

Lifebyte 59

Will You Be Among Those Our Lord Chastises? (Part 2)

It's Time For Followers of Jesus To Live Repentantly

*"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves,
and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways,
then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land"*

(2 Chronicles 7:14)



*For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?
Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6:14)*



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***“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out,
that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19)***

God’s Classroom: Preparation As A Messenger of the Hebraic Restoration

Before we press on in this series of Lifebytes on repentance, I [Mike] need to provide you some history about the prophetic anointing our Lord gave me 31 years ago. This decades-long journey of His development process may help you understand His command to Sue and me: ***“Help my people to live repentantly.”***

Our Father knew I needed much preparation to be His vessel to receive the prophetic message of the Hebraic Restoration. While Sue and I both share these truths, He needed to fit me as the shield to encounter the force of the demonic assaults that would wound both of us.

We’re grieved because of communication from a number of you who are placing your confidence in your *religion* rather than in the Person of Jesus Himself. Dire consequences of this misplaced allegiance will assail you in the coming days of chastisement.

For many years I served in the background of Christendom, coming alongside church and ministry leaders in their frustrations and difficulties. I hope that from my story you can understand the perspective of the Christendom establishment (Nicolaitanism) that our Lord wanted me to have *before* He assigned us to share the Hebraic Restoration.

You may have the same view I once had, seeing our Lord’s call for you in terms of what you’re *going to do* for Him. In the end, though, you find that His call has more to do with what *He wants to teach you*. Our Master’s ways are not like the ways of the world! Unlike education classes in which we learn a lesson and then are tested, He gives us the test, *then* we learn the lesson.

And what is the lesson? After we fail or fall short on the test, we come to realize that

we needed more of the *character and power of Jesus* to complete the task. Rather than any sense of failure, Jesus desires for us to trustingly look to Him and humbly cry out to become more like Him. The transformation of growing more like our Lord, Whom we’ll someday encounter and worship face-to-face, is truly one of His greatest miracles!

“Let me introduce to you Mike Dowgiewicz, ‘the enema.’”

“The enema” — that was my nickname. You may think that’s an insult, but I don’t! When I began my life journey with my Lord Jesus in February, 1977, the Spirit of Jesus gave me the gift of prophecy. What I mean by this is that the Spirit of Jesus speaks to my inner man to bring messages to His people.

- Often He reveals to me the unconfessed sin which individuals or faith communities are entertaining. He then makes clear to me the timing of delivering this word to them.

- Other times He brings forth words of encouragement and strengthening for the humble who live repentantly before Him.

I don’t recall when I was first dubbed the “enema” but the name fits. When unconfessed sin is clogging someone’s fellowship with the Father and Jesus, the Lord calls on me to confront the person or persons, directing them to repent of their sin. Forgive the graphic parallel, but unconfessed sin is a lot like constipation—a blockage that must be confronted in order to bring relief.

Our caring Lord continues to use me as a “spiritual enema” to be His merciful instrument. Because of His deep love for all of us, unconfessed sin and severed fellowship with Him *grieves His heart* (Ezekiel 6:9). As He did with prophets in

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the Bible, He directs me to warn His people about their sin so that they may repent and be restored in Him.

That our Lord would use the prophetic to warn His people of the consequence of living with unconfessed sin is no different than a parent warning a child of the consequence of their disobedience. If the child forsakes his wicked pursuit and turns to obedience, the parent relents. So does our caring Lord.

I'd been raised a devout Roman Catholic. From my own prejudiced framework, ALL Protestants were going to hell. The Apostle Paul spoke of himself as *“a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee”* (Philippians 3:5). That's how identified I was as a Catholic. I was so Catholic in my spiritual perspective that our Base Catholic chaplain got permission from the Bishop of Los Angeles for me to conduct weekday masses. (That reminds me of Paul's admonition about the Jews who were *zealous for God*, but it wasn't a zeal based on knowledge of the truth!)

At the age of 30 I was challenged by my born-again sister Mary to read the Bible. She'd left Catholicism after her conversion and was so remarkably transformed that her words carried weight with me. So I read the Bible for the first time in my life—but with the intent of proving to her how erroneous it was. When I found no error, I began to read it again, earnestly seeking what God wanted from me.

During my second reading of the Bible I became increasingly more frustrated with my own religious practices. One evening as I was reading the Word, our Lord Jesus spoke to my heart: “Mike, the answer to your frustration lies in the

meaning of the parable, *“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch will pull away from the garment, making the tear worse.”* He then noted that my sister, from whom I was at that time estranged, would explain the meaning.

