful fragrant blossoms. Likewise God knows that it is the love in our hearts that produces the desire for service; and that love is precious in his sight. Do you sometimes feel that there is so little, oh so little! that you can do for the Lord? Does your life seem to count so little for his kingdom? and do you long to be more useful? That very longing is as the odor of sweet incense before the Lord. If you are prevented from doing the things that you would gladly do, if circumstances shut you in like a hedge, if you seem weak when you would be strong, you can still do something. The more of these blossoms of desire you have, even if they never reach fruition, the more your life is beautified, and the more the Lord is pleased. These unfulfilled desires work to ennoble our character and to enrich us, provided we do not spend our time mourning and lamenting because we can not put them into action.

There is, however, one danger which we must be careful to shun. Sometimes people have their hearts so set on doing some great things that they miss the little things, the little opportunities that lie close to their hands. Life is made up of a round of little things. The great things only happen at rare intervals. But it is

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

Blighted Blossoms	1
Walking on the Water	2
The Routing of Giant Doubt (Part 1)	3
A Poor Rich Man and a Rich Beggar	4
Bible Study—Hope	4

Walking on the Water

Excerpt from *Peter the Fisherman Preacher*— By: E. E. Byrum

One day Jesus took the apostles and went aside privately into a desert place near the city of Bethsaida; but the people were soon coming to where they were. Hundreds, even thousands, came bringing their sick, and to hear him preach.

Late in the evening the disciples came to him and asked him to send the people away so they could go to the village and buy something to eat.

Jesus asked Philip where they could buy bread for the people to eat. He knew what he was intending to do, but he was putting Philip to a test. Philip replied that two hundred pennyworth of bread would not be sufficient to give each one just a little bread to eat.

Andrew, who was Simon Peter's brother, happened to be near by and he said that there was a boy there who had five barley loaves and two small fishes. But, he said, what are they among so many?

The disciples were wondering how the multitudes would be fed, as there were about five thousand men. Jesus said to his disciples, "Give ye them to eat." He meant that they must now feed all these people. Then he told them to have the people to sit down on the grass, in companies of fifty each. Think of it, one hundred such companies assembled there and now sitting down to be fed from the five loaves and two fishes.

Jesus took the loaves and fishes, and, looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude. After they had eaten all they desired they gathered up what was left and there were twelve basketsful.

This was a wonderful miracle and demonstration of the power of God, and a confirming of faith and preparation of the disciples for other things that were soon to happen.

The people said: "This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world." Jesus saw that they were going to try to take him by force and make him king, therefore he went alone into a mountain to pray, and the disciples entered a ship and went over toward Capernaum.

It was now dark and the wind began to blow and the sea was rough and boisterous, and the ship was being tossed with the waves. For a long time they toiled and rowed, and seemed to make but little headway.

Jesus, looking across the tempestuous sea, saw their hazardous situation and precarious condition, and about the fourth watch of the night, or nearing the dawning of the day, he came to their rescue, walking on the water.

The disciples saw him and they were troubled, and said, "It is a spirit." And they cried out for fear. Here these good men exhibited a natural trait of human weakness by being afraid of what they supposed to be a ghost, or spirit. They were only men of like passions as we are in this day and age of the world. There are times when every person exhibits more or less fear, which is only a trait of humanity and not an evidence of sin in the heart or something to bring one under condemnation. Therefore it is not strange that the disciples under such circumstances should become terrified and frightened.

When Jesus saw that they were really afraid he called to them and said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

It was now an opportune time for Peter to manifest his impulsiveness to the opposite of his former timidity and fear, and boldly step forward and go to the other extreme. When he heard the voice of Jesus, he said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water."

And Jesus said, "Come."

Peter had just witnessed the wonderful miracle of feeding the multitudes when Jesus had said: "Give ye them to eat," and by his blessing upon the loaves and fishes they were able to obey and feed the people. It doubtless convinced him that it was safe to undertake to do almost anything that Jesus would tell him to do. Therefore, when Jesus told him to come, Peter began to climb down out of the ship and without hesitation began to walk on the water. But he had not gone far when he began to look at the dashing waves and the boisterous wind, and his faith began to waver and he commenced to sink.

When he found that he was sinking he cried, saying, "Lord, save me."

"Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Although he had a test of his faith, and wavered, yet he knew his only hope was in Jesus, and he let Jesus help him. He trusted Jesus at the most critical moment, and found that by doing so he was safe and could even walk with Jesus, on the water.

But, did Peter cease his efforts to go forth about his Master's work because of this seeming failure for a time? Not at all. The ship was soon at the seashore and Peter was ready to assume responsibilities wherever he found work to do.

Blighted Blossoms

(continued from page 1)

being faithful in little things that makes us ready for our opportunities for the great things when they come. Christ said "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." The little things are not spectacular, they do not attract much attention, but they are the things that make up life; and if we are true in these little things, God will trust us with some greater things by and by. It is not wrong to yearn to do more; but that longing works evil if, in our reaching forward to greater opportunities, we neglect what opportunities we have. It is the fruits we are able to produce, not their blossoms, that count at the harvest.

Let us, therefore, strive to do all that we can; and if we can not do all that we would, let us remember that the blossoms that are blasted are not in vain. They serve their purpose. They are well worth while; and if we go resolutely and steadfastly on, we shall at last hear the Master's voice say to us, "It is good that it was in thine heart." How sweet these words will sound in our ears! How they will soothe our feelings of disappointment at not having done more! Let us press on, therefore, and not be discouraged because we do not see our hopes and plans realized in this world. Let us be strong and of good courage, knowing that God knows all about it. Let us thank him for such privileges as we have, and make the best of our opportunities.

The Routing of Giant Doubt (Part 1)

Excerpt from *Adventures in the Land of Canaan* By: R. L. Berry

Pilgrim Sincere lives in what I hear is one of the best parts of Canaan. He had a great encounter with old Giant Doubt; so let us pay him a visit. We have met the old Giant already, and we have no hesitation in saying that if there is a worse giant than he in Canaan, we are not eager to meet him. Pilgrim Sincere may tell us something about him that it will be of profit to us to know.

Here! We are at Sincere's place already. There is no question of his victory over Giant Doubt. Such a shield of faith as his is I never saw before!

"Pilgrim Sincere, we have been talking with pilgrims and residents of Canaan, and now we have come to see you. Will you tell us something that will enable us to gain a freehold in Canaan? We have met many poor pilgrims who say they have never yet gained a clear title to a home here. They have been driven here and there by this or that old giant. We are eager not to be defeated in this great adventure in Canaan."

"If you will give all honor to Immanuel and none to me, I will relate my experiences—a few at least. There are many giants in Canaan, very many of them. There is Giant Lust, who has slain thousands. Poor souls! Giant Puffup, who causes pilgrims to act as foolish as did the toad that saw an elephant and bursted itself trying to be as large; Giant Lethargy, who operates an opiate factory in a hollow that runs directly down into Egypt; Giant Covetousness, who decoys pilgrims to the silver-mind run by Balaam and Demas; Giant Pride, an evil giant who has troubled pilgrims for time out of mind; Giant Liar, who uses an abundance of camouflage; and others (Gal. 5:19-21)."

"My, you almost scare us naming them! Can it be we must fight all of them? Is not this that rest-land?"

"My dear pilgrims, this is Beulah-land and Sabbath-land. Here is the true rest. But remember, Canaan has its giants, more so than the wilderness; the true rest is found in overcoming them. Do not be affrighted. Look at the armor with which you are equipped."

"Sincere, the armor is all right, but it is ourselves that we are doubtful of. Can we use the sword and the shield as they should be used?"

"Indeed you can, pilgrims, no doubt of it. Why, when I got into Canaan I was so weak I nearly lost my life fighting."

"Tell us about it."

"About twenty-five years ago I entered Canaan. It was a great day for me! At last the long journey through the wilderness was over, the deep, wide waters of Jordan passed! Canaan was my own! I praised Immanuel and began to possess the land. (Josh. 1:2, 3)

"Not long after that I met a lean, white-whiskered man named Legality. He said he was my friend. He looked venerable and sincere, even if he did appear rather stern and immovable! 'Now friend Sincere,' he said, 'I have something here that will help you walk safely and straight,' and with that he slipped a peculiar jacket over my head and bucked it up pretty tight around my waist (Gal. 5:1).

