

VOICE OF LIBERATION

BY REV. G. WESLEY RANEY



TEXT: "To keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'"

Bible scholars are not in agreement as to what Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was. Some say it might have been a painful eye problem. Some speculate that it might have been malaria. Some have suggested that this "thorn in the flesh" may have been the constant and unremitting opposition of Paul's enemies.

This problem, whatever it was, affected Paul so badly that he went before the throne of God's mercy three times to petition God for relief. HE begged the Lord to take it away. But each time Paul prayed, the Lord answered him by saying, "My grace is sufficient for you." In other words, God promised not to remove the problem, but to bless Paul with the power to endure the problem.

This "thorn in the flesh" kept Paul humble, and reminded him of the constant need to have contact with God. If it were not for the thorns of life, some of us would become too "big-headed." Our achievements and accomplishments would rob us of a humble spirit. God allows certain "thorns in the flesh" to torment us to keep us from becoming Mr. or Ms. Bigstuff.

We learn from Paul that life goes on despite "thorns in the flesh." Even though he had this particularly agonizing problem, the apostle kept on preaching the gospel, teaching the Word, witnessing to God's love, nurturing the saints, and writing inspiring letters.

A great violinist was giving a concert, and the "A" string on his violin broke. Without hesitating, the violinist transposed the music and finished the concert on three strings. A lesser violinist might have stopped the concert and complained about his misfortune. But it takes a great artist to say, "If I can't play on four strings, then I'll play on three."

Sometimes in our lives it seems as though one of the strings breaks. It may be the loss of a loved one. It could be word that one of our children is in trouble. Perhaps it is the news that someone we love is seriously ill. Strings break in our lives all the time. When these times come, are you likely to fall to pieces, or are you determined to go ahead and produce a beautiful melody with what you have? If you cannot play on four strings, will you try to play on the strings that you have left?

In Switzerland there is a town called "End der Welt." In English it means "End of the World." This town is surrounded by high mountains, and the road to it suddenly stops on the farther side of town before an impassable rocky cliff. When one arrives, he immediately feels that he can go no further. But hidden away in that rocky cliff is a narrow path that leads up the mountain to the heights above. If one searches diligently, he can find that path and travel on.

At some time or another, nearly everyone arrives at a place which seems to be the "end of the world." In Charles Dickens' novel, *Great Expectations*, there is a character named "Miss Havensham." Elaborate preparations had been made for her wedding. But just before the wedding day, her lover jilted her. In grief and humiliation, Miss Havensham closed all the blinds in the house, stopped every clock, left the wedding cake on the table to gather cobwebs, and continued to wear her wedding gown until it hung in yellow decay about her shrunken form. Her disappointment became the end of her world. Have you allowed some disappointment to become the end of your world?

*Trials dark on every hand,
And we cannot understand,
All the ways that God would lead us,
To that blessed promised land;
But He guides us with His eye,
And we'll follow till we die,
For we'll understand it better by and by.*

Indeed, God's grace is sufficient for all the "thorns in the flesh" that life may bring. In the midst of suffering and pain, God can demonstrate His power in our lives. Our weakness opens the door to God's strength. Remember, God's power is made perfect or complete in our weakness.

Come Let's Think

BY EVA L. PERRY

BLOOD COVENANT

Through the Blood of Jesus I am redeemed out of the hands of the devil. Through the Blood of Jesus all of my sins are forgiven. The Blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, is cleansing me now from all sin. Through the Blood of Jesus I am sanctified, made holy, and set apart for God.

My body is a temple for the Holy Spirit. I am redeemed, cleansed and sanctified by the Blood of Jesus. I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, body, soul and spirit. His Blood protects me from all evil.

Because of the Blood of Jesus, Satan has no more power over me, and no more place in me. I renounce him and his host completely and declare them to be my enemies.

Jesus said, "These signs shall follow believers: in my name shall they cast out devils." I am a believer in the name of Jesus Christ. I exercise my authority and expel all evil spirits out from wherever they don't belong. I command them to leave me and you now. According to the Word of God, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God—Amen.