The very next day Mary drove 200 miles to see me in response to the Spirit's command to her. I ran to her as she got out of her car and asked her the meaning of that parable. Her response was immediate:

“Our Lord was telling the religious leaders that they can't patch together religion and a faith in Him. That only tears everything apart.”

Two days later I determined to follow Jesus with no turning back. (If you'd like to read more of this testimony, see Lifebyte 12. Relating To God Who Is Spirit.)

Because I'd become a *follower of Jesus* rather than someone who was tied to a specific denomination, the two chaplains on our ship didn't know what to do with me. Finally, they made me both the Protestant and Catholic lay leader.

After I'd followed Jesus for seven months, the chaplains came to me while off the coast of the Philippines. “Mike, we've been praying for you, and God has shown us that you need to leave the Navy and serve Him fulltime.” I was deeply concerned about my previous years of religious prejudice and wasn't sure if any of it still lingered. One of the chaplains suggested I go to an interdenominational evangelical seminary in Massachusetts so that I could explore the full background of Christianity.

I called my father to ask his permission since it was a “Protestant” seminary and I didn't want to dishonor him in any way. I concluded that if God could

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part the Red Sea, He could change my Dad’s heart to align with His will.

When I finished talking with my Dad he responded, “I believe God wants you to go there. You have my permission.” (Four years later my Dad came to me and declared, “I want the same Jesus I see in you.” We knelt down together and he became a follower of Jesus too!)

Follower of Jesus: 1 year, 7 months

Sue and I arrived at the seminary in September, 1978. I was 32 years old. The average age of a seminary student was about 24, most having come directly out of college. These recent college graduates treated all that they were being taught as an *academic* pursuit. In contrast, a few other former military people and I regarded all information we received as *affecting our way of life* — much like our military training had done for us.

Relatively few of the professors were experienced in personal ministry themselves. From their own words, even fewer had ever seen the *power of God* manifested in their midst, nor had they glowing testimony to His faithfulness. Most talked about God as if He were a scholarly topic. A number had gone to college, then seminary, then got a Ph.D and turned around to teach. Burdened by the pressure to get published, they offered little to young students by way of direct life experience with a mighty and interactive God. What a stunted ministry pattern for impressionable students!

Most viewed their role as conveying content and methods for pulpit ministry. They role modeled *lecturing at* people from behind a podium. This became the goal for pastoral candidates: standing behind a future pulpit to preach. Hellenism and all its various methods of rhetoric and exaltation of fact acquisition were

unrelentingly reinforced.

(For more on the insidious influence of Hellenism throughout western Christianity in particular, see *Restoring the Early Church*, Chapter 5. “The Loss of Our Hebraic Roots: Christianity’s Response to the Jews”; Chapter 6. “Greek Philosophy in the Church: How Did Plato Displace God?”; see also *Pastoring by Elders*, Chapter 2. “Nicolaitanism, Repression of God’s People”; and our Hebraic Article, “I Hate Nicolaitanism.” All are a free download at our website.)

Don’t think that my seminary experience was a total desert experience! Three older professors who’d been in ministry either as pastors or missionaries became spiritual fathers for me. One of these gracious men would regularly meet me for coffee and share from his experience how to minister effectively among the various Christian persuasions. His guidance would prove invaluable when several years later I became a counselor to clergy.

During my first semester in a class with another of these men, we talked frequently. As he learned about my past, two things caught his attention, prompting him to ask me to do a special class project for him.

First, I’d been a Navy helicopter instructor pilot, training others to fly operational missions. Although this role required me to instruct and brief my students before each flight, the essence of teaching flying is *flying*: the “see and do” method. Rabbis historically used this same training concept, relying on personal example as they taught their students practical skills. Paul, in the rabbinic mold, could say, “*I urge you to imitate me*” (1 Corinthians 4:16).

Also, following my third deployment to Vietnam, I’d been assigned as the Analysis Officer at Naval Air Station

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Point Mugu, California. I was responsible to study and analyze the Air Station’s capabilities to meet the ongoing needs of the Pacific Missile Range on our base.

In his office that morning my professor asked, “Mike, would you do a project analyzing the fruit of this seminary? I’ve been here over thirty years, and I don’t know if I’ve wasted my time.” I accepted his request. Through surveys and interviews I analyzed the nearby churches to which some of the seminary’s pastoral graduates had gone to minister.

