

It's time To Put Away Childish Things!

I Corinthians 13:11

“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

May 9, 2007

In Church School one Sunday, the discussion was about God's blessings. My response was, “some of the greatest blessings that God gives us are some of the hardest trials He allows.” Now nobody likes to get hit, especially when they come in an unending barrage or so we think. But the context of how we file and process these hits in our mind, how we react or act when they manifest determines whether we come through victorious or victimized.

Well, you say what does this all have to do with putting away childish things? I need to back up to the Saturday morning before. I woke up, prayed and began stirring, thinking on what needed to be done, hoping to get by with what had to be done. It didn't take long for my mind to tempt me to look at my inability, my lack and conjure up all kinds of complaints. All ifs, ands, and buts started rushing in and frustration was coming in a fast second. But just in the nick of time I heard Father say ever so gently and calmly, “it's time to put away childish things.” I was immediately convicted because many times before I had repeatedly said over and over again that “I'm never going to complain again” and yet flesh and blood always won out. Phil. 2:14 says “do all things without murmuring and disputing”; James 5:9 says “do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned.” Malachi told how little profit comes from mourning before God and Paul told the church at Corinth that Christians should benefit from seeing Old Testament examples of people who constantly murmured and complained against the Lord.

But this was my day of reckoning and the beginning of overcoming this problem. You know there's one thing about overcoming, it doesn't happen until you look directly at the obstacle or hindrance (you), see it for the miserable, unproductive fruit it is and know beyond the shadow of a doubt that “I truly want to be rid of this.” That was how it was that day; I had made a liar out of myself more times than you can shake a stick at it, but the light that shined the brightest was how weak, powerless, and pitiful God had been made out to be every single time it was done. That was the thing that hurt the most because I had never seen it in that light. He lifted the veil, and exposed me openly to myself. Even though it maybe “human nature” to do so God is not pleased when His people murmur, complain, and grumble about their lot in life; when we continuously yield to flesh and blood. These things come not only from bitterness and unthankfulness but it's an empty way to go through life. After rubbing my nose in it, He tempered it with grace and mercy. I didn't feel as one rebuked; I just felt relieved. Thank you Lord!

There's a calming sense of His presence while writing this because it's always a good feeling to not only recognize shortcomings but begin to overcome them. The thing about overcoming is “whom the son sets free, is free indeed.” But as usual, I'm getting away from my subject. The thing that Father showed me about putting away childish things is

that when we were babes and had no understanding He winked at those things. Oh, we said something like “nobody’s perfect” or “He knows I don’t mean it” but the bible says “we are new creatures” with new minds (His Mind) and old things are passed away because all things have become new and they are of Him. The childish way is to think of ourselves as just flesh and blood when the bible says we are growing up a spiritual habitation, His house, His temple whose temple we are. Childish things are not just things that we do or say; childish things are the direct result of childish mindsets, carnal thinking and disbelief in Our Father who’s over all. The scripture says “when I was a child” meaning when I came into the knowledge of Jesus Christ (salvation) I still had grave clothes and no real understanding. Then it was expected that my carnal mind would still be operating but the goal was always to grow up; to continually go from faith to faith and glory to glory. The years of experience and the multitude of trials, errors and failures have been the process (and still is) whereby we overcome all things. Childish thinking always tries to skirt around the fire instead of doing as the Hebrew boys did and walk right into it. Childish thinking tries to bargain with God in hopes that He will excuse us from all the troubles and tests and yet expects that the glory of His appearing will still be revealed to us and through us. Childish thinking believes that if I read my bible, say my prayers and perform the Christian duties expected that all is well until the day comes for me to go and be with Him. “But when I became a man” says it all.

Becoming a man implies I realize that not only am I a child of God but I’m a son of God walking as an overcomer in the earth today. A man understands that these light afflictions are only for a moment but they don’t compare to the glory that’s going to be revealed in me through Jesus Christ. A man walks by faith and not by sight understanding that all things work according to His plan. A man seeks not his own but esteems others better than himself, looking always to edify and build up, to be a repairer of every breach. A man forgets those things that are behind and presses towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. A man knows no boundaries, no failures (even when he’s failed) because he can do all things through Christ who strengthens him. A man seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and knows in spite of circumstances and difficult times that all things will be added unto him. A man loves the Lord even when he’s rebuked of Him knowing that He chastens those that He loves and scourges everyone for the good of his growth. A man recognizes that there are going to be times of uncertainty and doubt but he also knows that Our Father will never leave us nor forsake us. He will allow sickness, financial chaos, disputes among family and friends but a man knows that in our weakness He is strong. A man understands that the jobs and businesses we undertake are not for the sole purpose of gain but that He can be manifest through a people for the world to see. A man understands that ministry is not just standing behind a pulpit or gaining titles for people to call; ministry is doing those things that He has gifted us with and Him living it out through us. A man knows that the sermon he preaches the best is the one that says very little if anything. A man knows that he is a living epistle read of all men. A man understands that true worship and praise come with a price; that price is the total man that Paul wrote about in Romans 12. A man presents his body a living sacrifice that his life and being can be transformed into the very image and nature (character) of the Father. A man understands that the whole of creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God and God is going to manifest

His sons to a waiting creation. A man knows his Father and goes on to know Him; to love Him with all soul, mind and strength. A man loves his neighbor as himself. A man looks not to the future and what it's going to bring; he lives one day at a time. He doesn't get caught up in the realities of this life (world) but his reality is the Christ within.

In closing, my nephew was going on a trip the other week-end and his mother was getting his toiletries together. Instead of getting his usual deodorant he told her he couldn't get that regular kind because "he had to be a man on **this** trip (he put the emphasis on this). As I look back on that Saturday I realize one thing, "It's time to be a man on **this** trip (journey). I'm putting away childish things and growing up (**into Him**).

I'm still in His Light!
Gwen Riley