

jan 4

most of you don't know what it's like to sit down every morning in front of a blank sheet and try to discern what the Lord wants to say through you today. i admit i like those mornings most when the Lord is coming through loud and clear. those mornings when i just lie there experiencing my own personal rapture as i joy in His presence. it is those times when one feels the communication is clearest.

i suppose the Lord, in His infinite wisdom, just allows us glimpses and tastes of His majesty; enough to keep us wanting more, yet still content to finish our race. none of us can ever imagine the rapture the apostle paul must have know during his stint, and yet, he wanted his fellow brethren to know the Jesus he had met so bad, he said he could almost wished his self cut off if it would help. "i tell the truth in Christ, i am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that i have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. or i could wish that i myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh." rom 9:1-3

that's love for your fellows. it's that attitude that assures we will never be estranged from our Lord. i know christianity had it's periods of wanting to subjugate others and force them into believing. that is not our God's way. if they had know the true God, such means would never have been attempted. the same is true of when God's church sought to sell indulgences.

we continually strive for that narrow way and seek to reach out to others, because our desire is to always please Him. yes, even more than the demanding self. "if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." matt 16:24 even more than that, in matt 10:38 He says, "he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."

Jesus lived His whole life as an example for us; a path to follow. the more we die and let Him live through us, the more life we will know. yes, it's strange how death can produce life. "most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain." john 12:24

our Lord died that He might produce more of His self. "that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." rom 8:29 our heavenly Father created us in His image in the beginning because He wanted many sons. we allowed sin to enter in and corrupt that image. Jesus came to renew that image once again and erase the sin that marred it.

He offers it to all now. it cannot be compelled. it must be received. more than even that, it must be desired. i pray we all desire this new life more than the old one. if we must suffer in the flesh to rid us of that sin that so easily besets us, just know that it is worth it all. "therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." 1 pet 4:1 perhaps not a welcomed message,

but a necessary preparation for things to come. "we must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." acts 14:22 that's why we cling to the joy set before us.

linda