When that elderly servant of God read the results of my research he wept in front of me. Not one of the surveyed graduates had demonstrated a vision for what *God* desired for each congregation; the pastors had neglected *to seek His will*. Instead, they’d merely carried out the methodology they were taught at the seminary. Few concerned themselves with whether their practices or approach were biblical. They just kept their system rolling.

As I discovered, the most important concerns of these clergy were: (1) The quality of their rhetorical preaching; (2) Their job security; (3) Making sure that nothing, including the content of their preaching, upset or disturbed anyone.

I grieved over the hurt and sense of failure I saw in my professor’s tears. He told me, “You haven’t been around this institution long enough to be tainted by the system here. Would you write a paper on what you believe a Bible-based congregation of followers of Jesus should be doing?” I accepted his challenge.

The key suggestions in my paper on the biblical church model called for **more opportunity for interpersonal interaction**: role modeling, mentoring, facilitating use of spiritual gifts in a faith community. For example, I encouraged

church leadership to provide time on Sunday mornings for discussion of the truths that were presented in the sermon. *Discussion* bred a greater probability that those involved would apply scriptural truth to their lives. (Statistics confirm 70% application through discussion, but only 20% application or retention through listening.) After he read the paper, my professor asked if he could give it to the Faculty Senate.

Unfamiliar with the sacred cows of academia, I agreed. What I got myself into surfaced a few days later. As I sat in the cafeteria having a cup of coffee, a professor from the pastoral degree program came up to me. He bluntly asked, “Are you Dowgiewicz?” When I nodded he went on, “I read your paper and you better not show up in any of my classes.”

Over the next few days this scenario was repeated several times. One or two professors, though, asked if I could meet with them to help change their style of conducting classes.

Follower of Jesus: 2 years, 3 months

After my first year in seminary the Lord opened the door for me to become the Controller of *Money Magazine’s* number one Christian college in the nation for that year. The college, about two miles from the seminary, had once been affiliated with them but had split into two institutions 10 years earlier.

The Controller before me had been there for 25 years and had left six months before I took over the position. Talk about a challenge! There was no job description and little to go on to pick up the pieces of the 6-month void. When Sue gave me a coffee cup with the inscription, “*God is the blessed and only Controller*”, I reminded myself daily of that life-giving truth.

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On campus were 150 faculty and staff with about 1,000 students. I soon found that the President and four Vice Presidents comprised over 25% of the payroll. Ascertaining what other Christian colleges paid their leadership, I realized that these five men were grossly over-paid. Employees at the bottom of the pay scale were told they *must sacrifice* to do the “Lord’s work”.

After my first month on the job the Chairman of the Board of Trustees took me out to lunch. CEO of one of the largest corporations in the Boston area, he was an ardent follower of Jesus. Asking how my job was going, he was stunned when I informed him I was about to resign. I told him that the pay scale was unbiblical, and that as Controller I couldn’t in good conscience perform any longer. My exact words to him: “When I consider those at the lower end of the pay scale, I feel like a Nazi guard telling a Jew that he’s going into the shower when in fact it’s a gas chamber.”

To his credit, this executive on his own initiative hired a payroll consultant who revamped the entire pay scale. **The five men at the top were not happy with me.**

Soon after I arrived at the college, Sue and I became advisors for a Sunday evening gathering of students eager to grow in their walk in Jesus. Up to 100 took part, and many of these dedicated followers of Jesus didn’t mind spending an hour on their knees praying for God to use them as instruments of His will and purpose.

Follower of Jesus: 2 years, 8 months

The president of the college was a big supporter of Young Life, a ministry to teens. Each Halloween he allowed Young Life to use the campus as a community

outreach featuring a haunted house. Since I’d personally witnessed demons come out of people in deliverances we had aboard my Navy ship, I was appalled by Young Life’s Halloween tactics.

Several campus employees also abhorred the haunted house approach because witches from nearby Salem annually desecrated parts of the campus with animal sacrifices. Our Sunday evening student gathering implored me to do something to stop Young Life from carrying out their plans. When I went to the President to discuss this, **he kicked me out of his office.**

But our mighty God prevailed! Through prayer and fasting, our gathered students stopped the haunted house on campus. **And once again, the President held me in contempt.**

The Evil of the Masons. A remarkable piece of information came my way one morning when I attended a meeting of the college’s audit firm in Boston along with some members of the school’s Board of Trustees. Just before the meeting, one of the Trustees brought up with me how *far above all other Christians* were members of the Masons organization. According to this prosperous “Christian”, the sign of God’s delight in a Mason was great wealth from His hand. To my dismay, that belief was foundational to the many on the Board of Trustees who were also Masons.