"There,' he said, 'that jacket just fits you. You are in Canaan now, and must walk, oh, so straight and carefully! Why, if you make even ever so little a mistake, you will be punished, I fear, dreadfully. But that jacket will help you and keep you from doing anything far out of the way.' And with that he left me.

"Well, I wanted anything that would help me, so I kept the jacket on. It bothered me considerably. It was made of stiff, iron stays woven in with rough haircloth, both of which were made, so Mr. Legality said, by one Mr. Over Conscientious Scruple who lives in the town of Sensitive.

"Every move I made was retarded by that jacket. By and by sore places appeared where the end of the stays engaged my flesh. I met Mr. Legality once and told him how bad the jacket was treating me, but he said the

cure was to buckle it on tighter. Oh, my, how it did hurt! But he said it would be dangerous to take it off. So I continued to suffer. I could not act freely in any manner.

"Just about this time old Giant Doubt met me. He carried a book and a big pencil. 'Sit down here while I give you an examination; that is my business,' he said. 'My lord has commissioned me to do this work.' Something inside me told me that here was an enemy; but he spoke with such a show of authority that I passively sat down. And he began.

"How do you feel?"

"I do not feel very good, just now.' I said.

"I thought so. No doubt there is something wrong with you. Have you gained an established home in Canaan yet?"

"No, I haven't,' I replied.

"Well, you never will; at least there are serious doubts about it. It is my business to make sure that pilgrims possess the land. Did you put up your memorial stone?"

"Yes, I carried a stone out of the middle of Jordan and set it up. I suppose it is there yet.'

"That stone was no good, a little rough rock it was. Why didn't you select a nice large stone such as Pilgrim Joyful carried out?"

"I did the best I could; that was the only stone I saw in passing through. It noticed it was not like Pilgrim Joyful's, and not like Pilgrim Honest's either.'

"No good, no good! Too small! I doubt if it is really stone at all. Did you leave all the wilderness luggage on yonder side Jordan?"

"I intended to. I dropped the whole bundle as I stepped into Jordan.'

"I doubt it. I believe you have considerable wilderness trappings in your possession. More than that, I doubt whether you left all your load when you crossed the Red Sea. Did you?"

"I thought I did,' I replied.

"I doubt it. How do you feel now?" said old Giant Doubt.

"I feel bad, worse than before the examination began.' I replied.

"I see you do. Something is wrong with you. You have passed a poor examination. It is my business to carry you out of Canaan as unworthy to be in this good land. Come on,' and with that he arose and advanced toward me with both hands extended. I trembled violently, but seemed powerless to resist. He picked me up and started off with me. Just then I spotted a sturdy post with a signboard nailed to the top. I eagerly sought to read the legend. 'Beware!' it began. 'At this place a certain old giant, named Doubt, has a habit of stopping pilgrims and taking them through a pretended examination. He claims to hold a commission from his lord to do this work. His commission is true; but his lord is Beelzebub. After the examination, he usually carries off the pilgrim who allows him to question him. Many have fallen to his devices. He is a cruel old giant, and he carries his victims to' - and here I could read no more.

"We soon left the main road and entered a dark valley called Vale of Destruction.

"Let me go,' I shouted.

"I will not, you are not fit to be in Canaan,' he replied.

"I struggled and shouted for help with all my might. He held me close, however and the vale grew darker and darker.

"O Immanuel, do send me help! Oh, deliver me from this cruel giant!' I cried. Just then there appeared ahead a stream of light, which came in from one side of the valley. When we reached the light, I saw a beautiful mansion built high up on the sides of a valley that broadened out in a beautiful vale named Hope. Some people were singing on the lawn of the mansion. Either they caught a glimpse of the old giant carrying me, or my loud shouts for help reached them. At any rate, I saw two of them start toward us. (Gal. 6:2)

A Poor Rich Man and a Rich Beggar

From *Picture Story—Life of Christ—Story 46—Luke 16:19-31*

The Pharisees seemed to think that rich people were better than poor people. One day Jesus told them a story to show that God looks at people's hearts instead of their riches.

"There was a certain rich man who thought only of his own comfort and happiness. He wore expensive clothes, like a king's, and ate the best kind of food every day. His many servants were quick to do his bidding, and he did nothing except to live and enjoy himself.

