

Thus Saith God's Word

Rev. Ted Brooks, Pastor of West Saddle Creek Baptist Church

High Expectation

"He spoke this parable: a certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard and he came and sought fruit thereon and found none.
 "Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard behold these three years I came seeking fruit on this tree and found none; cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him, Lord let it alone this year also till I shall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit, well and if not then after that thou shalt cut it down." (St. Luke 13:6-9)
 "If a man say I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen."
 "And this commandment have we from him that he who loveth God love his brother also." (1 John 4:20-21)
 "The women of my people have ye cast out from their children have ye taken away my glory forever. Arise ye and depart for this is not your rest because it is polluted it shall destroy you, even with sore destruction." (Micah 2:9-10)

My friend, God has high expectations of you and I. Much like the prophet Micah we are to be the champion of the oppressed. You and I as soldiers of the cross must stand in the behalf of the poor middle class. Notice again with me these words. "He came to his vineyard and sought fruit and found none." He had visited this vineyard for three years and found nothing and the question was asked why cumbereth it the ground? Cut it down.
 Micah came on the scene and he has a message to preach. The city built with wrong. He tells the tale of two cities. God comes forth from the temple of heaven, using the mountain tops as his stepping stones.
 He comes in judgement against the two Hebrew kingdoms, Israel and Judah. It was from these two cities which should have been the centers of law and order and justice. Moral corruption had spread like a contagious disease all over the land; Micah was appalled at the wickedness and the degradation, the selfishness and the violence, the enervating luxury and the gross materialism of the inhabitants of the great cities. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what is the sin of the house of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? (Micah 1:2-5)

Micah has a message to the leading citizens that are implicated- hating the good and loving the evil- the men of rank and influence have turned the moral order upside down. The rulers, the guardians of justice, have betrayed their trust for they oppress the people they govern and build the prosperity of Jerusalem on violence and injustice. (Micah 3:9-10)
 Micah turned to the prophet and said, "Ye that made my people to err, that bite with their teeth and cry peace." (Micah 3:5) Micah discovered that the preachers are blind guides, leading the people astray- motivated by the love of money. They bless the man who satisfies their material wants and declare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths. Micah tells them that God will forsake them in the days that are coming. (Micah 3:5-7)
 Micah declares the judges cannot be trusted for instead of administering justice impartially, according to ascertained facts and legal principles, their decisions are influenced by monetary bribes. (Micah 3:11) The priests also have their price. They manipulate the sacred oracle and give instruction in accordance with the size of the fee. (Micah 3:11) Micah goes on to tell the mania for money is all the more odious because it is covered by a veneer of false piety. Micah tells us these preachers would profess that they are leaning upon the Lord when in fact they are worshippers of money.

It was the rulers, prophets, judges, priests that Micah pronounced judgement on. "Therefore, Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins and the mountain of the house of wooded height." (Micah 3:12) "Because of you...." Because of corruption of the leaders calamity will overtake Jerusalem, the temple site will be deserted. Why? Because these two cities, Israel and Judah, were built on wrong. The mills of God grind slowly. Folks thought Micah was off his rocker. He was vindicated by history when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 B.C.
 Destroyed because of false prophets who caused the people to err. Prophets who had no vision and it shall be dark unto you that you shall not divine and the sun shall go down over the prophet and the day shall be dark over them; then shall the seers be ashamed and the diviner confounded; yea they shall all cover their lips for there is no answer of God. (Micah 3:6-7)
 Jesus said, "I came seeking fruit and found none. Three years and nothing. Why cumbereth it the ground?" Ministers of today are accused of fornication, adultery. There are those who have been accused of what is called "a love child." The priesthood now, much like the government, can't discipline themselves because they say they are all guilty, but you and I need to look and see what it was that Micah saw which would bring destruction upon these cities that were built upon wrong. Read again with me: "The women of my people

have ye cast out from their pleasant houses." (Micah 2:9)
 Before we get going and go down town to those houses, what is known as welfare homes or called projects and labor, all those persons as a sick society, you might want to know how it was they got there. Micah said, "Woe to those that devise iniquity and work evil upon their bed. When the morning is light, they practice it." (Micah 2:1) Micah said these rulers went to bed at night dreaming of a scheme on how to covet fields and they took them by violence. (Verse 2)