In subsequent years I’ve discovered how far reaching is clandestine Masonic power in this land. For example, in 2000 we moved West to work among Native Americans who were on reservations. We found that Masons rule most of the business dealings around the reservations, intentionally keeping the Indians in poverty through low-paying “sweat shops”. When one of the Native men working with us confronted the owner of a

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sweat shop about the injustice and inequity of his operation, our friend started receiving death threats.

Washington, D.C. is dominated by elected officials and power brokers who are Masons. Many previous presidents, including both Bushes, owe their allegiance to the Masons who worked to put them in power.

Follower of Jesus: 4 years, 3 months

God doesn't waste past experiences or training opportunities in our lives. He used the years I'd put into getting my MBA while in the Navy so that I would secure the job at the College.

During my second year as Controller I conducted a seminar at Lancaster Bible College in Pennsylvania, teaching biblical finance to other financial managers of Christian colleges and seminaries. Most of them had been using worldly methods and had never seriously looked into the Bible for financial principles. (At that time Larry Burkett had just begun Christian Financial Concepts.)

During the seminar my own boss, the Vice President for Finance, took exception with every scriptural point I presented. The product of years of secular business practices, he admitted he'd never searched God's Word for guidance about financial issues.

When I returned to campus I felt a lot like Jacob when Laban's heart grew cold toward him (Genesis 31:2). One day I was reviewing our endowment funds. Although it had been covered up well, I discovered that over the years the administration had misappropriated over \$400,000 of restricted endowment funds. This money has been specifically designated by donors to pay the tuition of graduates who would go forth to share the Gospel.

I immediately shared this discovery

with my boss, thinking that he was unaware this was going on. The following day he brought me before the President, who immediately fired me. However, the two men had overlooked an important point. Computerization for business purposes was just coming into its own at that time. I'd been working feverishly with the head of the computer department to computerize our Business Office.

A phone call by the President to the Computer chief confirmed how needed I was to complete this process. Visibly shaken, the President then asked if I would stay on for two more months.

At that moment I heard the Spirit speak: *“Despoil them!”* These words were God's command to the Israelites before they left Egypt for the Promised Land (Exodus 3:22). Emboldened by the Spirit I responded, “I want three months severance pay. I'm going back to complete my seminary education and I want you to pay for that. Since my wife is taking classes here for teacher certification, I want her to complete her studies for free.” They jumped to fulfill my requests!

How was the administration able to get away with misappropriating \$400,000? During the two months I stayed on I talked with our auditors. They were aware of this illegal practice but were fearful of losing the college account and that of other Christian institutions if they cited the misappropriation.

One afternoon during those next two months a close friend who was business manager of a Christian school on Long Island came to my office. He told me that he'd come to campus to apply for my job and asked if it bothered me. It didn't. In fact, I actually sensed the righteous hand of God in having a man of such great moral character replace me.

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He then told me that the reason he was in my office was because he'd been ordered not to talk with me. "Mike, I know you. You've found out something that they need to get rid of you for. What is it?" I told him that if he got the job he'd find a certain folder in my desk that would explain all he needed to know.

After I left, my friend became the Controller and immediately confronted the Board of Trustees. While they didn't fire anyone, they did work to rectify the problem.

You might wonder why "no heads rolled". **The President and my boss were very popular in evangelical circles, and no one wanted to bring discredit on the college.**

About a year after I left the college, the Vice President for Finance came to me to ask forgiveness for his "cowardice". God had kept a heavy hand on him ever since he'd taken me to the President's office to be fired. That spiritual pressure had weighed painfully on him and he felt compelled from within to talk with me.

Follower of Jesus: 5 years, 4 months

I went on to complete my seminary requirements and Sue got her certification. The Vice President for Finance for the seminary asked if I could do some consulting work in the area of personnel. Since the seminary had once been part of the college, it had the same payroll and personnel problems I'd encountered when I first went to the college.

After my first week on the job another consultant in the area of finance and accounting was fired by the seminary's Vice President for Finance. The man took me out to lunch and revealed the embezzlement and misappropriation of funds he'd uncovered. Wisely, he'd kept copies of everything and gave them to me.