FOLLOW JESUS

Do you wonder where you are,
While you gaze up at a star?
If your way seems dark as night,
Follow Jesus, He is right.
Do you often suffer scorn,
When your friends talk up a storm
Because they fail to see your light?
Follow Jesus, that's all right.
When your mind is keen and
Clean,
And most people think you're
Mean!
Because they do not know your
Height—
Follow Jesus, and stay right.

Editor Rejects Racism

ATLANTA, Ga. (AP)—The senior editor of *Ebony* magazine told Morehouse College graduates last week there will be no solutions to urban problems that generated rioting in Los Angeles until there are more studies of the upper class.

Lerone Bennett said there has been too much study and concentration on the "Negro" problem while "the problem of race in America today is a white problem."

Bennett challenged the Morehouse graduates to become strong leaders who can ask the hard questions. He said they must "teach this profound and ignorant country and move scholars and TV commentators away from the dead end of studying and blaming the victims."

The country, he said, needs new graduates "who do the electric slide and work computers and slam dunk science and technology as well as a basketball."

Morehouse's class of 447 is believed the largest single class of black male graduates of any school in U.S. history.

Among those receiving diplomas was Enis Cosby, son of actor-comedian Bill Cosby, who, with his wife, attended the ceremony.

The National Hockey League had to cancel its Stanley Cup league championships in 1919. Why? Because of a raging flu epidemic. Wisdom is often just knowing when to keep your mouth shut.

If your life be short or long,
Learn to live it with a song;
Heavenly things are your delight—
Follow Jesus, and end up right.

—EVA PERRY
Read your Bible prayerfully and think!

St. Paul Church To Hear Choir

On Sunday, May 31, at 4 p.m., St. Paul AME Church will present in concert the Male Chorus of Turner Memorial AME Church of Washington, D.C. The 35-member choir is currently on tour of Southeastern states and will come to Raleigh after performing in Columbia, S.C.

Their concert tour is also in support of the candidacy of their pastor for the Bishopric of the AME Church, the Rev. Goodwin Douglas.

The public is invited to come out to hear the songs of praise and enjoy the fellowship.

Women Hold Conference

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (AP)—The Women's International Convention of the Church of God in Christ was attended by about 15,000 people in Milwaukee last week.

The gathering of the predominantly black church group began with a prayer service Wednesday.

The theme of the convention this year was "Christian Women United for Effective Leadership in These Crisis Times."

"The most essential role for women is to exercise more care toward our faith," said Mattie McGlothen, president of the convention.

Ms. McGlothen, 82, said women's leadership skills need to be strengthened to ensure "better homes, better churches, better communities and a better world."



FIGHTING YOUTH DRUG USE — HHS Secretary Louis W. Sullivan, MD, L, was joined by Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson in Washington, D. C. for the May 13 launching of a national media education campaign to cut alcohol and drug use among African American youth. The By Our Own Hands campaign focuses on 14 cities but the educational

materials are available to cities across the nation from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 800-729-6686. Targeted cities in addition to Washington and Atlanta are New York, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Ft. Worth, Memphis, Houston, Philadelphia, Raleigh, Durham and Detroit.

Methodist Conference Contributes Assistance To L.A. Riot Victims

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—More than \$24,000 contributed during the United Methodist General Conference here for emergency assistance in Los Angeles was part of a response that a key church official called a "godsend to thousands of hurting people."

In the stricken areas themselves, pastors and church members set up collection and distribu-

tion centers for food, clothing and other necessities. Emergency shelter were provided, and a legal-aid "hot line" established. Many church members lost their jobs as a result of the violence, including at least 50 in one predominantly Hispanic congregation.

"John Wesley [founder of Methodism] would be proud of the way our people are responding,"

said Bishop Jack M. Tuell of Los Angeles. Tuell paid special tribute to the Rev. Robert Smith, superintendent of the Los Angeles District, who initiated the church's response there, and who characterized the response at the General Conference and elsewhere as a "godsend." The special offering was one of several actions here related to Los Angeles.

Come Worship With Us

LAODICEA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2004 Rock Quarry Road
Raleigh, N.C. 27610
Phone: 832-2784
Prayer Line: 828-PRAY

Radio Ministry (WCLY, 1550 AM)
Saturday—7:00 P.M.
Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.
Bible Study Wed., 8:00 p.m.

