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## **ARE YOU TROUBLED WITH INSOMNIA?**

Robert Morris said that one night he lay in bed for hours worrying about things when he heard God speak firmly to him, “Stop it!” Robert was, of course, startled and puzzled. “Lord, I can’t seem to keep myself from worrying. Please tell me what to do.” God said to him, “Meditate on My word.” Robert immediately scrolled through his memory and decided to meditate on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. He said that before he finished reciting and meditating on each phrase of this psalm he drifted off to sleep.

On some nights I wake up at 2:00 AM, 3:00 AM, or 4:00 AM for bathroom trips and can’t go back to sleep. My big brain gets fixated on some concern and goes zipping along for hours. (Note: “Concern” is just a euphemism for worry.) Sometimes I give up and get up and turn on the Keurig. I have heard a lot of people mention that they are also troubled with insomnia.

Psalm 37 is one of the “Wisdom Psalms,” and it instructs us from the opening verse, “*Do not fret,*” or “*Do not worry,*” and it goes on to say, *Trust in the Lord and do good .....Commit your way to the Lord ..... Rest in the Lord.* And it says again, *Do not fret (worry), it only causes hurt.* We all understand that worry is simply fear and fear is simply lack of trust in the Lord. God tells us to “*Fear not!*” many times in the Bible. And God also tells us that rest and sleep are His gifts to us: Psalm 127:2 - *For God gives to His beloved sleep.* And Psalm 4:8 – *I will both lie down in peace and sleep; for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.*

So when we find ourselves unable to trust God, I believe that God’s prescription for us is to meditate on His comforting, strengthening promises. Following is Psalm 23 in the NKJV for all of us to memorize and meditate on in those fretful night hours:

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters (Lit: “waters of rest”); He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

## **BIG CHANGES ARE COMING!**

On Sunday morning, October 6<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Kirk announced that Cory Sondrol has met with the leaders of our church and has agreed to come on staff on the first of the New Year, to co-lead the church for a couple of years with Pastor Kirk, and then to assume the role of Senior Pastor in two years when Pastor Kirk turns 65. Kirk said that at that time he will stay on staff in the role of Parking Lot Attendant or whatever (more likely, Cell Group Facilitator), and that he and Jane want to continue as a part of Canyon View.

Cory followed Kirk as pastor of the Vineyard church in Canyon City and did a great job, so this is an answer to prayer for all of us who have gotten to know him over the past few years. We are thrilled and excited to welcome Cory and Julia into our church family.

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## **PRAYING OUR LAMENTS AND PRAISES**

Cory brought the morning message on October 6<sup>th</sup>, and following is a brief synopsis:

“The last five Psalms, Psalms 146-150, are called the “Hallelujah Chorus” since they are totally focused on praising the Lord. “Hallelujah” is the Hebrew word that translates “Praise the Lord.” There are wonderful times in our lives when we feel like praising the Lord, but there are also times when we may be going through a time of suffering and loss, and we may be experiencing confusion, hurt and pain. At such a time praising the Lord is the last thing on our minds. The Psalms contain an important hidden message:

Expressing our honest laments to the Lord at such a time opens the door so that His loving Spirit can change our laments into praises.

The word “lament” is not a common word to us. The definition is “an outward expression of hurt or sorrow.” The synonym is “complain.” This is remarkable and counter-intuitive. The key to finding God is being real and transparent. Authentic, radical transparency is what God wants from us. In the Psalms we learn about lamenting, complaining to God. How you do it is important. God already knows what is in our hearts, and He simply wants us to be honest with Him.

In Psalm 54, King Saul was sending his army to search out and kill David, and the Ziphites told the King where David was hiding, probably for favor and a reward from the King. David cries out, “*Save me, O God, hear my prayer, they are trying to kill me!*” That is honest and authentic.

The word “Selah” follows many of the Psalms. It can be translated, “Pause for a moment of reflection.” One modern translator words it, “Chill out, shut up, and open yourself to God to speak to you.” That is better. After a pause, David writes, “*Behold, God is my helper...I will praise your name, O Lord, for it is good. For He has delivered me out of all trouble.*” Note: Nothing has changed, but something has shifted in David’s heart.

You may have been taught that you have to be nice with God no matter what is happening in your life. Then you or someone you love is diagnosed with cancer. It hits you like a big fist. You may be thinking, “What the hell is going on?” (Forgive me if I offended you, I’m trying to be real.) God is not offended by our being real; in fact, that is what God wants from us.