The following day I was given this man's responsibilities as finance and accounting consultant. It would take a book to describe the evil I uncovered. A few weeks later I anonymously called four different government agencies to discuss the illegalities I'd found. Each agency informed me that they would criminally prosecute the individuals and the seminary if they were given the evidence. However, they added, if I could clean up the criminal activity, they'd disregard it.

What was so strange in all this is that the Vice President for Finance was behind all the corruption. I can only believe that it was the hand of God that caused him to hire me. (I also discovered that three members of the Board of Trustees were party to the crimes being committed.) The V.P. had many ways to purchase favor from others on staff. If anyone found out about it as the other consultant did, they were immediately fired.

I knew firsthand what happens to people who expose evil! So don't be surprised that when you take a stand for righteousness, painful consequences may follow.

My office at the seminary was adjacent to that of the President Emeritus. This godly older man had been the first president of the seminary and had resigned only a few months earlier. He'd been instrumental in launching Billy Graham on his crusades. Mr. Graham was also on the seminary Board of Trustees.

Though at the time I was still a young 35, this older gentleman and I would have deep conversations from time-to-time that covered a broad range of topics. His favorite topic was preaching. Before he became president of the seminary, he had pastored one of the largest congregations in Boston. He considered

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preaching to be the lifeblood of Christianity. I, on the other hand, saw reliance on the Holy Spirit and the strength of intimate spiritual relationships to be essential.

I never let him know about the covert criminal activity that was going on during his tenure as president as I was convinced he was unaware of it. I did respect him greatly for his years of dedication to what he believed and his personal devotion to Christ.

Armed with the documentation that substantiated the criminal activity of the seminary, I met with the Vice President for Finance. Angered by my discovery he shouted, “NO ONE is big enough to get rid of me!” His only concern was whom he’d need to fire in order to cover his trail. He couldn’t fire me because I’d previously briefed the new President with what I’d found. To protect me, the president shifted me over to work directly for him.

Later I met with the other Vice Presidents who’d been receiving money “under the table” from the Vice President for Finance. I earnestly hoped that they’d repent when they were confronted by their misdeeds. **But not one repented! Each felt he was a “servant of God” and above all accountability.**

I left that meeting in dismay and discouragement and went out onto the campus grounds to pray. There I encountered an acquaintance, a young woman who had just returned from working with Mother Teresa in India. She was bawling and I asked her why. She responded,

“I just saw the *shekinah* glory of God depart this place. God is no longer with this seminary!”

While I was praying a few days later, the Spirit impressed me to leave my job

and go to Connecticut to care for my Dad. Our Lord was about to take him home and wanted me there when he died. The President agreed to release me from my responsibilities and that it was up to him now to clean up the seminary.

One last point. During my time as a seminary consultant my academic advisor came to me with a letter from the United Methodist denomination. The letter demanded that the seminary fire one of their faculty members for her conservative stance, particularly on marriage and the family. If the seminary didn’t remove her, the denomination would no longer send students there. (The woman’s husband had been martyred several years earlier in South America. Afterward she and her little girl had lived with the very people who had killed her husband.)

I turned to my advisor in anguish. “Don’t go through with this! She’s touched the face of God!” This godly woman was released from the seminary, and God honored her faithfulness by giving her a far-reaching ministry that continues to touch thousands upon thousands.

Follower of Jesus: 5 years, 11 months

I was blessed to care for my Dad until he died in January, 1983. Right after his homegoing, directors from a defunct retreat center in Connecticut asked if Sue and I would rebuild its ministry. Through confirmation from our spiritual leaders we became retreat center administrator/teachers.

Two months after we arrived there I was asked to counsel clergy in Connecticut on behalf of an evangelical, Boston-based ministry to churches throughout New England. Here’s where my nickname “the enema” really took off! I encountered a lot of hidden sin among so many clergy and church leaders. A number of the clergy I met with had

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been involved in adulterous affairs, but only a very few situations had ever been handled scripturally by either the congregation’s leadership or denomination.

As with the college and the seminary, the leadership felt it was critical to protect the congregation or denomination’s reputation rather than pursue biblical steps to restore righteousness. As a result of their misplaced focus, unrepentance was epidemic among many congregations.

Please take note: *The more that unrepentance proliferates, the larger the congregations grow.*

As we’ve shared previously about pastoring, no one can serve more people than he knows personally.

