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STRIVE TO ENTER HIS REST!

The Hebrew people were in slavery for 430 years! We can't imagine how terrible their lives were: endless toil, cruelty, beatings, hunger, hopelessness. The Egyptians even started murdering their boy babies. And there was nothing they could do to change their situation. God looked down from heaven, took pity on them, and sent them a deliverer, a savior, named Moses. He told them, "God is going to deliver you from your slavery and give you rest. He is promising to give you a land of your own, so it was called the Promised Land. In that place you will enter into His rest." Rest for the Hebrews was a place, a land.

God looked down from heaven and saw that we were in slavery to sin and suffering and hopelessness. There was nothing we could do to change our situation. God took pity on us and sent a deliverer, a Savior, named Jesus. He also has a Promised Land for us - - rest in Christ. Rest is our promised land.

It is rare for Scripture to tell us to strive for something, but in Hebrews 4:11 we are exhorted to "Strive" or "Make every effort" or "Be diligent" to enter God's rest. The Amplified words it like this: *Let us be zealous and exert ourselves and strive diligently to enter that rest (of God, to know and experience it for ourselves) that no one may fall or perish by the same kind of unbelief and disobedience (into which those in the wilderness fell).* The Old Testament describes how most of the Hebrews failed to enter God's rest. They were afraid of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. They said, "Those guys are giants compared to us, and we are grasshoppers compared to them." They refused to trust and obey God. God was angry with them, really angry. He made an oath, *I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter my rest.* So for the next forty years they wandered around in circles until all the adults died and fell in the wilderness.

God warns us in Hebrews 3:12, *Beware, brethren* (note that He is talking to Christians), *lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.* Note that lack of trust in God is called "an evil heart of unbelief." He goes on to warn them that if they don't continue to trust and obey Him that that could fail to enter His rest. (Read Hebrews, Chapters 3 and 4.)

Genesis tells us that God rested on the seventh day from all His works. For God, a day was His place of rest, the Sabbath day. Hebrews 4:9 says, *There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.* Some denominations argue about whether Saturday should be our Sabbath instead of Sunday, but that misses the point. Colossians 2:16 says, *Do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration, or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of things to come, but the reality is found in Christ.* Jesus is our Sabbath, Jesus is our Promised Land, Jesus is our rest. We don't have to labor, to work, to enter that Promised Land. Jesus purchased it for us on the cross. We receive it by faith, by trust.

Are you living in the Promised Land? Have you entered into Christ's rest? I have met and ministered to scores of Christians who are living in fear, dread, and torment. Some Christians are tormented by fear of death for themselves or their loved ones. But Hebrews 2:14-15 says that Christ *destroyed him who had the power of death, the devil, and has released those who were in bondage all their lives because of their fear of death.*

I have prayed with people who were literally trembling in fear because of their economic circumstances, and I am certainly not making light of their fear, but I am saying that in view of the uncertain future we all face it is imperative that we enter into Christ's rest. His rest is a place of inner peace regardless of outer circumstances.

I listened to a CD by Graham Cooke recently, and he said that he had come to a place where regardless of what happens in his life or the life of his loved ones, that with fifteen seconds he can return to the inner experience of peace. That is Christ's rest. In the past, when something upsetting happened sometimes it took me several days to return to inner peace and rest. I have now reached the point where sometimes it takes me several hours, and at times within a few minutes I can enter into rest. God calls a lack of peace and rest an evil heart of unbelief! It is unacceptable to God that we live in a torment of worry and fear. It is a lack of faith and trust in our heavenly Father! Why allow the enemy to torment us for days or weeks or years? Do we or do we

not trust God?

Rest is not passive, not lazy. We rest in work, not from work. Jesus was always active, but always at rest. There were incessant demands on His time, but He was a center of peace. His enemies were cursing and threatening Him, but He was serene. In a boat on a stormy sea His disciples were frantic with fear, but He was asleep on a cushion. When they awoke Him, He rebuked them because of their lack of faith, lack of peace. He spoke to the storm and immediately quieted it. Because of His peace inside, He had authority over the storm outside.

When you are driving, do all those irritating drivers cause you to lose your peace? Do you scream, "Stupid!" shake your fist at them, and perhaps try to ram their car? That is a sign you are not at rest. I heard a testimony several years ago: A man had a terrible week on his job. The pressure was unremitting, and everything went wrong. On his way home on Friday afternoon the traffic was snarled, it was very hot, and the air-conditioner in his car wasn't working. At a red light, the car behind him honked while the light was still red. He said some bad words under his breath. Then the car honked again. He lost it! He started cursing and giving a certain sign to the other driver. He was angry and upset all the way home. When he parked his car in the driveway, he walked around back of his car and noticed the bumper sticker that he had forgotten was on their car. It said, "Honk if you love Jesus!"

Do you lie in bed wide awake at 1:00 AM, 2:00 AM, 3:00 AM, sweating, trembling, seeing visions of catastrophe? That is simply unbelief in a mighty God who loves you and is watching over you. Stress and fear make people emotionally, mentally, and physically sick. That is a scientific fact, and long before modern science it was a biblical revelation. Friends, God has the most marvelous, practical, gift for you and me: His rest. Receive it by faith. Return to it quickly when you lose it. Walk in it. Live in it. It is your Sabbath, your Promised Land. It is God's priceless gift to you.

A few verses from Psalm 46 for you to meditate on:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

A FAITHFUL HUSBAND

Eve to Adam: "Have you been faithful to me?"

Adam to Eve: "Who else?"