Look at Psalm 42, as an example: The Psalmist cries out, “*My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me, ‘Where is your God?’ I will say to God, ‘Why have you forgotten me?’ I am continually depressed and cast down. All your waves and billows have gone over me*” The Psalmist is being real, and rather than be offended, God has the Psalmist’s words recorded in His Book as an example for all of us. After a pause, a Selah, the Psalmist writes, “*Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him.*” You can see that while nothing has changed externally, there has been a wonderful change in the Psalmist’s heart.

So the first “C” is for Complaining, lamenting. The second “C” is for Confession...to God. (Later I will talk about the necessity for confessing to some person, but first, according to 1 John 1:9, is confession to God. Years ago I was captive to the addiction of gambling. I even had my own bookie. For a long time I hid it and lied to my wife and to others, and my life was going downhill. Finally, I confessed. There were still bad consequences, but that was the necessary first step toward my healing.

In a congregation this size, there are surely some here who are hiding your sins. Porn is a very common sin in our society and even in the church. And adultery is not uncommon. You know the sad story about how David’s adultery with Bathsheba led to the murder of her husband, Uriah. After the Prophet Nathan confronted David with his sin, Psalm 51 records how David confessed and cried out to God for forgiveness. There were terrible consequences for David and his family, but God forgave him and restored him to a place of honor.

What do we hear when we confess? Not shame. Complaining (lamenting) and confessing lead to freedom, not shame. Psalm 30:11 declares, “*You will turn my mourning (lamenting in the Hebrew) into dancing.*”



## **TESTIMONY OF PASTOR JESUS ANTONIO**

(In 2007, twelve years ago, I spent a week ministering to the staff of an orphanage in Tepic, Mexico, and in the evenings I preached in small churches in the nearby town. A stocky, middle aged pastor named Jesus Antonio shared his testimony with me, and his humility and honesty made a strong impression on me. I reported his testimony in my newsletter in March, 2008. (Note: You can find my newsletters going back to 2007 on my website, [glennbrownministries.com](http://glennbrownministries.com), if you are interested.) As I recently read through Pastor Antonio's story, I was impressed with how it aligns with the things I have learned in my 47 years of ministry since God called me to minister Inner Healing and Deliverance. His story follows :

“I was born into a Roman Catholic family. In my mind I knew that God was important, but I lived in sin. I studied and became a construction engineer. By age 30 I had destroyed my life with alcohol. My wife lost four children by miscarriage, and one son died at 2 years old. My wife was about to leave me.

One day I cried out to God: ‘What kind of God are you? You are a terrible father. Look at the things that have happened to me. Talk to me! I have never seen or heard you. Where were you when I was abused as a child, when my kids died? I’m going to shoot myself!’ For nearly two hours I yelled at God. Then a strong wind came into my room. I started trembling. I vomited and screamed and fell on the floor.

A voice spoke to me very clearly. ‘The things that happened to you were not my fault. Your parents rejected Me.’ I saw a vision of my ancestors passing in front of me. I could not see their faces, but I could see their sins. I saw men who were thieves, idolaters, committing adultery, involved in witchcraft, fighting and hurting people. I said, ‘Oh, God, please forgive!’ I saw myself being born and saw my whole life. I was not a good person. I saw the things I had done when I was a teenager, shootings, knives, drugs, stealing cars, getting drunk. Again I asked God to forgive me.

I heard the voice say, ‘I have loved you, with an eternal love. I gave my son Jesus Christ for you.’ I made a pact with God that day. I said, ‘God, I don’t understand hardly anything about the Bible, but from this day as I read the Bible, everything that is written in your Bible I will do! So I quit my engineering job, abandoned all things to God, and said I would start a church. God brought my wife back to me and healed our marriage and our sicknesses.

The doctors said we couldn’t have any more kids, but we prayed, and God said, ‘If you believe, you will have a child.’ Sure enough, we had a son. When the boy was six months old, he got sick and died at the hospital. The doctors wanted to take his body away. God said to me, ‘He is not dead but sleeping. Tell him to wake up!’ I did, and when I picked him up, he cried out! The doctors were startled and amazed. The voice spoke to me: ‘I am the resurrection and the life! The curse over your kids to die young has been broken. There is no more curse. You are my friend.’