Notice what God said about these persons who were robbed of their homes. "They came from pleasant houses." In other words, before they were cast out into the street, they came from pleasant houses. At one time they had to have had morning devotion. At one time they too would say their prayers at night. At one time they too had a home of peace, joy and love. One time their children read scripture. But because of greedy landowners who wanted more, soon the small plot of land began to disappear. Land that was left to them by heritage was now gone. The problem much like today was that the people were I-centered, not thou-centered, concerned more about making a living than making a life. In Micah's day there was a great sin "The accursed love of possessions to have more than his or her fair share. There is a great danger in this, Micah said, "For behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place and will come down and tread upon high places of the earth." (Micah 1:3)

Notice with me again: why cumbereth it the ground? (Luke 13:6-9)
 Micah said I saw him when he left his place and all that was before him, the mountains molten under him, the valleys were cleft as wax. There came a time when God said, that's enough. Enough of what? Notice again what it was that brought God down to this earth to destroy cities that were built on wrong. Not only were the women cast out of their pleasant house, but God declared that "Their children have ye taken away, my glory forever. (Micah 2:9) "Children are an heritage of the Lord." (Psalm 127:3)
 Micah saw as you and I see today, many a mother has been cast out of a pleasant house. Children today are roaming the street with no where to live. The place that once was pleasant is now gone. There are some of you who shudder in uncertainty and doubt. Maybe you are not able to recall the promises of Jesus. Though the night of sorrow gather dark about thee, yet you are not forsaken." When I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.

He will bring me forth to the light and I shall behold his righteousness. "Yea the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day. The darkness and the light are both alike to thee. God hath spoken unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness. I will bring the blind of a way that they know not. I will lead them in a path that they have not taken. I will make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them and not forsake them." (Micah 7:8-9, Psalm 139:12, 112:4, Isaiah 42:16)

Now notice again these words of warning from God to you and I who are at rest. We are told to arise and depart for it is polluted. It shall destroy you. Sin is not limited and bound to certain locations. You may have a pleasant home where there is joy, peace, and harmony, but you and I need to be aware of those who are out to make a living rather than making a life. Micah saw them as they coveted the land, houses and showed no concern for the children, nor the mothers. You and I must become a champion for the oppressed, the poor and middle class. "Children are the heritage of God." Micah pointed out that the exploiters had no mercy even upon defenseless widows who with their children were ousted from their well loved homes. The helpless children, the true glory of the nation were the victims of their rapacity. (Micah 2:9)

Like a butcher killing and skinning an animal, chopping up the carcass and boiling the joints in a pot, the leaders of Judah had oppressed and exploited the common people with utter ruthlessness. (Micah 3:1-3) My friend, do you not see this accursed love of possessing, this sin which is of selfish egoist, who is determined to have more than his or her fair share, with a ruthless disregard for their right and need. What you see today is folks who are divorced getting from giving and evaluate life in terms of possessions. What Micah points out is "the profit motive, when it is the sole basis of an economic system encourages a cut throat competition and selfish ambition that inspires men to be more concerned about making a fast dollar than making a Christian life."
 Micah saw men so I-centered that they no longer are thou-centered. When men become common thieves, they will no longer have concern for the women who have been cast out from their pleasant houses. Even today there is little concern for children who have been robbed of the blessings of God. The children will soon decide whether they will sing from the book you sing from. They will now one day decide whether they will preach from the book you preach from. Soon they will decide if they should love their neighbor as themselves.
 Micah declared their kind of life style would be polluted and that it would destroy those who took part thereof.
 Next week the conclusion of High Expectation.

