

2023 Spring Clarion

A Newsletter of Christ Ministerial Fellowship

-a non-denominational communion of ministries with the purpose of mutual encouragement, like-minded fellowship, and love toward one another.

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**The registration deadline
for the Spring CMF
Conference April 26-28,
2023 is April 15th**

There is still room for you!
See attached registration form.

Contact us!

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Take a look at our website.

Please enjoy books, past and
current Clarions and recordings
of Conference messages at
www.christianmaturity.com

Growing Old Like Caleb by Mark Waters

We are all getting older. Many of us have been walking with the Lord for many years. Getting older is not easy. We start to hurt more. We get tired quicker. We are slowing down. People typically expect older people to do less much like this man in **2 Samuel 19:30-37**. *"Now Barzillai was a very aged man, even fourscore years old: and he had provided the king of sustenance while he lay at Mahanaim; for he was a very great man."* The king wanted him to cross over the Jordan and go over to Jerusalem with him. In so many words Barzillai said. I can't do these things anymore. I am too old. Let me go home so I can sit on my front porch and die.

There is another man who said I am 85 years old. His name was Caleb. Caleb saw the same thing the 10 spies saw but he had a different spirit about him. The question is what was Caleb's secret to such an overcoming life? It can be summarized in the following letters: S.K.T.

1. S stands for "SEE His face." Caleb practiced this truth! He knew what it was to follow Christ fully. I think of the Greek woman seeking the Lord to heal her demon possessed daughter. Jesus pretty much called her a dog and appeared to shut the door on her and her desperate cry for her daughter. Jesus' words appeared to say no, but in looking at Him, she saw a face that looked on her with love and that caused her faith to arise and say, "Yes Lord but even the dogs get the crumbs from the master's table." It is easy to look at the circumstances of life and see a big "no" over us, but everything changes when we see His face. The Psalmist said turn us again and cause thy face to shine and we shall be saved. We see something more when we turn our eyes away from everything else to see His face. We have the privilege and legal right, by the finished work, to come to be with Him with open face! No more veil, God bids me enter by a new and living way! That is the great secret so many have lived by through the years.

2. K stands for "KNOW His presence." **Numbers 14:9** *"Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not."* Caleb saw that the Lord was with them and that made all the difference in the world.

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When he was spying out the land he saw that the Anakim were there with great fortified cities. This took the heart out of the 10 spies but it didn't trouble Caleb. He knew it wasn't about self-strength, it was about abiding in Christ's strength. All that God has for us as His people is beyond our strength and ability to possess, but Caleb still said, we are able to go up and take the country! It's true that older men have less strength, but Caleb knows where His true strength lies. It is in the Lord Himself and that vital union between Him in us. The secret of the Christian life is that Christ lives in us.

When Caleb was 85 years old he said give me this hill country which the Lord spoke on that day. It may be that the Lord will be with me. I will drive them out just as the Lord has said. He is 85 years old and he wants to take it on at that age. He wants the hard country, the one everyone has turned their backs on. There is nothing like knowing the presence of the Lord, that He is with us. *"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength..."* To wait on the Lord means to bind together by twisting. Think of a weak vine that has wrapped itself around a mighty oak tree. It takes on the strength of that which it is bound together with. Cultivating the Lord's presence in our lives is a most precious gift and a wonderful means of God's strength to us. **Psalms 27:5** *"For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock."* Jesus Christ is new every day and because of that and His oath (see Numbers 14:21), the land is before us. All the promises are sure in Him. Let us go up at once. Even in our old age we are able to go up and take the country and possess the land from Jordan to the sea.

3. T stands for "TRUST in His love." **Numbers 14:8** *"If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey."* Paul tells us we are made more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Jude admonishes us to keep ourselves in the love of God. It's easy to look at the details of our lives and doubt God's love for us. As Caleb looked at the fortified cities and the giants in the land, his focus was on the Lord's delight in them. If the Lord delight in us, and He does! We can have this confidence! He will bring us into the land! I want everything God has for us! Being brought into the fulness of the God is a work of His love and grace in us. It is not about our strength to make it in. Paul says in **Romans 8:31,32** *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"* It is Calvary love that is being poured out on us. It is Calvary love that secures the inheritance God has promised the Church. The enemy has been defeated. His defense has been taken away. The giants are bread for us. Rather than being destroyed by them, we can face them and grow strong in the conflicts of life. What a secret Caleb had! He trusted in the Lord's love!

