

God Is Not Through with You!

If you are reading these words and worried if God is through with you, the answer is: God is definitely not through with you! Being reared (thankfully) in a devout Christian atmosphere, I can remember certain passages of Scripture expositied that would scare some of God's people to death, such as Genesis 6:3: *"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years."* John 6:44: *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day"* I John 5:16: *"If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."*

Think of this, for 120 years Noah preached righteousness and repentance, but only his family came into the ark. The attitude of the whole world was indifference and mockery, much like the sons in law of Lot, *"And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law"* (Genesis 19:14). Consider the attitude of Pharaoh - no matter how much light and illumination God gave him, his response was thus: *"And when Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants"* (Exodus 9:34).

When God is through with someone, there is no longer conviction over sin or a longing for relationship with God. Scripture backs this up because as wickedly as Saul (Paul) was living, the Bible records, *"And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"* (Acts 9:5). Paul was goaded with conviction even before the revelation of Jesus on the road to Damascus.

So if you are not right with God and you are bothered about it, under conviction about it, this in itself is proof that our Lord is not through with you yet. Your discomfort is God's conviction. Your longing to be right with Him is His drawing. Our Lord wants you right with Him more than you want to be right with God. Don't give up; repent and be right! *"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"* (Romans 2:4).

Before we proceed further in this discussion, allow me to bring up Esau. Esau sold his birthright to Jacob for a measly bowl of red soup! When it was all over and he realized what he had done, the Bible says, *"For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears"* (Hebrews 12:17). If this verse stood alone it would appear that God had given up on Esau. This verse, however, does not stand alone; it says in the two verses before this verse: *"Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be*

any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright" (Hebrews 12:15,16). Esau had become bitter, he was defiled, he was a fornicator (given over to obey every whim of fleshly desire) and profane (blasphemous and irreverent). When he wept those tears, he did so because he felt deprived of lands, riches and stuff. He was not sorry for his sin, he was sorry he was losing the physical things of this world.

My premise is that God never lets anyone remain lost who wants to be found. He never keeps people who truly want to be right with him hanging on without resolution. Why are we so certain our God is not through with you? Because:

1. It is God's nature to be merciful.

Although a portion of this quote was placed in modern song, the original quote came from C. H. Spurgeon: "God is too good to be unkind. He is too wise to be confused. If I cannot trace His hand, I can always trust His heart." The Bible says, *"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not"* (Lamentations 3:22). *"For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him"* (Psalm 103:11). *"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy"* (Micah 7:18).

Samuel Davies said it better than I in his hymn based on Micah 7:18 written during the Great Awakening, Great God of Wonders: "In wonder lost, with trembling joy, We take the pardon of our God: Pardon for crimes of deepest dye, A pardon bought with Jesus' blood, A pardon bought with Jesus' blood. Who is a pardoning God like Thee? Or who has grace so rich and free? Or who has grace so rich and free?"

2. It is God's nature to restore.

According to the ancient philosopher Aristotle, "Nature abhors a vacuum." Aristotle based his conclusion on the observation that nature requires every space to be filled with something, even if that something is colorless, odorless air. Although some physics scholars may argue, dispute or tweak this theory, when it comes to God's nature, we are certain that God will not allow continued deterioration in the heart and life of a person who desires to be filled with hope and happiness in God's plan. Jesus said, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"* (Matthew 5:6). Our Lord did not say, "might be", but rather "shall be" filled!

God promises, *"And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you"* (Joel 2:25). As the prophet looked out upon the dry, barren land that had been invaded by the locust, cankerworm, caterpillar and finally the palmerworm, remorse for the promised people of God had touched him deeply. In this allegorical application, these insects had done their devastating work and I am sure he was thinking: this land has no hope. God had a new message for Joel! God was saying, no matter how far Judah and Israel have

gone, there is hope! When there is no more leaf, when there is no more branch, when there is no more root, I can restore a wasted land or a wasted life even then!

3. It is God's nature to finish what He has started.

Paul said, *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ"* (Philippians 1:6). This is one reason I believe in the eternal security of the believer; God always finishes what He starts. Solomon said, *"I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him"* (Ecclesiastes 3:14).

God said, *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end"* (Jeremiah 29:11). The phrase, "an expected end" in Hebrew scholarship is likened to a man in a boat, who is rowing a boat with his back toward where he is going with his face in the opposite direction. The application is that as we travel in life with our eyes blind to the future, our heart and spiritual eye is to be toward God who is our "High Tower" and sees down every part of our future. If we allow Him to coach us, He will navigate us through the troubled waters, the stumps and sandbars of life. He will lead us into the "mark twain" (water that is two fathoms which is about 12 feet deep). This is the safe water that the big riverboats could navigate through. God is saying, I see your end and it is a good one. Trust Me, I will see you through, because I have nothing but thoughts of peace, not of evil designed for you. You may be distressed, but this path I am leading you on is all part of the journey. Our Lord is saying, "I have placed hope in your future; I will finish what I have started in you and for you!"

-Pastor Pope-