

feb 23

i hope. just as i penned those first two words, i had to stop. it suddenly came to me, what a beautiful way to begin ones' day; with those two words. and yes, to live continually in that hope. "now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us." rom 5:5 you'll have to forgive this brief excursion of mine. now we can move on to what the Lord was dealing with this morning.

this is something i really was putting off. i was hoping the Lord could get His message through me without disclosing some of my personal times with Him. and yet, perhaps it is those times which may serve another best in their walk. yes, if we are to please our Lord, we must be obedient. if it means our failings and lessons are exposed, we surrender all to Him. even as the apostle paul proclaimed, "yes, and if i am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, i am glad and rejoice with you all." phil 2:17

there was a time, earlier in my walk with the Lord, when the spirit world and the evil fighting against righteousness became real to me. i was taking a shower, just worshiping my Lord Jesus. as i cleaned my physical body, i was rejoicing that my spirit was also clean before the Lord. i was totally clean. as i finished the shower, a thought suddenly entered my mind. "now urinate and you will be clean inside and out." i was taken back. even though it may have made a perverted logic, i knew it was not right. it was

like this place, at this moment, was holy ground. holy because my Lord's presence was there as i worshiped Him.

as i pondered what had just happened, the Holy Spirit whispered in my ear. "a spirit just came against you." then it all made sense. i guess i had never before connected spirits with bad thoughts or actions. they were just my own doing.

there was another time when my sweet mother and i were engaged in a disagreement. it just seemed to escalate without any apparent reason. suddenly it came to me that this was not natural, but spiritual. as i quietly took authority over that spirit and bound it, things began to calm as quickly as they had begun.

these were just two minor incidents, but it's really true. "we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." eph 6:12 if we do not recognize that fact and utilize the authority given us, this walk of ours will be difficult, to say the least. "if you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, in which you trusted, they wearied you, then how will you do in the floodplain of the Jordan?" jer 12:5

Jesus has fully equipped us for the battle. the logo of this ministry symbolizes the verses in ephesians. "stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and

having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." eph 6:14-17

things are coming upon this world and they are coming quickly. out of the billions now upon this earth, how many remain in darkness and only need to see a glimmer of light and hope. (yes, that same hope we began with. God weaves together the beginning and the end.) it is up to us to be that light and offer that hope.

multitudes are just waiting to know someone cares; that God cares; that He knows their name. He not only knows their name, He knows all they have ever done or ever will do. and still He says, "come". "come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest". matt 11:28

none of us have to blaze a trail through this wooded forest. Jesus has gone before us. He has shown the way and prepared the way. all we need to do is, follow the path. and even as we travel the way, we feel His rod and staff to comfort us. may you be comforted with these final words. "for He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." heb 13:5 and i might add, "nor relax My hold upon you".

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