

Some of God's Greatest Moves Come Out of Our Caves of Despair!

By Paul Norcross

Within the cave of despair, Elijah learned to hear the still small voice of the Lord. And with that conversation came the instruction to anoint Hazael as King of Syria, and Jehu as King over Israel (who's first duty was to kill wicked Jezebel), and Elisha as Elijah's understudy. Not too bad for a man whose victory at Mt. Carmel over all of Jezebel's pagan prophets soured in despair for his own life! [[1](#)]

Have you ever been in the cave of despair over your ministry, over your calling as a wonderful believer, over your marriage, your job, your family? Have you ever wanted to give up -- even on the heels of stunning blessings and joy -- and been discouraged like Elijah so that he wanted to give up and die?

I think every pastor, and every believer goes through such times. But is there ever a wonderful answer, and it is for you in 2006 -- God may choose to get your attention through a mighty earthquake, or a wind so powerful it throws big rocks around, or even an inferno of flames -- or He may not need to.

But this one thing He will do.....

He will speak to you in a quiet, still voice, and it will settle your heart and give you new direction if your will let go of your turmoil and draw near to Him.

The Word of God declares in Psalm 23 that he will lead you beside the still waters..... the place where He will restore your soul.

So if you are tired and weary, there is a place of refreshing. This is the place where the weary can get rest. It is the place wherein we must labor to enter, [[2](#)] and it is the place from which the Lord will re-energize you with new vision, purpose, and hope. Hallelujah!

Is there a Jezebel spirit trying to squeeze your life out from you? Is there a fearsome urge to run and find refuge? Are you yearning for a place to hide out and escape? There is such a place, and it has a wonderful name. David called it "the secret place of the Most High."

Not Everyone Will Make The Effort

Not everyone in 2006 will be willing to find this place, and stop their whirling around

long enough to be still, and know that He is God.[3] Not everyone will discipline themselves to seek Him daily in a quiet place. But if you are reading this far, I trust that you are determined not to be among them! You are determined instead to fall in love, and remain in love with the One who ever lives for you, having once died for you. This is the One who longs for your company, and Who went to prepare a place for you to visit, so that where He is, you may be also.[4] He is Jesus, and you who seek, hear, and obey Him are the sheep of His pasture.[5]

Is the desire of your heart to dwell in this place? Then today is the day to drop what you are doing, and seek a fresh intimacy with Him. Tomorrow will not do.

Four Keys To Success in 2006

How exciting the new year is, and true as in past years, the Lord delighted my heart with wonderful instruction to share for the coming year. So I would like to pass this along with the fervent hope that you will accomplish more for His Kingdom this year than any year of your life! It is going to be a great year for His sheep! It will be a very perplexing, and hard year for those who have not yet learned to prefer the good green grass at the Master's feet.

So, if you will pardon formulas for the moment, let me share the formula for success in 2006 which the Lord shared with me for the Body:

I - Spend Time With Jesus Every Day

Jesus, our Brother, our Savior, our Friend, our Hope, our Salvation, the Author and Finisher of our Faith – He wants to do all these things and more from the quiet confines of the secret place, at the altar of your heart. Will this altar expand this year, and in faith will your dialogue with Him increase as your time and joy in Him increases? How much our Spirit-man longs to learn, but how often we neglect the wealth of schooling we receive as we abide in this place.

II - Get A Personal Vision Of The Hope of Christ's Return

Without a vision of the return of Christ for His Body, we each will run out of gas. Living for the hope with an eagerness and an expectation brings life and zeal where beforehand there was mere going through the motions. Jesus is our all in all! He is the One from Whom the Living Word speaks, and makes His Word come alive in our

hearts. Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?[6] Won't He sizzle our hearts with joy-filled expectation as we go to Him and ask Him to teach us about His return with such lasting understanding that we never again run out of gas? Study the Scriptures on the hope, and be vigilant and watchful in prayer.[7]

Become a breathless bride, awaiting her bridegroom!

III - Learn To Appreciate Yourself The Way God Appreciates You

God is always for you and never against you. He will never leave you nor forsake you.[8] You are of all people most blessed, and the entire love letter of Ephesians shows the heart God has for you! You are lovely and acceptable (Charitoo = charming, lovely, agreeable!!!) to Him,[9] His workmanship[10] (poiema = masterpiece!!!). Our Lord is always as the forgiving father who searched each day for his prodigal son to come home, and when he did, he threw a party in his honor! Get this as a revelation into your heart as you spend time at His feet – you are loved and greatly appreciated by the Master.

IV - Deal With Life's Details (So They Stop Dealing With You)

When crises are biting at your heels because you have procrastinated over fear of their consequences, or laziness, or just being overwhelmed, confess it as sin from unbelief. The Lord paid taxes from a gold coin found in a fish's mouth. The same God who owns cattle on a thousand hills[11] is the same one Who will supply all of your need in Christ Jesus.[12] At the name of Jesus Christ every knee must bow, plus every thing in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth![13] Does that leave any room for your need getting missed? Not by a long shot, and not by God.

Our having lack is through the mis-direction of our heart, but the good news is that He will direct our steps where and when we choose to trust Him and quit leaning on our own understanding![14] And the greatest way to learn to do this is steps I, II, and III. One of the greatest deterrents to doing this is failing to do step IV.

In This Coming Year, Don't Blink

The Lord told me, "Paul, in this new year, don't blink. By that I mean don't hesitate to move on the things I tell you. Plodding obedience is better than no obedience, but rapid obedience is what is needed for the coming times, and you will see an acceleration of the spiritual pace this year. So be ready to respond quickly to My call, and counsel often with the Holy Spirit."

I am more excited as I have ever been for what God has in store. It takes increasing relationship with our Lord to stay walking on supernatural water. When we call out to Him, He'll bid us to come,[15] but when we stay in the boat, we become overwhelmed by blue water over our bow. Though Peter sank when he looked at the wind and the waves, we are learning to keep walking toward Jesus, staying riveted to His eyes of passionate concern, and joyful yearning for your growing confidence in Him.[16]

May this be a year of boldly entering in to His presence, His love, and His friendship. May it be the year of learning the transition from being a servant to being His friend, and from being His friend to being His partner, and from being His partner to being the greatest partner of all, His Bride.

You are greatly loved, and your life is hid (krupto = concealed) with (sun = together with) Christ in (en = at rest and continuance in) God.[17]

With all joy and love dwelling in Him in this new year,

-- Paul and Rita Norcross

[1] I Kings 19

[2] Hebrews 4:9-11

[3] Psalm 46:10

[4] John 14:1-3

[5] John 10:27

[6] Luke 24:32

[7] Matthew 26:41; Mark 13:33 ; 14:38 ; Luke 21:36; I Thessalonians 5:6; I Peter 4:7

[8] Hebrews 13:5b

[9] Ephesians 1:6

[10] Ephesians 2:10

[11] Psalm 50:10

[12] Philippians 4:19

[13] Philippians 2:10

[14] Proverbs 3:5-6

[15] Matthew 14:24-32

[16] Hebrews 4:12-16

[17] Colossians 3:3