

◇ A WORD IN SEASON ◇

willing to be servants who make sacrifices? Are we individually willing to serve this generation who desperately needs the Lord?

What type of servant is the Lord searching for and what kind of sacrifices must we make? Though each person's calling is unique, I believe there are certain characteristics of a servant that will touch a generation. We can see an example of the servant for which God is looking in Genesis 24:10. There it says, "Abraham sent out his servant to find a wife for his son." Abraham represents the heavenly Father, who sends out His servant, the Holy Spirit, to search for a true bride. In Zephaniah it says that the Spirit is searching and there will come a time when God will send out His Holy Spirit searching with lamps to find those who have not settled in complacency. I believe strongly God is saying today, "I am going to search the Church, and find for Myself those who have not compromised nor settled in complacency." He will illuminate the Church to find those He can truly trust and who are brides without spot or blemish.

It goes on to say in Genesis 24:10-14 that the servant took ten of his master's camels loaded with good gifts and went to Mesopotamia, where his master's relatives lived. The servant waited with his camels by the city well and prayed that God would send him the right bride. The servant also asked God that as a sign, the young woman would offer to draw water for him and his camels.

Let's look at the significance of the ten camels. Camels can go for days in the desert without water or food. When they get out of the desert, they are thirsty, stinky and hungry. Today, the camels represent those in the world: people who are hungry, thirsty and stinky; who have been traveling in the desert of the world looking for something of substance. They are crying out, "Give us some-

thing to believe in." The camels are coming and when they come will the laborers be ready to serve them? I've heard it said that 9% of a population would believe us based on what we say; 36% will believe us based on what we say and how we say it. The rest will believe us based on our character. Let us show them Christ and they will find their food and their drink in Him. He alone can satisfy the longing of their souls. When the camels come, let them see the servants of the Lord ready to serve them. It may take a lot of water to fill them, to cleanse them, to quench their thirst. Will we be ready to give them a drink?

Abraham's servant found a woman at the well willing to be that kind of servant. Genesis 24:18-19 reads, "So she said, 'Drink, my lord.'...And when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, 'I will draw water for your camels also, until they have finished drinking.'" That is a servant willing to go the extra mile and it's hard work. Throughout scripture we see many examples of servants of the Lord. It is often the servants who saw the greatest miracles. Those who were doing the work, who saw God manifest His presence, and perform miracles. God wants us to be that kind of a servant, willing to give of our time, talent and treasure. At the heart of it all, God wants us, our willingness to be His servants. He wants us to surrender our lives to the work of the Kingdom. The longing in our souls will only be fulfilled as we say, "Yes, Lord." As we submit to the leadership He has placed in our lives, they will guide us. God will confirm His will and His direction for each person's life. God is looking for our willingness to do whatever it takes to serve Him and reach this generation.

The Lord is looking for those who will ride upon His horses into battle. From the prophetic dream, we saw horses that were saddled with no one on them. They were ready for battle

but where were the riders? The first two horses went out. Likewise, Jesus commissioned His disciples to go out two by two in Luke 10:1. Then many more horses followed. In the prophetic word that came forth, we heard that the Lord Himself would come on a great white horse and His name is Faithful and True. Likewise, in Luke 10:1, the Lord sent out His disciples into place where He was about to go. Are we ready to saddle up? Are we ready to be true servants who mean the words, "Lord, not my will, but Your will be done?"

What will it take to reach this generation? If we are willing to serve them God will show Himself to them. They will see Christ through us and our love for them. The laborers are few and there are many that need serving. God only asks us to do our part. Together, we can serve all the camels. Are we willing to saddle up on the Lord's horses and be a part of His army?

The camels are coming, are we ready for them? Is the Bride of Christ ready to serve them? Revelation 19:7 says, "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready."

Are we preparing to be the Bride of Christ? Are we truly serving our Lord and Savior? Are we serving the needs of others? It's hard work, but oh, the joy of seeing souls added to the Kingdom. God's promise is "if we will go, He will come."



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Published by Turning Point Ministries International
P.O. Box 570007
Houston, TX 77257
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IT WE WILL GO, HE WILL COME!