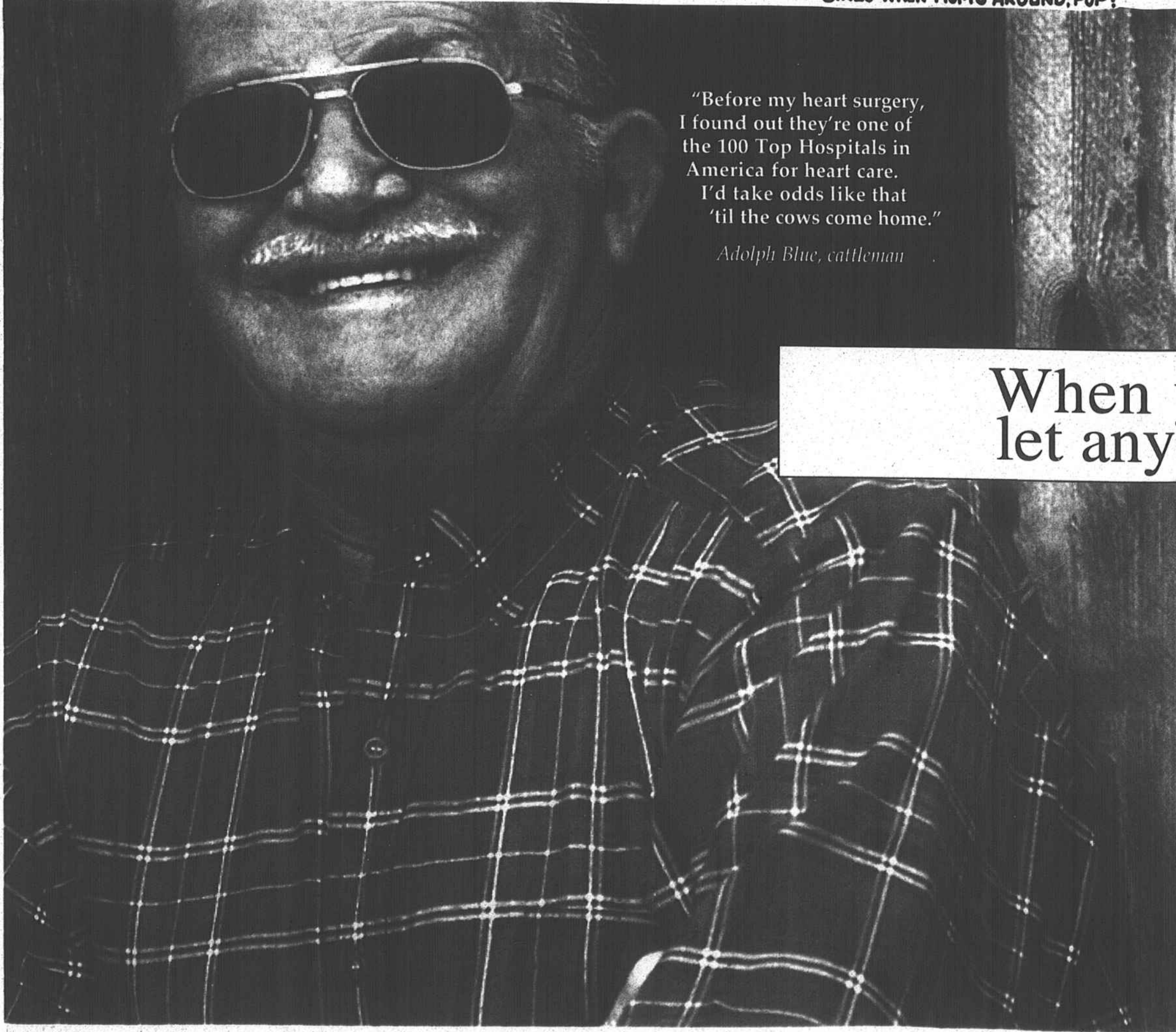
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MAYNOR REUNION

Robert Douglas Maynor
And
Elizabeth Jacobs Maynor
FAMILY REUNION
ALL DESCENDANTS BY BLOOD
AND MARRIAGE

The Maynor Children: Authur Maynor; Celester Maynor Cummings; Elizabeth Maynor Lowery; Frank Maynor; Jim Maynor; Luther Maynor; and Willie Maynor

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 2001
1:00 P.M.
MOUNT OLIVE PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH,
PEMBROKE, N.C.
.....COVERED DISH.....
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE:
.....LET'S ALL BE SUPPORTIVE.....
A SPECIAL DAY THAT ALL MEMBERS OF THE MAYNOR FAMILY WILL NEVER FORGET



"Before my heart surgery, I found out they're one of the 100 Top Hospitals in America for heart care. I'd take odds like that 'til the cows come home."
 Adolph Blue, cattleman

When you let anyone