



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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Paul and Gretel Haglin

EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

November 2011

“Comfort, O comfort My people,” says your God.

“Speak kindly to Jerusalem...”

Isaiah 40:1-2a (NASB)

Dearly Beloved,

Thirty years ago God called us out of the relative comfort and security of ministering to our own charismatic fellowship into the broader Church worldwide. We had just completed our final meeting as a fellowship, according to clearly confirmed directions from the Holy Spirit to close down the church He had asked us to start a mere six years earlier, and were wondering where — what — how — we were going to continue our “ministry” when it appeared to us we no longer had a ministry.

We were still pondering this question as we opened our front door to the sound of our phone ringing rather persistently (I guess we didn’t turn on our answering machine when we left for our final church meeting — there was so much on our hearts and minds). It was one of our favorite local pastors with an urgent request for us to minister in his fellowship the next weekend. “I know you never leave your own pulpit on Sundays,” he said, “but my elders and I have a strong sense from the Holy Spirit that you are to minister to us next week.”

Trying to subdue the chuckles in our voices, we said we would love to minister in his sweet fellowship next week because as of two hours prior to his call we didn’t have a pulpit to leave. We explained God’s word to us to close the church: “I have called this fellowship into being for a reason and for a season.”

We had pursued the reason He gave, but up to this point in our adventures with Jesus as our Lord and the Holy Spirit as our guide we had never considered what God meant by doing things in seasons. After all, the ministry testimony books we had poured through always followed the same pattern: a word comes from God to declare a new truth; the word is pursued (usually tremulously at first); multitudes are attracted as boldness and confidence rises in the ministry of that “new” word; the scope of the ministry becomes worldwide and hugely successful financially; a whole new “non-denominational denomination” is established in the theology of Christendom to be analyzed, emulated, and (sometimes) idolized for generations to come.

But here we were, still meeting in rented space in a local community center.

We had discerned that the season was for three main objectives. First we had to learn how to minister the truths God was giving us and experience the work, pain, challenges, changes, joys, and love that they brought to the surface in all of us. We learned how to face and deal in agape love with these transformations of the inner beings of ourselves as well as in the precious saints who came to be joined together with us.

Second, God wanted us to learn what truths He desired us to insert into the Body of Christ. Third, He wanted us to experience the total dependency on Him we needed to walk in to shepherd

His flock His way: **“Speak kindly to Jerusalem...”** We learned the graces God gives his itinerant ministers (when asked for) that help the local ministry to receive, nurture, cultivate, and weed newly planted “Words” so they could take root and grow to bear good and lasting fruit without creating schisms.

With all the new teachings we had digested and expanded upon from our beloved friends and true instructor/mentors in the faith for transforming the Body of Christ into the likeness of Jesus, John and Paula Sandford, we were almost stunned when the Holy Spirit lead us first to teach and minister on the healing gift of comfort.

We started nearly every new conference venue, training school session, or new fellowship with a teaching on comfort—how to comfort and how not to comfort as shown clearly and repeatedly in the Scripture. We could practically hear the heart of Jesus crying out with the words: **“Comfort, O comfort My people...speak kindly—tenderly—to the heart of Jerusalem”** To us, the heart of Jerusalem was the Church, and oh, how it needed God’s comfort!

We followed up teaching how to comfort with God’s comfort, with how to deal with disappointments. Why? Because everywhere the Lord led us to minister, there was great need for comfort and very little understanding how to comfort, and there was deep disappointment and very little teaching on how to overcome it and walk in Holy Spirit victory through it...especially without blaming God for it somehow.

Beloved, there is even more need in the Church today for these basic pastoral teachings than there was thirty years ago when we first started! Why? Because the whole world is now in chronic need of real comfort, and the only source of true comfort for the world is the Comforter in the Christian Church—the Body of Christ—the Christ in you, the only hope of glory.

So why is this the subject of our Thanksgiving Letter of Faith? Because right now both of us are faced with new dimensions of need for the true God — comfort we have taught and ministered. Yes, Beloved, we are both facing new experiences of being totally dependent on the grace and mercies of our God, and the comfort of The Comforter — spirit, soul, and body.

Three weeks ago Gretel somehow broke a piece off her spine twisting over in bed. The pain was truly horrific as it apparently lodged itself against some nerves. An unusual operation (via scope, fortunately) a few days later fixed that situation so that she has not even had to take any pain medicine since. She is, however, very frail physically, mentally, and emotionally as a result of the trauma, and Alzheimer’s seems to have gotten worse.

After a brief stay in a Therapeutic Hospital, we moved her into a bedroom in Mark and Alexis’ home where she is near the hospital if need be, and the therapists are able to come to her. She is very happy there and is responding well to the therapists too. It is much like home to her and both Mark and Alexis are fabulous love-givers, but of course we both can hardly stand being separated from each other and from the farm. (For love notes, her address is: Gretel Haglin, c/o Alexis Richert, 2354 Sportsmen Hill Drive, Chesterfield, MO 63017 USA)

In the meantime, I am minding the farm and Terry Lea is driving me in and out to see Gretel regularly. It is quiet and beautiful here, but very lonesome without my bride at my side.

When we first cried out to Jesus to show us how to comfort God’s kids, He directed us like a laser beam to passages in 2 Cor. 1:3-5: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.”** (You will be especially blessed if you read this in the Amplified Bible!)

Our God is the God of all comfort and the source of all comfort. We all must comfort each other with His comfort through the Comforter... kindly (that's God's way)... and to the heart (that's God's place). And God's word to us all especially in times of such need for comfort is: **“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”** (1 Thess. 5:16-18) That is the source of comfort that will comfort the world!

Beloved, we are most thankful to God for guiding us to the right care, for providing the right care-givers, for all of the comfort that has come to us from YOU, and of course from the Holy Spirit Himself.

We believe we can grow in Christ Jesus through these strenuous times, and your undergirding prayers are a vitally important part of that.

Thank you, and may you be abundantly engulfed in the God of all comfort, and the comfort of God!

Huge Thanksgiving hugs,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul & Gretel". The script is cursive and fluid, with the ampersand being particularly stylized.

Paul & Gretel