

WMAF
Newsletter

Defender

World Ministries to the Armed Forces



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Going Home! A Christmas Story...

by Rev. Joseph P. Howe



Some years back, a handsome young man came into our services when Rev. Gilbert Howe was alive and preaching. Mike, a very private person, though not shy, would come and go. So pleasant and bright, yet there was something distant about him. He would be faithful to services, yet in a curious way, be unfaithful at the same time. A paradox of conflicting virtues and attributes, yet he responded to the Gospel that was preached.

Christmas time was fast approaching and Great Lakes Training Center was filled with excitement and anticipation of the coming vacation. "Going home" was on everyone's mind and became the daily obsession with each passing day. Mike, however, seemed more troubled than excited. He was quiet and in deep thought on the last Sunday before Christmas leave. When the invitation was given at the end of the service, he came forward and knelt at the altar in the front of the church. He broke down and began to sob, because he had some deep things to settle with God—and he did.

When the service was over, he stood to his feet and addressed the small group of the faithful gathered around him. He told us his story and what had been bothering him for so long. Mike came from Alabama. He was the Valedictorian of his high school class and had won a full four-year academic scholarship to the University of Alabama. All of his future was assured—except for home.

His father had a serious drinking problem, which devastated the home. When dad was drunk, he became violent and demanding. Most of the time, his fits of anger were directed toward his wife, the mother of their son Mike. Over time, Mike became enraged at this father with a heart full of hate and resentment. The strain between Mike and his father became so intense that they could not speak with a civil tongue to each other.

High school graduation was approaching and preparations

were being made for that great day. One Spring afternoon, Mike returned home from school to find his mother beaten and unconscious, lying on the kitchen floor. That did it! He could contain himself no longer. The rage welled up in him as he picked his mother up and nursed her into bed. Within the next couple of days, he had joined the Navy, dropped out of school, and bid his brokenhearted mother, "Good-bye." He arrived at Great Lakes broken and devastated.

"Tonight," he said, "I made things right with the Lord. I am going home, though I hadn't planned on it. But, there is a mission I must complete if I am to have victory in my life. I must make things right with my dad, but I don't know how. All the hatred and resentment is still in my heart. Pray for me, that I can settle this with dad." Off he went to Alabama with the daily prayers of God's people.

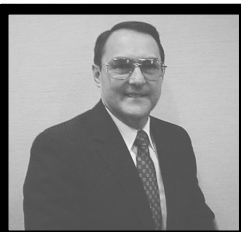
He arrived home, unannounced, to the joy and surprise of his and godly mother. What a reunion they had! He told her of God's working in his life and all that had happened to him. They rejoiced together for answered prayer. Mike also told her of his main reason for coming home—to make things right with dad.

Just as he spoke those words, dad walked into the house, drunk again. Their eyes met and the strain was evident, and dad replied, "Oh, it's you!" There was no change in Mike's heart. All the hatred was still there! The rage remained! The father walked into the bedroom and passed out on the bed asleep.

All that night, Mike walked the floor. He couldn't sleep. He had come all this way to get victory and *nothing* had changed. Yet, he knew that his heart *had* to change if he was going to have victory in his life. "Why doesn't God do something? Why doesn't He change my heart?" he thought. Pacing up and down the floor, falling to his knees in prayer, he begged God for deliverance.

The morning sun came up and Mike heard his mother making breakfast downstairs. Down to the kitchen he went to meet the anchor of his soul, his mom. "Tough night wasn't it," she said, "I've been praying, too, that God will give you victory in this."

Mike walked into the bedroom where his father lie asleep, unmoved from the night before. "I stood over his bed and looked down into the face of the man I hated for so many years.



From the Pulpit: Message and Bible Study

by Rev. Joseph P. Howe

Title: MILLENNIUM--WHEN SHALL THESE THINGS BE?

Scripture: II Peter 3



The question reverberates throughout the land: "What is going to happen?" "Is the world coming to an end?" Of course, it will in due time, as the Bible predicts it will. The upsetting part of the question is that the signs of the last days are all here!

The disciples asked Jesus, "When shall these things be?" in Matthew 24:3. It is not a new question, but an age-old question. As in Jesus' day, there are those who would like to be privy to God's Plan and know the times and the seasons of events. God, however, is clear on this point, "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*" (2 Pet 3:10). In Peter's discourse, that bears reading, in 2 Peter 3, God makes it clear that no one will have inside information, nor will know the time of His coming.