Revised of original 1995 teaching
By Doug Stringer

How many of us would say that we want to be used of God? I believe all of us who are Christians would say we desire for God to use us. I believe we would also agree that if God spoke something to our hearts He wanted us to do that our desire is to obey Him. I believe the Lord is asking us all a question and making a promise at the same time. "If we will be faithful to go where the Lord leads us, then He will meet us and souls will be added to the Kingdom".

Will we be faithful to go where He leads? When we hear God speak something to our hearts, will we obey? As you read this message, I pray that God would speak to your heart as an individual and that together, as the Body of Christ, we would hear God's challenge to the Church.

◇ THE QUESTION

This leads me to present a question, "Do we have ears to hear what the Spirit of the Lord would say to us?" Have we begun to take the Lord and His word for granted? Have we become weary and discouraged in the journey and therefore are not as sensitive to God's voice as we once were? We may initially say, "Of course not!" yet when we look at the Children of Israel, we can see a similarity between them and the church today. In Numbers 21:4 we read, "Then they journeyed to Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way."

The first three verses of that chapter explain how God fulfilled His promises. Throughout the book of Exodus we read of all the wonderful works God did for His people. Yet the people became discouraged. In Numbers 21:5 it says, "the people spoke against God and against Moses, 'Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water and our souls loathe this worthless bread.'" Another translation says, "detests this worthless bread." What bread were they talking about? This was the manna sent from God. They detested the manna God Himself provided during their desert time. Though they had received daily provision from the Lord, in a time of weariness, they lost focus of God's goodness. Often in times of weariness and discouragement, we detest the very life-giving things of God. So the question comes back to each one of us, "Will we hear what the Lord is saying and then will we obey?" We must neither detest nor loathe what God is speaking to us as the Church. In order for us to hear what God is saying, our hearts must be open to receive from Him.

It seems that in the midst of God's great provision in our lives we can begin to take Him for granted; just like the Children of Israel in the book of Numbers. They began to loathe and detest God's manna, His provision for them. The people became discouraged and wondered how long they would be in the wilderness. They murmured and complained and failed to give thanks for God's goodness. Likewise, when we become discouraged, we can lose our vision of hope. Our focus is off of the Lord and onto our circumstances. Yet those pressures and circumstances

should be a catalyst to draw us closer to the Lord. It is during those intense times, that we recognize our total dependence upon Him. When we go through trials, we are very much aware of our desperate need for the Lord's intervention. Yet as God brings the breakthroughs, we can become ungrateful, seeing our lack rather than God's abundant provision and grace.

Do we have ears to hear what the Spirit of the Lord would say to us?

◇ TRUE SATISFACTION

Throughout the past 2000 years, the Church has overcome two things: poverty and persecution. In 2000 years, every time there has been poverty, the Church as prospered. God always prospered the Church in the midst of poverty to propagate the Gospel. In the midst of persecution, the Gospel continued to be shared through God's people. Throughout church history during times of persecution, revival occurs.

In contrast, when we find ourselves in seasons of relative ease and comfort, we can become complacent and dull of hearing. The Church has failed to grow during long periods of peace and prosperity. God does want His people to be at peace and to prosper, letting that be a sign of His goodness to the nations. Yet it seems that during times of ease, we get distracted and forget that our total fulfillment is found only in the Lord. Our eyes get focused on the material world and we become self-confident, and self-reliant, rather than relying totally on Him. When this happens, we must quickly turn

back to the Lord for it is only in that place of intimacy with Him that we find true satisfaction.

Jesus set the example and told us what really brings fulfillment and satisfaction in our lives. As He said in John 4:34, "My food, is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." Likewise, if we want true satisfaction for the longing of our souls, then we must do the will of God. Jesus goes on to say in John 4:35, "Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields for they are already white unto harvest." Jesus told the disciples to lift up their eyes, so they must have been looking at something other than the harvest. It is possible that their focus was upon themselves and their circumstances. Jesus exhorted them to look up and refocus. Jesus knew that the disciples' true fulfillment would come as they focused upon the harvest. As they would begin to look with the same perspective Jesus

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had, they would see the needs of others, and their fulfillment would be found as they worked the harvest fields. The same is true for us. When we get our eyes off of ourselves and begin to look at the needs of others, our needs will be met and we will find fulfillment. In addition, there will be souls added to the Kingdom.

