

## **Hungry for Spiritual Food**

“This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life” (Psalm 119:50). “Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction” (Psalm 119:92).

Howard Rutledge, a United States Air Force pilot, was shot down over North Vietnam during the early stages of the war. He spent several miserable years in the hands of his captors before being released at the war's conclusion. In his book, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies*, he reflects upon the resources from which he drew in those arduous days when life seemed so intolerable.

During those longer periods of enforced reflection it became so much easier to separate the important from the trivial, the worthwhile from the waste. For example, in the past, I usually worked or played hard on Sundays and had no time for church. For years Phyllis (his wife) had encouraged me to join the family at church. She never nagged or scolded -- she just kept hoping. But I was too busy, too preoccupied, to spend one or two short hours a week thinking about the really important things.

Now the sights and sounds and smells of death were all around me. My hunger for spiritual food soon out-did my hunger for a steak. Now I wanted to know about that part of me that will never die. Now I wanted to talk about God and Christ and the church. But in Heartbreak (the name POWs gave their prison camp) solitary confinement, there was no preacher, no teacher, no Bible, no hymnbook, no community of believers to guide and sustain me. I had completely neglected the spiritual dimension of my life. It took prison to show me how empty life is without God (From Howard Rutledge). Hopefully, a bitter imprisonment will not be necessary to cause us to see what's truly important in life.

### **Taking Spiritual Vitamins**

“The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple” (Psalm 119:130). “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes...” (Psalm 19:7-8).

Some seem to expect the word of God to hit them like a jolt of adrenalin each time they read or study it. Although the "jolt" may hit us periodically, the benefits of the word of God act more like vitamins. People who regularly take vitamins do so because of their long-term benefits, not because every time they swallow one of the pills they feel new strength surging through their bodies. They have developed a habit of consistently taking vitamins because they have been told that, in the long haul, vitamin supplements are going to have a beneficial effect on their physical health, resistance to disease, and general well-being.

The same is true regarding the Bible. At times it will have a sudden and intense impact on us. However, the real value lies in the cumulative and intense impact that long-term exposure to God's Word will bring to our lives. (From *1500 Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p. 29)

### **Making a Difference**

A demonstration was once performed to show that a tiny cork could eventually move a heavy piece of steel. A very strong wire suspended an eight-foot bar. Nearby, a small cork hanging by a fine silk thread was swung gently and rhythmically against the metal. At first, the large object remained apparently motionless, but after being struck repeatedly for ten minutes, a

slight variation could be observed. At the end of half an hour, the impact of the cork had transferred enough momentum to the bar to make it swing like a mighty pendulum.

What mighty things small things can do! What mighty things you can do to make a difference! Gather with God's people at a local church of Christ, and learn what a difference the WORD OF GOD will make in your life!

Jesus fed 5000 men with five barley loaves and two small fishes. When they finished eating, they gathered up twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Imagine what Jesus can do in your life! (John 6:1-14) Make the first step to a better life in Jesus Christ. (Selected)

### **Are You A Workaholic?**

"The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure, even to eat" (Mark 6:30-31). Are you a workaholic? Think about these questions:

- Does maintaining a frantic schedule make you feel important?
- Do people often tell you that you're working too much (and do you take that as a complement)?
- Do you find it difficult to say "no" to requests?
- Is it difficult for you to rest and unwind?
- Have you ever talked on the cell phone while playing with the kids?
- When is the last time you went a full day without answering a text or an email?
- After killing yourself over a 60+ hour work week do you still feel guilty about not doing enough?
- Do you resent the fact that your spouse and children complain about you not being around?
- But the critical question is this: Are you working for them or for the Lord?

How do you overcome this addiction? ... You have to find your self-worth in God's love for you, not in your productivity at work. So listen to me all you workaholics out there... I'm giving you permission to slow down. Leave some of that work for later. Go home early and just enjoy time with your family. Leave the laundry for tomorrow and take a few extra moments today to meditate or pray. (By David Maxson)

### **Heaven Bound By Mike Vandine**

If the love of God dwelt not in me  
I would to sin a puppet be  
No right or wrong no way to see  
Where I would spend eternity

Some kind soul taught me the way  
Where I could be on Judgment Day  
His precious word I now have found  
Thank God my soul is heaven bound

### **A Moments Wisdom**

- Many people who plan to be saved from their sins at the eleventh hour, die at 10:45.
- A man of character finds a special attractiveness in difficulty, since it is only by coming to grips with difficulty that he can realize his potentialities.

--Our plans miscarry because they have no aim. When a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is the right wind.

--I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure--which is: Try to please everybody.