And there was a certain beggar man named Lazarus, who had no home nor friends. He was a good man although he was a beggar, and he came to sit at the gate of the rich man to ask for crumbs which might fall from the rich man's table. The poor beggar was sick, and sores broke out all over his body. He could not drag himself away from the rich man's gate. As he lay there suffering, stray dogs from the street came to lick his sores. But the rich man did not try to help him at all; he let him lie there day after day in his misery.

By and by the poor beggar died, and the angels came and carried him to heaven. No longer was he a poor beggar, for now he could rest in peace and happiness with faithful Abraham and other good people who had left this world. The rich man died, too, and his friends buried him in a nice, new grave, and perhaps they mourned greatly because he had been taken away from them. But that was not the end of the rich man, for after death he found himself in a place of torment. Now he was poor, so poor that he could not even get a drink of water to cool his burning tongue.

In this place of torment the poor rich man lifted up his eyes and saw, far, far away, the same Lazarus who used to sit at his gate and beg. He remembered Lazarus, and now he saw him resting happily with Abraham in a beautiful place. The poor rich man called loudly to Abraham and cried for mercy. He knew he could not hope to rest with Abraham in that beautiful place, but he wanted Abraham to send Lazarus with just a drop of water to cool his burning tongue.

But Abraham called back that he could send no water. He said, "Remember that you enjoyed good things in your lifetime, while Lazarus had only poverty and suffering when he lived in the world. Now he is comforted, and you are being tormented. And I can send nothing to you because no one can pass from this place to your place of torment, neither can anyone from your place come to us."

Now the poor rich man remembered his brothers who were yet living in the world. He did not want them to come to the place of torment, and he asked Abraham to send Lazarus back to the world to warn his brothers about that dreadful place. But Abraham said those brothers had God's law to warn them, and Lazarus need not go. Then the poor rich man pleaded that his brothers might listen if someone rose from the dead to tell them about the place of torment. But Abraham answered, "If they will not hear the words in God's book, neither will they listen if one should rise from the dead and speak to them."

Bible Study—Hope

By: Alvin J. Ellison—Rom. 8:24-25

- I. Relationship of the Unsaved Classified
 1. The sinner—Eph. 2:11-12
 2. The hypocrite—Job 8:13-14, Job 27:8
 3. The deceived—Matt. 7:21-23, 2 Thess. 2:10-12
 4. All the unsaved—Psa. 9:17
- II. Relationship of the Saved Classified
 1. The justified—1 Pet 1:3
Experience
Prov. 10:28, Jer. 17:7-8, Psa. 146:5
 2. The sanctified—1 John 3:3
Experience
Heb. 7:19, Heb. 10:14-15, Heb. 6:17-19
 3. An exhortation - 1 Pet. 3:15, Heb. 3:6
- III. Conclusion— Rom. 5:1-5

Have we any hope within us of a life beyond the grave,
In the sweet and vernal lands?

Do we know if this, our tabernacle, were to be dissolved,
We've a house not made with hands?

Blessed hope we have within us is an anchor to the soul,
It is both steadfast and sure;
It is founded on the promises of Father's written word,
And 'twill evermore endure.

Hope has brought us thro' the dangers and temptations of the past,
And we fear not those to come;
By her blessings we'll go forward, while our mortal life shall last,
Then we'll joyously go home.

Since we've walked the strait and narrow way our path has ever shone
Brighter, brighter, day by day
Hope within our hearts assures us it is better farther on,
It is brighter all the way.

Life will end in joyful singing, "I have fought a faithful fight,"
Then we'll lay our armor down
And our soul will break the cable here and take its happy flight,
To possess a starry crown.

We have a hope within our souls, Brighter than the perfect day:
God has given us his spirit, and we want the world to hear it,
All the doubts are passed away.—W. G. Schell (Col. 1:27)



The Church of God Pastor: David Chancellor
701 S. Eastern Ave. Email: dchancellor@juno.com
PO Box 6187 Website: http://www.moorecog.org
Moore, OK 73153 Phone: (405) 794-2765

Spanish interpretation is available in the services.

Service Times:

Wednesday Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Young People's Service (Sunday)	4:45 p.m.
Children's Service (Sunday)	5:00 p.m.
Sunday Evening Service	6:00 p.m.

We have literature available for those who would like to study the Word of God in the confines of their home. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at the above telephone number, address, or website.