We must remember even during periods of peace and prosperity to keep our eyes focused on the Lord of the harvest and on the fields which are ripe for harvest. There are souls crying out for a taste of the Lord's goodness and we have an obligation to feed them. As we do the will of the Father, we will find great fulfillment in our own lives.

◇ THE HARVEST FIELD

I have had many experiences which stirred my heart regarding the vastness of the harvest field. One in particular stands out. You may be aware that I am half-Japanese. I was born in Japan, but I have lived in America

most of my life. It is interesting that in 1979 before I surrendered to the call of God, two evangelists spoke a prophetic word into my life. They said that God would use me in an evangelistic way and that He would open doors for me into Australia and Japan. In my early years of ministry, God opened doors into various parts of Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Yet one nation remained closed to me -- Japan. I had not been in Japan for over 21 years but in 1995 the door opened and I had the privilege of going back to see how we as a ministry could help earthquake victims in Kobe.

As you may recall, an earthquake devastated Kobe, Japan, in January 1995. One evening while there, I went up to the room where I was staying and I began to weep uncontrollably. I was so overwhelmed by the needs of the Japanese people. Not only are there great material needs because of the earthquake,

but there are vast spiritual needs. At the time Japan was only 1/2 of 1% Christian, 15 years later only 1.5% are Christian (Operation World). I was burdened by the brokenness of the people and I began to once again, hear the cries of the multitudes of people in the valley of decision. The Lord was allowing me to feel a small part of His heartache for the lost.

I began to cry to the Lord, "God it's not fair. I'm not questioning you, but I don't understand. In America we have heard the Gospel numerous times and there are people who have never heard the Gospel. Where is the justice when we have all the resources and other nations have not even heard of you?" My heart became overwhelmed and I wept in brokenness. I heard over and over in my heart and in my ears, "the harvest is still plentiful and the laborers are still too, too few." Those were the words spoken to me a while back by Brother Leonard Ravenhill. He exhorted me by saying, "Doug, continue to pray for laborers into the harvest." Those words resounded

again during my next trip to Asia as I visited with Dr. Khoo Oon Teik, a well-known physician who helped pioneer a Bible college in Singapore. Prof. Khoo held my hand and cried, "Doug please raise up more laborers for the harvest." Those words continue to ring in my ears.

◇ IF WE WILL GO

I returned to America with a sense of brokenness that I cannot express. My prayer since has been that God will give the Church the sense of urgency that we are the laborers God has called into the harvest. There is something each of us can do and God has promised that if we will go, He will come.

Jesus Himself encouraged us with this promise as we look in Luke 10:1-2. Luke 10:1 reads "After these things, the Lord appointed seventy others also and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, 'The harvest is truly great but the laborers are few. Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the harvest. Go your way, I will send you out as lambs among wolves.'"

The harvest is still plentiful and the laborers are still too, too few. Are we willing to be those laborers? I believe that because of the long periods of peace and prosperity in America we, the American church, have become apathetic and complacent in our comforts. I believe the Lord is stirring us. We cannot just say, "God I will do whatever you want," but we must be willing to do whatever God wants. Many of us have prayed, "God whatever it takes, whatever You want, I want to do it." I recall that the children of Israel prayed that at one time. They said, "Jeremiah, whatever God wants, go find out and we will do it." They all agreed. Jeremiah came back and told them what God wanted them to do and they called Jeremiah a "liar". They spoke the right words with their lips but their hearts had already decided what they wanted to hear. So the question comes back to us, "Do we have ears to hear what the Lord is saying today?"

◇ THE WAY OF THE CROSS

The way of the cross is saying, "Not my will, but Your will be done." When we look at the book of Leviticus, one of the five offerings that was presented as a sacrifice to God, was called the burnt offering. The burnt offering represented total surrender to the Father's will. That's what Jesus did. Jesus prayed "Father, not my will but Your will be done." Jesus actually became the burnt offering, a sacrifice offered up to God for us. Likewise, we are told in Romans 12:1 to "offer yourselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God." We are to follow after Him. Jesus didn't say, take up My cross and follow Me. He said, take up your cross and follow Me. Our lives are the sacrifice we offer to God, our whole-hearted obedience to His will. When we hear God speak, we must die to our own desires. God may ask us to do something we really don't want to do. Yet when we can obey Him in those things, we will understand total surrender to His will.

