

mar 6

shall we jump right in? what a joy it is to spend this time with each of you in the mornings. i don't know how much it profits you, but it profits me greatly. and i want to take this opportunity to say thank you. thank you for listening. thank you for just being there. even those who might be there involuntarily.

i know fellowship may not rank highly with some of you. as everything in life, we tend to take those things easily obtained for granted. it is when they are withheld we really appreciate their value. fellowship has been withheld from me largely. except for this time i spend sharing with you.

the Lord has said, "where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them." matt 18:20 right now, as i write these words and as each of you bother to read them, it is a gathering of sorts. today, as many of you attend your regular places of worship, this is my place and this is my time. just as our Lord is in the midst of you as you gather, He is now in the midst of us as we gather. i really believe that. "behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!" psa 133:1

His presence, His love, His peace ... i hope you are feeling them now as i am. "i was glad when they said to me, 'let us go into the house of the Lord.' our feet have been standing within your gates, o jerusalem!" psa 122:1-2

as we gather together to think of Him; to talk of Him and worship Him; we are being ""transformed by the renewing of your mind". rom 12:2 the renewing of our minds. renewed from the fallen nature into one where we are like Him. yes, "He must increase, but i must decrease." john 3:30 the "i" in all of us must decrease.

that "i" which would claim, even as a child so often does, "me" and "mine". it must change to "you" and "yours". the needs and desires of others become subservient to our own. that was the life of Jesus. "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." matt 20:28 we too must serve, and yes, if necessary, give our lives as a ransom. "greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." john 15:13 not always in death, but in service.

mother teresa of calcutta was one of those people, pouring out her life to the neediest if the needy. she poured out her life for others. i care not to squabble about denominations or beliefs at this point. there are many like her even today. i'm not saying everyone is called to such a sacrifice. i'm saying we all need to be ready with a "yes" if He calls.

yes to getting out of one's "comfort zone". yes to exposing one's thoughts and heart before others. to lay themselves open for ridicule and abuse. laughter at the one standing exposed is only hurtful if life remains. we are the true "dead men walking". we have been "crucified with Christ; it is no longer i who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which i now

live in the flesh i live by faith in the Son of God,
who loved me and gave Himself for me." gal 2:20

i heard a preacher say something interesting the other
day. i saw something in scripture through a different
lens. when Jesus was in gethsemane, He returned three
times from His sorrow, only to find them sleeping. He
did not return to scold them. He returned to remind
Himself repeatedly, of the joy set before Him. they
were the prize set before Him; the joy. their
redemption made it all worth the price He was about to
pay.

there are always hidden layers (truths) to scriptures
if one will seek and let the Holy Spirit reveal them.
but one must dig for those treasures. i love this
scripture from the amplified bible. "the measure [of
thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear]
will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that
comes back to you – and more [besides] will be given to
you who hear." mark 4:24

will you give that "thought and study"? will you let
yourself be "transformed by the renewing of your mind"?
will you pour out your life in sacrifice and service?
will you joyfully join in that fellowship that welcomes
Him into your midst? in essence, will you go where He
leads? or will you be one of those who turn back?
"from that time many of His disciples went back and
walked with Him no more." john 6:66 i find it
interesting that scripture is 666. ring any bells?

be not one of those who refuse to submit to His calling
and turn back. "we desire that each one of you show

the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until
the end" heb 6:11 our King is coming! be there to
meet Him!

linda