RUSH METROPOLITAN A.M.E. ZION CHURCH
558 East Cabarrus St.
Raleigh, N.C. 27601
(919) 832-8270

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
V.C.E. 6:00 p.m.
Evening Worship 7:00 p.m.
Prayer Service 7:30 p.m.

Office Phone: (919) 832-5628
Parsonage: (919) 821-8779

FIRST COSMOPOLITAN BAPTIST CHURCH
1515 Crosslink Road
Raleigh, North Carolina 27610

DR. W. B. LEWIS, PASTOR

Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 11:00 a.m.
Baptist Training Union 6:00 p.m.
Teachers Meeting & Prayer Service
Wednesday 7:30 p.m.

Sunday School Lesson
FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE
II Peter 3:3-14

One of the purposes for Peter's writing this letter was to prepare believers for dealing with false teachers within the church. Peter knew these false teachers would attempt to cause confusion in the church by questioning whether Jesus really meant what He said about His second coming.

PRAY FOR PEACE!

Join us each Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. as we honor the Black Madonna, Queen of Peace and pray for an end to War and God's own Peace for our World.

Church of St. Joseph
SUNDAY MASS
9:00 AM
11:30 AM

A parish in the Roman Catholic tradition small enough to call home

Pearlree Lane at Poole Road
Raleigh, North Carolina

ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

Wake Baptist Grove Church
302 Main Street Garner, N.C.

SUNDAY
Regular Sunday School 9:45 am
Worship Service 8:00 & 11:00 am

TUESDAY
Continual Witness Training 7:00 - 9:00 pm

WEDNESDAY
Seed For The Sower Bible School 7:00 pm

THURSDAY
Lay Institute For Equipping 7:00 - 9:00 pm

TUESDAY & FRIDAY
Intercessory Prayer 5:00 am

OUTREACH MINISTRIES
Single, Couple, Golden Age, Youth & Children,
Prison, Laymen, Ladies, Missionary Center,
Music Ministry, Cross Ministry, & Others.
772-6123

WAKE CHAPEL BAPTIST CHURCH
4509 Blvd Road
Raleigh, N.C. 27609
Phone: 878-4956

SERVICES
Sunday 8 a.m. & 11 p.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Bible Study 7 p.m. Tuesday
Prayer Meeting 8 p.m. Tuesday

Pastor: Rev. J. Wilkins, Jr.

MARTIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
1001 E. Martin Street
Raleigh, N.C. 27601
Phone: 833-9756

ENTER TO WORSHIP DEPART TO SERVE

Sunday School 9:00 A.M.
Morning Worship 11:00 A.M.
Baptist Training Union 5:00 P.M.
Wednesday:
Prayer Meeting/Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

DR. CHARLES T. BULLOCK, PASTOR

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
101 S. Wilmington Street
(DOWNTOWN RALEIGH)
Phone 832-1649

Church School 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.

PASTOR: Rev. Nathaniel Boykin

Lincoln Park Holiness Church
13 Heath Street • Raleigh, NC 27610
(919) 832-5119

BISHOP ELIE RATCLIFF, JR.
Pastor
BISHOP ELIE RATCLIFF, SR.
Founder

9:00 A.M. Sunday School
11:00 A.M. Morning Worship
6:30 P.M. Evening Service

Living Waters Fellowship Center
3309 Cedar Springs Drive
Raleigh, N.C. 27603
Phone No. 831-1200

PASTORS: DR. ALLONA HOLMES
SERVICES
SUNDAY ... 9:30 a.m. BIBLICAL TEACHING
11:00 a.m. PRAISE & WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY 7:00 p.m. MID-WEEK SERVICE
"Willing & Determined To Serve"

ATTEND SERVICES

Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church
Bunn, North Carolina 27508
(919) 496-6681

Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship Service 11:00 a.m.

"Saving the Bunn area for God so that we can Save the World!"
DR. JOSEPH C. PAIGE, PASTOR.
Minister K.L. Dunston, Associate Pastor
Rev. Dexter Wright, Associate Pastor

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