DARREL & MARIAN'S TRIPS

A couple here in Grand Junction are members of an AG church, and they volunteer at the Healing Rooms where I got acquainted with them. They are in their mid-60's, and he is a retired machinist. Last week I visited in their home and learned some things about them that thrilled me. They are low-key type people, and they love to study the Bible. They usually spend four or five hours every morning going through their study-Bibles or using studies they have ordered.

About six years ago they were invited by a missionary couple from their church to go to Cape Town, South Africa, on a short-term mission trip. They went for two months, worked at constructing a church building and led several people to Christ. They really enjoyed it and decided to save their money and go on another trip. I had told them about Pepe Quiroz' ministry near Mexico City and how Pepe needed someone to work with the orphans, so about three years ago they went down and worked with the orphans for two months. One day they were outside and saw one of the boys, about ten years old, thrashing around in the dirt and surrounded by the other kids. They ran to him and thought he was having an epileptic seizure. They had read about the deliverance ministry but had never seen it done. Because of the sounds the boy was making, Darrel felt this was a demonic manifestation, so he and Marian started praying and commanding the spirits to leave, and the boy immediately became so still they thought he had died. In a few minutes he got up smiling, and apparently he was completely set free. During their time there they did this ministry of demonic deliverance six times. It was on-the-job training.

Darrel and Marian came home and started saving their money so they could go on another trip. They liked it! Three months ago they felt led to go to a small town in Mexico near the Baja, named Puerta Penyesco. Some years ago when they had been traveling in their RV they had met the pastor of a small church there. The pastor was delighted to see them, asked them to give their testimonies, and started having them share some of their teachings. They taught a group of about 17 people several hours a day for six weeks. A man in his 40's attended that church, and he was almost totally blind. After six surgeries the doctors had given up on him and told him he would go completely blind. He had formerly had a good job working with computers. Marian laid her hands on his eyes and prayed, and the man said he started seeing light! She prayed some more, and his vision started returning. Within a week the man's vision had been completely restored, and he had resumed his computer job and started driving his truck! The pastor of the church had a glandular disease, and his neck was swollen to double normal size. They prayed for him, and Marian felt his neck shrink back to normal size under her hands! They led many people in that community to the Lord, and the church is revitalized!

The point I want to make is that Darrel and Marian are average, low-key, laymen-type Christians. Because they were obedient to go, God used them in a mighty way. They saw things they had never seen before. They are saving their money

right now getting ready for their next God-adventure.

If you have never been on a short-term mission trip, I want to encourage you do so. Jesus said "Go into all the world." When you obey Him and go I believe there is a special anointing that God gives to those who go beyond their comfort zones. I have seen such marvelous things happen as I have gone to Mexico, the Amazon, and to prisons. It is such a thrill to see God do things through you. Ask God what He wants you to do.

THE FARAWAY LAND

I want to recommend an exceptional book to you, The Faraway Land, by Dora Gail McDaniel. It is rare to find a modern novel that is so original in concept yet puts one in mind of some of the classics of C. S. Lewis. Gail is a friend of mine and a member of the Vineyard church I attend. Since Gail knew that I was a voracious and eclectic reader, she asked me to review her book, and then she gave me the honor of using my testimony or reference about her book in its promotion. This would be a great gift: birthday, Christmas, Valentine's or whatever, for a guy to give to any lady in his life.

You can order The Faraway Land at any bookstore. ISBN number: 978-1-4497-0049-2.



MINISTRY

I just concluded one of the most satisfying weeks of my life. On the invitation of Pastor Kent Hummel, I returned to the church that I started and pastored from 1978 to 1988, Good Shepherd Church in Loveland, Colorado.

I preached at the two Sunday services on June 6th and 13th and led the seminar, "Breaking Your Chains," on Thursday and Friday evenings and Saturday morning. Much to my delight, many members in Good Shepherd are deeply involved, or want to be involved, in the ministry of inner healing and deliverance, and they said my seminar was helpful to them. From my perspective the week was a love-fest. Many long-time friends came to visit and participate during the week. Some even came from other cities. I couldn't remember any of their names, but they all looked familiar.

It was thrilling for me to see and hear the things Good Shepherd is emphasizing: Prayer; prayer and fasting days; missions (I recently heard a national missions leader say that Good Shepherd is doing the best job of showing practical love and support of their missionaries of any church he has ever visited, and he has visited hundreds of churches. Wow! Robin Parker is their missions committee chairman, and she has a heart for missions and missionaries, as you might guess); inner healing and deliverance; unity among the brethren (every Sunday, public prayer is made for one of the other pastors and churches in Loveland); children's outreach and ministry. One of the church's missionaries is Apostle Marcel Destine in Haiti. Kent goes regularly to Haiti to teach in pastor's conferences. In November he will lead a conference of 200 pastors. Kent and Jan adopted a precious Haitian girl a number of years ago. (It is very interesting that my present pastor, Kirk Yamaguchi, and his wife, Jane, recently adopted a Haitian girl to keep company with their Chinese daughter and their own sons.)

May I testify to you that God is the best Boss you are going to find around here! He is so faithful and kind. He can indeed turn our mess into a message. As it says in 1 Cor. 15:58 (The Message): ***With all this going for us, my dear friends, stand your ground. And don't hold back. Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that nothing you do for him is a waste of time or effort.*** Or in the words of that sports guy: Let's go all - the - way!

God Bless, Glenn **WEBSITE:** glennbrownministries.com

I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry. If any of you want to receive tax credit for your financial contributions, you may send them to: CANYON VIEW VINEYARD CHURCH 736 24 ½ Road Grand Junction, Co. 81505