

## Pastors Comments

### **The Real Ministry of the Holy Spirit November 20, 2006**

On September 7th our church suffered the loss of our song leader. The cause was his death after a short illness. Grief has been encountered and it will wend its way thru our lives for some period of time. In some ways even into the distant future it will return and pierce our souls from time to time.

As a family man he once promised to love and care for his wife until death do they part. He did that with abundance. Early in his Christian experience and married life while seated with his wife in a pew he rebelled to the idea of no marriage in heaven. He had begun to comprehend the words of the one who had consecrated their marriage. At that time he grieved his earthly relationship seeing it was not eternal. That was over 20 years ago. He matured in his understanding of the centrality of Jesus in the life of eternally born ones. Even within the Christian's relationship with God there is indeed command to love one's wife intensely. He worked at a job that he did not care for because it provided the kind of income he felt he needed. With his own hands he was building a house that I described at his funeral as a "palace for his Princess." He searched for a business that would supply their needs in a way that would offer the desired income while allowing them to pursue something better liked.

As a song leader he was always intense. His exuberance was contagious. People sang for him. While counseling other singers he always encouraged intensity. He lived his life in that manner. Only recently while singing in a trio "I Must Tell Jesus" was he confined to mute his production by the plea and sentiment of the song. It was so out of character that I noted it later during the sermon part of the service. Our memories and hearts are filled with his solos that drew us to Christ, encouraged us in difficult times and helped make enduring the sermon more tolerable.

Other situations remind us of how temporary life in this world really is. A dear, dear former member after keeping his Alzheimer's affected wife in their home for five years was forced to commit her to a care institution. The burden of her care being lifted produced a sense of guilt in the midst of the relief. Fortunately, she is comfortable and happy in her new surroundings. She delights in seeing him although she now does not remember specifically how he relates to her. And then, there are the funerals, blessed time of loss and remembrance.

In contemporary Christianity the Holy Spirit is often treated as the one who adds excitement and zest to life. If everyone goes away happy they tend to return to that congregation in the future. It works. The only problem is the very meaning found in the title given to God the Holy Spirit. The idea is comfort in trying times. Indeed Comforter is used as a proper name. A more clear meaning is consoler. One who deals with us during the worst times of our lives. Yes, the work of the Spirit is multi-faceted but life remains a "vapor that appeareth for a little while then fadeth away."

I believe there exists presently an exaggerated emphasis upon the temporal and an anemic view of the eternal where God the Holy Spirit is forever directing us.

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