

abiding in Christ  
(a repeat daily)

"the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." lam 3:22-23 esv

this is the word of the Lord from the book of lamentations. not necessarily a book one would go to for comfort. and yet there is comfort in those words. if we will only let it. the whole word of God is profitable and comforting. even those times of chastisement which the flesh may dread but will greatly profit from. what did king david say? "thy rod and staff they comfort me." psa 23:4 thy rod a symbol of strength and protection. the staff a symbol of guidance and loving kindness.

you know, i love those mornings when the Lord awakens me early to share His leading for the day. my mind scrambles to grasp and retain all His is speaking so i may recall it when i sit down to share with all of you also.

these are the times i treasure. yet there are those times when i must stare at my computer without any concept of where i will be going. this was one of those and only you can determine the value of my words. it is then we must depend entirely on the Holy Spirit and where He is leading. "for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say." luke 12:12 in those times, inevitably i will later receive confirmation from another source that i was "in tune"; that i was listening to the right voice; my

Father's voice.

that is why it is so important to stay close to our Lord. we are urged to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." 1 thess 5:16-18 this is not just a past time to pursue, it is our very life and existence.

i think it was a monk named brother lawrence that wrote a book years ago entitled "pacticing the presence of God"? as one's mind would slowly drift to other things, they must center it back on Him. i also remember a story about the old saint, smith wigglesworth. he was riding in a car with someone and they were discussing many things. suddenly smith blurted out, "stop. we haven't talked about Jesus for 15 minutes". and what does His word have to say? "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord". eph 5:19 and yes, that "pray without ceasing" thing also.

these habits do not come naturally in our fallen state. they must be cultivated; tended to and watered as a garden must be. i don't know about you, but the scriptures i used to loving quote, can quickly slip from recall if not visited frequently. "solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." heb 5:14 that is His word - reason of use, exercised. our spirit needs it as our body does. practice may not make perfect but it surely helps. so practice His presence.

stop and consider: where do you go for comfort and assurance? where is your "eye" in the midst of the storm? it is only there you will find what you need most. one could almost read matt 24 and luke 21 as if they were the daily paper.

then there remains much that is hidden and not reported. it is happening around the world in various places. the earth is reeling with ferocious results. flooding, storms, storms, tornadoes. hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, all signs the earth too is eager for the "new birth". wars and rumors of wars dominate the news cycle. maybe these things have not yet touched your neck of the woods. i am reminded of the sneak previews they advertise in movie theaters - "coming soon to a theater near you".

there is no "safety" in this life. remember the parable: "the ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. he thought to himself, 'what shall i do? i have no place to store my crops.' then he said, 'this is what i'll do. i will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there i will store my surplus grain. and i'll say to myself, "you have plenty of grain laid up for many years. take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." but God said to him, 'you fool! this very night your life will be demanded from you. then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'" luke 12:16-20

as they say, "we have brought nothing into this world and we shall take nothing with us". only that which we have stored up in heaven. where is your treasure

stored? as my life has narrowed down to the "necessities", i realize how much was never really needed, only wanted. now, all i need is Him and He fulfills all my "wants".