Two men in those days were particularly despised by the majority of clergy I knew. Those servants of God were Bill Gothard and David Wilkerson. Both emphasized repentance as an essential, ongoing facet of living in Christ.

After we’d served at the retreat center for a year, the Family Services Office of the Catholic Diocese of Norwich asked us to meet with them. The Bishop had heard that we were “former Catholics who were now following Jesus.” He wanted us to help him rid his diocese of religious complacency.

First, he sent us with a group of nuns to the Billy Graham Crusade in Hartford in 1994. (Billy Graham was his hero and the Bishop had read all his books.) Several Catholic youth groups had attended the Crusade, and when the altar call was given many of the kids went forward. I saw the nuns cry for joy! I turned to a nun sitting next to me who had also sensed the presence of God around us. “A few years ago,” I said, “we wouldn’t have been caught dead here!” She nodded with tears and a joyous smile.

For a few years Sue and I cooperated with the Family Services Office, and several Catholic youth groups used our retreat center. After the Bishop left, though, it seemed as if all hell broke loose. The directors of the Family Services Office went to work in Haiti and the new Bishop wanted nothing to do with us.

Several state leaders of the Catholic youth groups attended a conference in New Orleans. There they were taught how to incorporate occult practices into their ministry to young people. Sue and I discovered this when a youth group from a congregation in Vernon, Connecticut came to our center. We came upon the leaders in our downstairs meeting room encouraging the kids to meditate on a human skull-like candleholder with a candle ablaze in it. Horrified, we stopped them.

When I reported this to the priest he answered, “We need to do anything we can to attract youth.” (His attitude was much like that of Young Life with their haunted house.) About two weeks after my conversation with him, his church building was condemned as structurally unsafe and hasn’t been used since. It still stands as a grim testimony along I-84 some 20 years later.

Follower of Jesus: 16 years, 9 months

After 7 years at the retreat center I became the “third man held in disdain” among the clergy. For several years as I counseled clergy, the Spirit of Jesus would send me to different ones to warn them about specific, unconfessed sin in their lives. A prophetic person gets in trouble when the one you’re sent to warn acknowledges his sin but *refuses to repent*. Those in that sorry category would then mock me among their fellow clergymen. In fact, as far as I know, only one pastor I was sent to ever repented and forsook his sin.

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Over time, as clergy brought me up at their various gatherings, I came to be regarded as their enemy. One of them penned a widely circulated letter filled with lies about me. Yet my Lord wouldn't let me defend myself. He had other plans for Sue and me. Without discussion with me the Board of Directors of the retreat center sent me a letter in September 1993 to fire me.

We Encourage You:

Through this whole pilgrimage *our Lord had a plan for us*. But first He needed vessels who had learned the lessons of preparation He'd intended. The years of testing had nearly cost us our marriage. Days after receiving the letter from our Board, the Spirit guided us to go to Israel. There our Father would share with us the Hebraic foundations.

It was a broken couple who landed in Tel Aviv on December 13, 1993. We had little hope for our marriage, but both of us held strongly to our faith in Jesus. We now are two battle-scarred people our Lord has prepared to help you live repentantly. How great and loving is the God who can so heal the wounded and equip them to serve His purposes!

The *shekinah* glory left an unrepentant seminary. Please, don't turn *your* back on the Holy Spirit. *“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His”* (Romans 8:9; see also Psalms 51:11).

Don't grow hard of heart and hearing through habitual unconfessed sin! Once you're deafened to the Spirit, you're controlled by Satan all over again. Heed this warning before it's too late:

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the

heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame (Hebrews 6:4-6).

Years ago Billy Graham said, “If God doesn't judge the United States, then He will have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah.” Our God isn't about to apologize; He's about to chastise this nation.

STOP putting your confidence in Christian organizations or religious practices or even in this nation's government. Trust in the Lord with ALL your heart, and live repentantly so that you may enjoy ongoing fellowship with Him even as trials swirl around you.

The writer to the Hebrews was adamant in His warning to followers of Jesus to beware of disobedient unbelief that translates into hardened hearts and deafened ears (see Hebrews 3:6,12-19). He goes so far as to proclaim that we are *Christ's house* and *partakers of Him* IF we hold *steadfast to the end* a confidence in Him that refuses to *depart from the living God*.

Please, **STOP** fellowshiping with those for whom *personal righteous living* means little and *communal righteousness* means nothing. Why should you forfeit your prayers being answered because of the unrepentance of others (1 Peter 3:12)?

Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come (Hebrews 13:12-14).