There are many sick people, tormented people in my country. They are living under many curses. I don’t believe Jesus would die to save our souls but not give us power to heal and break curses. God told me to name the church I started, ‘Living Waters.’ He has used us to save many souls, to heal many sick people, to break curses and cast out demons. He has shown me we must live a holy life, but he also showed me we must help people get to the root of their sins so they can be set free.”

## **REFLECTION:**

1. Wow! What a perfect testimony to illustrate the truth that if we honestly cry out to God with our complaints (laments), God will respond with truth and love and liberation.
2. Note the sentence in the first paragraph, “In my mind I knew there was a God, but I lived in sin.” Remember my teaching last month, “Without Excuse”.

3. Note the sentence, “A strong wind came into my room.” The word “Wind” is the same as “Spirit” in both Hebrew and Greek. “*God breathed on Adam and he became a living soul.*” On the day of Pentecost, “*Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind.....*”

4. Then Pastor Antonio said, “I started trembling. I screamed and vomited and fell on the floor.” We have seen these manifestations during ministry many times. They are manifestations of demons as God is casting them out of the person. Some Christian teachers strongly say, “No, no, you mustn’t allow the person to vomit. It’s wrong to allow them to do that! That glorifies the devil!” But that was the way that God ministered to Pastor Antonio without human participation. Why don’t you tell the Lord that you don’t approve of the way he set that poor man free? (There might be a hint of sarcasm there.)

5. He said, “A voice spoke to me...” several times. God sometimes speaks directly to people today and not just through the words in the Bible.

6. God told Antonio that he had been strongly influenced by the sins of his parents and ancestors. God also showed him that there had been curses on him (from his ancestors, but also probably through the idolatry and witchcraft he mentioned). Please see my teaching about Generational Curses, Witchcraft Curses, and Word Curses and the Occult in the video and written teachings on my website.

7. Note that in spite of Antonio’s rebellion and many sins, God loved him and readily forgave him when he confessed and repented.

8. Note the similarities when God raised Antonio’s son from the dead to Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead. Especially His declaration, “*I am the resurrection and the life.*” Wow!

9. See how Antonio “Abandoned all things to God,” and God led him to his destiny as a pastor and has blessed him with signs and wonders and much fruit for many years.

If you and I will abandon all things to God and trust Him and obey Him and follow Him, He will lead us into our destiny. Hallelujah!

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## **HALLOWEEN?**

Halloween has become one of the biggest retail business days in our country, and for a month or more Hollywood and television revisit every twisted horror movie ever made. Halloween and all its practices are associated with witchcraft, which has become big business. Almost every young person on the planet has seen “Twilight.” What is it about? Vampires and sorcery and witchcraft. Twilight is one of the highest grossing series in American movie history, second only to the Harry Potter series.

Halloween’s origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (sow-in). The Celts lived 2,000 years ago mostly in the area that is now Ireland, part of the UK, and northern France. In ancient Britain and Ireland this festival was observed on October 31, the end of summer. The souls of the dead were supposed to revisit their homes on this day, and ghosts, witches, goblins, black cats, fairies and demons of all kinds were said to be roaming about. It was necessary to placate the supernatural powers controlling the processes of nature. Also, Halloween was thought to be the most favorable time for divinations concerning marriage, luck, health, and death. It was the only day on which the help of the devil was invoked for such purposes.

Halloween was not celebrated in early America due to our strong Christian heritage. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the great potato famine brought thousands of Irish immigrants to America, and they brought their customs with them.

## **The jack-o-lantern**

This custom may have originated with the witches’ use of a collection of skulls with a candle in each to light the way to coven meetings. But among the Irish, the legend of “Irish Jack” explains it. In that legend, a stingy drunk named Jack tricked the devil and forced him to swear he would never come after Jack’s soul. Eventually Jack died and was turned away from heaven and from hell, so he was condemned to wander the earth. Jack was eating a turnip (later that became a pumpkin) when he died, and the devil threw a coal at him which he put inside the turnip/pumpkin, and his spirit has been roaming the earth with his jack-o-lantern in search of a place of rest.

## Tricks or Treats

One possibility for this custom is that ancient witches had to steal or beg for the materials needed for their festivals and great bonfires. Later, it became related to the Catholic concept of purgatory and the custom of begging for the “soul cake.” The Druids believed that witches held this day to be special, something clearly true for modern witches. In Ireland, people thought ghosts and spirits roamed after dark on Halloween, so they lit candles or lanterns to keep the spirits away. Also, since the spirits created mischief, the people had to buy them off by giving treats to those who came dressed as supernatural beings.