There is great fulfillment, hope and joy found in obeying God. As we read in Luke 10 verse 1, we see that Jesus is making a promise to the disciples. As He commissioned them to go into each place two by two, He promised that if they would go, He would come. God is saying to us, "I want you to go and prepare in every city and place where I send you and then I will come. If you will go, then I will come". I believe God is about to move mightily, like we have never seen. We must be willing and faithful to go where He sends us. Are we willing to make the sacrifices and go? Will we be those laborers who will help in the mighty harvest of souls?

I believe the Lord confirmed His urgent call NOW to laborers in a series of prophetic words and visions that followed My trips to Japan.

◇ PROPHECY AND VISIONS

First a woman in the ministry submitted a dream she had to us. In that dream she was standing by a hillside and from the right hand side, going down to the left she saw two powerful horses running by. First one and then right behind it another one. It was pointed out to her in the dream

that they were neither black nor white. After a short while many horses were running down hill. It was pointed out to her that there were saddles on the horses but no one was sitting on them. She somehow knew that the horses had a goal, as if they were going into battle. She felt strongly that she needed to find out what it meant and specifically to find out what the horses symbolize.

Little did she realize that just a few days before; I was sharing a message about "preparing the Bride." I quoted the scripture, which reads, "if you have run with the footmen, and they have wearied you, then how can you contend with the horses?" The verse goes on to add, especially when you have been living in the land of peace. Jeremiah 12:5.

God is saying to us, "I want you to go and prepare in every city and place where I send you and then I will come. If you will go, then I will come".

Shortly after this, a word came forth from one of our leaders during one of our Friday Night meetings. "You have heard it said in times past that the Lord of the universe laid aside His glory and crown to walk among men -- meekly and humbly as a shepherd amongst His sheep. And during this time, many of you have grown weary in the waiting and have become entangled in things that have damaged you greatly and you cried to the Lord, "How long Lord, how long until the Lord hears my cry and delivers me from my afflictions?" Know this, that even now the Lord is stirring Himself to visit His people but this time it will not be with a shepherd's crook but a sword. He is not riding on a donkey but a great white horse and His name is called Faithful and True and He is coming in the clouds with power to receive His bride which has adorned herself and which is without spot, wrinkle or blemish."

There was something God was specifically speaking to us concerning the horses. We needed to understand what the horses represented in the first dream and we needed to understand what God was saying about the horses through this prophetic word.

In the dream the horses had no specific color. There were just two

strong horses and behind were multitudes of others saddled up and prepared to go into battle. Next, the Lord was saying that He Himself is coming on a white horse with a sword, preparing the bride. In Luke 10:1-2, it says that we are to go before Him in every city and place that He is about to go. The pieces began to fit together. I believe God is saying, "Church, saddle up. Saddle up. The horses are going into battle, but where are my laborers who are going to ride on those horses? No longer entangle yourselves with the footmen, but get on the horses and fight the battle upon the horses of God." We are that army that He is calling to be prepared. If we truly believe He is coming, then let's do something about it. Let's saddle up!

◇ LABORERS

God wants to send laborers into every city and place where He is about to go or manifest Himself. The challenge is that the harvest is vast but the laborers are too few. Laborers are servants of the Lord. Serving is work and sacrifice. His servants are to offer themselves as living sacrifices. He wants us to have a heart of a servant to this generation. God anoints the sacrifice. We must offer ourselves not in words only, but giving our lives to service. When we give our lives in total surrender to the Father's will He will consume us with His anointing and presence. God anoints the living, breathing temples of the Holy Spirit bought with the price of the blood of Christ. He wants to consume us as the living sacrifice and His glory will fill our temples.

As a corporate Body of believers, when we gather in brokenness at the cross, saying, "God what is Your will for us? What is Your will for the corporate Body?" then together we become an anointed structure of people who say, "God not my will, but Your will be done." The issue is: Are you willing to be a servant who makes sacrifices? God is looking for those whose hearts are His; whom He can trust to do His will. Are we