Haven't there been other times when these signs were there? These signs were present just before the flood during Noah's time. In fact, the Bible says of the last days, "...as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man" (Luke 17:26). God destroyed much of His creation with water because of the sin of the people. The last days will parallel those days. Reading Luke 17:26-30, Matthew 24, and 2 Peter 3, will give you the picture.

At various times in history, the believers felt they were nearing the end of the world. At the turn of the last millennium, history records people looking for the end times. The turning of each century produces a certain amount of millennial concerns.

In the Twentieth Century, there have been numerous occasions that set people searching the Bible for answers to this question. World War I was the "war to end all wars." Never had anyone seen such a global mobilization and destruction. Huge artillery, machine guns, and gas all made their debut in the slaughter that followed. World War II political events fit the prophecy picture like few other times in history. Many were convinced, "This is it!" You can still find some of those books buried in the mass graves of the misinterpreted writings. The Cold War has produced its share of end-time writings and predictions.

Now we have Millennium 2000, Y2K and all! The "computer factor" has answered many perplexing dilemmas of the past. It was hard to conceive how worldwide control would be possible as described in the Bible. Now, the possibilities seem endless! Is it the end?



There are a few Biblical principles to keep in mind. The primary answer that God gives to all those who inquire is, "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night*;" (2 Pet 3:10). Jesus also said, "*Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh*" (Mat 25:13). The message of the bible is to *always* be ready for the Lord's coming. So no matter what the signs may say and what conclusions we may deduce from them, no man will know the exact time.

Another principle is that God will determine the end days. He does not measure time as we do and says His day is coming quickly, "*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*" (2 Pet 3:8). God is progressing to the conclusion of His plan of redemption. "*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise*," (2 Pet 3:9). God's prophecies will take place and the end will come. History or politics does not drive God; His Plan is not dependent upon us.

So, what does all this mean? Redemption is the key to God's heart. God is "*longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Pet 3:9). That is the heart of God. When the last person comes to Christ, the end will come. He wants man to have every opportunity to accept Him.

Additionally, Jesus exhorts us to be watchful and live right. He asks, "*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness*," (2 Pet 3:11)? The message we should get is to make our salvation sure and live right until Jesus comes! "*And the rest will I set in order when I come*," Jesus said (1 Cor 11:34).

No matter what the events of the world indicate, be ready. Jesus could come at any time!



Study This!

BIBLE STUDY II Peter 3

PRINCIPLE: What do you see in these verses? Write down the Bible principles that are most important in the passage.

PLAN: Write down the ways you can live these principles during the next 24 hours.

PRACTICE: After 24 hours, write down your progress. Your victories become your testimony and your defeats become your prayer requests.

Need Help? WMAF95

Continued from pg. 1

I remembered all the fights and beatings and differences. All the old and hateful feelings came back. Oh, God, is there no deliverance for this?" Suddenly, his startled father awoke and looked up at Mike standing over his bed.

"Dad, I came home for several reasons, but the main one was to see you. I have had a real hatred in my heart for you for many years. All the fights, beatings, and how you've treated mom, all built up in me. It is the reason why I left home and joined the Navy. I have hated you as much as anyone can hate anyone. Yet, I know that I can't go on living this way. God has done a work in my heart and I need to make this right with you. I came home to tell you that I love you." It was here, at that moment, that God did His work! All the bondage and burden that he was under lifted! God, somehow, gave him a love for his dad that he never had before—and it was real!

His father was stunned. He just looked into Mike's eyes. Nothing was said, as the older man's red eyes filled up with tears and slipped down his weather beaten face. Without a word, he gripped his son's arm and rose out of bed and slid to his knees, pulling Mike with him. He buried his face in the sheets and cried out for God's forgiveness. There, Mike led his own father to the Lord. Soon, mom joined in the celebration and things got settled between them all.

Mike came back to Great Lakes, rejoicing. Mom and Dad got back together. Dad quit his drinking. A true Christian home was established that has lasted these many years. All this because one young man wanted to get victory over the devastating sin of his life. When he got delivered, everybody got delivered! Mike told us upon his return, "It was my best Christmas, ever!"

rec'd 12/7

I appreciate what you do for the soldiers. Good to have someone working for us.