## Masks and Costumes

In ancient paganism, shamanism and animism, masks and costumes were used to hide the wearer from evil spirits and also to allow communion with the spirit world. Another belief was that the mask might attract and absorb the power of the animal or spirit represented by the mask.

## In Mexico

Mexico is traditionally a Roman Catholic country where Catholic doctrine became blended with native Indian, pagan beliefs and customs. “The Days of the Dead”, *los Dias de los Muertos*, is a huge two-day holiday with fiestas, alcohol and costumes. Throngs of people visit cemeteries on these two days creating traffic jams. They visit the graves of their loved ones; they bring gifts like flowers, food and alcohol – if their deceased loved one was a drinker – which they pour on his grave; and many stay all night and supposedly commune with the spirits of the dead which oftentimes talk to them, etc. Since the Bible says there is a chasm between the living and dead and forbids this practice, they are really communing with demons that are masquerading as their dead grandfather or whomever. (On several occasions, our team was in Mexico at the end of October and went to cemeteries with church teams to engage in friendly evangelism and pass out Christian pamphlets.)

## Reflection

If you inferred that I do not approve of Halloween, you was correct, Jellybean. Of course, I understand that Christian parents love their children and would never purposely open the door to evil into their lives. And the church in America (all of us) has absorbed so many worldly values that it is hard for us to take many of the corrections and warnings in the Bible seriously. It is difficult for us to believe what Jesus taught about the devil and demons and their design to deceive and destroy us. It is difficult to believe that the occult and witchcraft are really part of a devilish grand plan of deception. If I had not had an experience in January, 1973, when demons were cast out of me – and I was a Christian pastor who had had a “born again” experience and had just received the baptism of the Holy Spirit – I would probably not believe any of those things today.

We need to decide if we really believe that Jesus Christ was *Emmanuel*, God with us. The Bible declares unambiguously that Jesus Christ was God, the Son, the second person of the Trinity, and that through Him God the Father created the cosmos. See the first chapters of John, Colossians, and Hebrews, as well as many teachings in the Psalms and the Old Testament. If you are a born-again Christian, you have believed that Jesus was the Son of God who died for your sins on the cross and has saved you from eternal judgment. But have you decided that He was mistaken about reality and that we modern folks have so progressed in our knowledge that we have the right to choose which of His teachings to accept and which to dismiss? Jesus taught more about the devil and demons than all the rest of the teachings in the Bible combined.

Jesus and all the writers of the New Testament also believed that the Old Testament (the only Bible they had at the time) was the inspired word of God, and it teaches clearly about the practices of Halloween. Read the warning of Moses to the chosen people in Deuteronomy 18:9-14 (NLT): (Abbreviated)

*When you enter the land the Lord our God is giving you, don't imitate the detestable practices of the nations living there. Don't sacrifice your son or daughter as a burnt offering. Don't let your people practice fortune-telling, or use sorcery, or interpret omens, or engage in witchcraft, or cast spells (the very things done in Satanic and witch covens, and constantly done in Harry Potter and Twilight and Dungeons and Dragons, etc.) or function as mediums or psychics, or call forth the spirits of the dead (Halloween). Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord.....*

I have to tell you that we have learned that when people practice these things they are unintentionally opening the door to demonic spirits. The same is true when people “innocently” drink alcohol and take drugs and watch porn and possibly when they visit Sodom and Gomorrah (I mean Las Vegas). I would no more permit my child to dress as a witch or demon than I would permit him or her to dress as a Nazi and march around with a photograph of Hitler. At this point in our Biblical understanding, it is not innocence, it is ignorance and may be willful defiance of God and His laws which are given to protect and guard us from danger and destruction.

Following is a list from my teaching on the occult (see my Website). You might need to repent, renounce and command any spirits that came in through these practices to leave by the authority of Jesus Christ:

Astrology, channeling, crystal balls, fortune tellers, demonic games, horoscopes, rebellion, independence, hypnosis, Yoga, drugs and alcohol, Ouija boards, Satanism, séances, tarot cards, TM, witchcraft, Freemasonry.

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## **GOD’S LOVING REMINDER THROUGH THE PROPHET MICAH**

*The Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8, NLT)*

God Bless  
Glenn

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