

New Website Offerings

Excerpts Only

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MONTH OF OCTOBER

MINI-MESSAGES

I QUIT

The time has come to try another approach. Oh Lord, it's not that I want to be heard saying that your way is the way of last resort for me. Or maybe it is. But I'm just so tired. And weary. And you and I both know things aren't getting better with me in charge. So that's why I've made up my mind.

God, I'm quitting. No more Know-It-All. No more having to be in charge. No more playing like I know more about myself than you do. You're in control from this point forward. Spirit, soul and body. Family and personal. Career and social. Monday as well as Sunday. It's all yours now. I resign!

REAL PRAYER

We have been led to believe that in order for prayer to be effective, it must be arduous, lengthy, even painful. And we must stay at it for hours on end . . . pleading, longing, waiting, hurting, and begging. You don't find that in the Scriptures. Except in a very few and extreme cases, prayer doesn't have to be hard to bear. And I cannot find any biblical characters who struggled with guilt because they didn't pray long enough or because they weren't in enough pain or because they failed to plead and beg sufficiently. Check it for yourself. It isn't there.

Biblical prayer includes praise and thanksgiving, intercession and petition, meditation, and confession. In prayer we focus fully on God; we capture renewed energy to continue, a wider view of life, increased determination to endure. As we strengthen our grip on prayer, it is amazing how it alters our whole perspective. I encourage you to get a fresh, new grip on prayer. It is essential for survival.

WHAT GETS YOUR ATTENTION?

Don't get distracted by "junk." Don't let the issues of daily life drive out the good, the important. Don't let the urgent things crowd out your highest priorities for God, others, and yourself. Find God's top priorities for you and DO THEM NO MATTER WHAT.

KEEP DREAMING YOUR DREAMS

Sometimes dreams fade quickly. Sometimes dreams fade slowly. Sometimes dreams come true. Sometimes we wait for God to work His plan to show us things beyond our wildest dreams.

Is your dream fading? Do you sense it is about to disappear? Has your dream already faded? Hear the Lord, "Be strong and courageous ... get ready ... I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you ... Be strong and courageous."

So keep dreaming your dreams. Faded dreams can be reborn. God is still God. He is the same yesterday, today and forever!

CALLING ALL MINISTERS

In a world of instant gratification, the call to give up our rights and our possessions to bless others appears stupid, shortsighted, naïve, and weak. The long-term call of Jesus, however, reminds us that this world is not our home that the riches we have now are only on loan from the Creator to whom

we will give an account, and that glory awaits those who live the counter-culture lifestyle of the Savior. The last will be first. The least will be greatest. The sick will be well. The lonely will be included.

God wired all of us to be involved in His great ministry of redeeming the world. However, such a powerful impact on the world cannot be made by audiences in church buildings or self-absorbed religious dilettantes who have read all the best sellers on the Christian market but have been unwilling to soil their hands with the dirt of the street and the grime of lost souls. Now don't read this as being critical of going to church or reading Christian books. Both are important! But, those activities should move us to minister, not insulate us from the messy and costly nature of ministry!

The work of ministry still boils down to two, powerful, convicting, and moving commitments: to serve and to give. Jesus became this truth. Jesus taught this truth. Jesus demonstrated this truth. As those who gather around the Lord's Table and share in the communion meal that makes us one, we also hear the call of the Savior to remember Him by being His bodily presence in this world by committing to serve and to give. (I Corinthians 10:14-17)

ARE YOU OUT OF FUEL?

Rest is the forgotten fuel. But this needed rest is more than just a few more power naps, a little more sleep, or a little down time. What is needed is spiritual rest — withdrawal from the “busyness” of our hectic worlds and quality time in the restorative presence of God. This holy time — or sacred space as I like to call it — is crucial for our spiritual balance and productive living.

Jesus fueled His ministry in what I call sacred space. After a very busy time in ministry, we find Him practicing His regular spiritual sustaining time with the Father.

The next morning Jesus awoke long before daybreak and went out alone into the wilderness to pray. (Mark 1:35)

Jesus provided this same sacred space for his closest followers as He trained His future world-changers.

ARTICLES BY OTHERS

LEARNING LIFE'S LESSONS

We live and learn that God is faithful and that He can be trusted, but we only learn it through living. You can learn why you should trust Him in a church building, but you'll only learn to really trust Him when you live with Him and see His faithfulness in the unfolding of your life. Often that means uncertainty. Sometimes it means outright suffering. And no, no one wants uncertainty or suffering and God does not cause either. But it's exactly in those moments, when our resources are exhausted and any control we might have is gone, that we learn just how boundless are God's resources and just how limitless His control.

So live and learn. Whatever life brings you, keep your eyes and ears open. Look at each day of your life, whatever it may bring, as a chance to examine another facet of God's love, know a little more about who He is, and see another example of His faithfulness.