Maj MB
Bosnia

Rec'd 12/8/1999

Dear World Ministries,

Hey! Peace be unto you. I would like to thank your ministry for sending and showing that you care for soldiers. Being here in Bosnia can get really lonely. Your newsletter has put a good mood and happy feeling in my heart. Thanks very much. God bless.

SFC DKD
Bosnia

Mail Call!

Email mailbag Nov. 1999

E-mail

I just read your newsletter. I have to say it was really interesting. It caught my eye when I first saw it. If I had enough of them I would share them with the whole ship. I know everyone on board would appreciate them.

Reading your newsletter made me feel just a little bit closer to God. I've always had faith in God but I've never given myself onto Him. I'm currently trying to turn over my life to the Lord doing it on my own with the guidance of a few helpful friends. I want to live my life for the Lord and serve him in everyway.

I'm not sure what I have to do to be saved. I mean I read the Bible everyday and carry it with me at all times. I have confessed my sins to Him and asked for forgiveness. I have a hard time leaving the life I'm used to living. The real problem is the profanity I use. I guess being out here really brings it out in a person. Every time I use it I catch myself and ask for forgiveness.

I don't have all the answers. I'm just trying to learn as I go along. Thanks for a listening ear.

MM3 AJJD
On board a ship



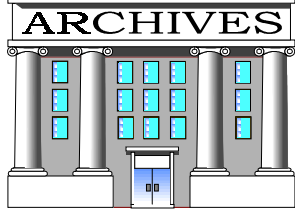
rec'd 12/9

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
I'm stationed on board the USS Inchon. I would love to be a part of the ministry, also my best friend. She always wants to do more for God's people, a very caring and loving people. Please send us issues of your subscriptions. We would love to have them. God bless you in the ministry.

TW
USS Inchon



From



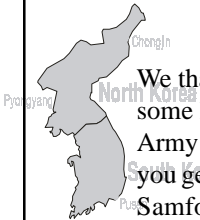
Anecdotes from history

by
**Rev. Michael
 G. Marshall**

From the Confederate Ranks Gettysburg, 1 July 1863

Late in the afternoon of this first day's battle, when the firing had greatly decreased along most of the lines, General Ewell and I were riding through the streets of Gettysburg. In a previous battle he had lost one of his legs, but provided himself on the efficiency of the wooden one which he used in its place. As we rode together, a body of Union soldiers, posted behind some buildings and fences on the outskirts of the town, suddenly opened a brisk fire. A number of Confederates were killed or wounded, and I heard the ominous thud of a Minie' ball as it struck General Ewell at my side. I quickly asked: 'Are you hurt, sir?' 'No, no,' he replied; 'I'm not hurt.' But suppose that ball had struck you: we would have had the trouble of carrying you off the field, sir. 'You see how much better fixed for a fight I am than you are. It don't hurt a bit to be shot in a wooden leg.'

Anyone Going to Korea?



We thank the Lord for the hospitality and ministry of some hard working and godly Chaplains at Yongson Army Base, Seoul, Korea. Look these people up when you get there: Ch (COL) "Sam I am" the Preacherman Samford, Hospital Chaplain, Yongson. Chaplains Randy Griffin (aviation unit), Chaplain Jim Nichols, Mathew Wysocki, (Hannam Village Chapel), Chaplain Ken Werho.

Merry Christmas!
 &
Happy New Year!
 ...to all our friends
 around the world!



Help is on Line!

For pastoral help, e-mail

WMAF95@aol.com

Web Site Soon:

www.WMAF95.org



Watch for it!

Sign Up A Friend

You may have a friend in the military that would like to be a part of our worldwide ministry. Please, send us their name and address below and we will put them on our list referred by you.

Write your name here:

Name _____

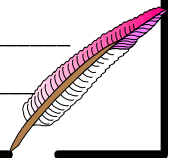
Write your friend's name here:

Name _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____



The **WMAF Defender** is a bi-monthly newsletter, published by World Ministries to the Armed Forces, ministering to military people around the world. Dedicated to the cause of Christ, the salvation of souls, and the discipling of Christian military members everywhere. The **WMAF Defender** is solely supported by the offerings and donations of those interested in this outreach.

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