Caleb could not be denied what He had heard from the heart of God all the years of his life. He learned what we have suggested in the letters S.K.T. He lived the life He lived even in his old age by SEEING His face, by KNOWING His presence, and by TRUSTING in His love. He heard of God's purpose for His people. He had heard about the possession of an inheritance in the land. He heard of God's oath. It all did something in him. He wanted to be used of the Lord in significant ways for the advancement of the kingdom. He practiced this truth! He knew what it was to follow Christ fully. **Numbers 14:9,10** He lived to encourage the younger generation. He encouraged the saints and may we do the same! He said to them and to us, *"Don't give up! Let us go up at once, and possess all that Christ won for us at the cross; though the giants may be there our way to hinder, God has given us the victory!"*Ω

Mark your calendars for the 10th Anniversary Women's Retreat

June 2nd and 3rd Bethany Christian Fellowship, Athens, PA

\$30 registration cost for both days or \$20 for part of the retreat.

Make your hotel registration at the Comfort Inn, Sayre, PA \$97.02 by calling (570) 888-1100.

Mention Christ Ministerial Fellowship Women's Retreat for the special rate.

The registration form will be emailed out in the next few days. For more information contact Arlene Ghilardi at: arleneghilardi@gmail.com>

In Disguise

Joseph Nieves

The Tabernacle as a whole is made up of three realms or divisions: first, the OUTER COURT which consists of a curtain of fine twine linen sustained by 60 pillars of brass in sockets of brass. You enter the gate and are inside the OUTER COURT which brings you to the next part of the Tabernacle called the Tabernacle proper. The Tabernacle proper is called the HOLY PLACE. It also has an entrance made up of a veil. Inside the HOLY PLACE, we find the lampstand, the table of showbread and the altar of incense. The HOLY PLACE is a type of a life in the Spirit, a walking in the Spirit, living in the Spirit.

Next, the second part of the Tabernacle proper is the HOLY OF HOLIES. Inside here, we find the Ark of the Covenant and the Shekinah Glory, or the manifest presence of God. The Tabernacle proper had four coverings over it. The first was fine twine linen. The second was made of goats' hair, speaking to us of Christ our scapegoat being sacrificed for us. The third covering is that of rams' skin dyed red and speaks to us of the ram of consecration that is brought out in Leviticus 8:22. The fourth and last covering of the Tabernacle proper was made of badger skins, which was a rough and unattractive covering, but was impervious to the dust, rain, wind, sun and all elements. Actually, the only purpose of this covering was to resist the elements in order to protect the interior of the Tabernacle proper. The badger skin speaks of Christ, our covering. The Word of God says in Isaiah 53:1-2—*"Who hath believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed, for he shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of the dry ground. He hath no form nor comeliness and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised and we esteemed him not."* He hath no form nor comeliness, no beauty that we should desire him. To those who are in the OUTER COURT and look at the Tabernacle proper, it only looks like a commonplace covering. It has no attraction to appeal to the natural man. In I Corinthians 2, the Word declares the natural understands not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. To the natural eye, there is nothing we desire as we look at the Tabernacle proper. But, to the one hungry of heart and with the discerning eye, he is drawn by the hunger and by that urge of the Spirit into the HOLY PLACE and the HOLY OF HOLIES. For the Tabernacle is not of the outward but of the inward; the gold and the beauty of this inner sanctuary is hidden, is veiled, from the natural eye. The natural man cannot know or understand but it must be perceived by the Spirit.

I believe that because of a hunger in your heart, God begins to draw you and out of that comes this understanding and perception. Several places in the scriptures Jesus appeared to the disciples and to others, but was not recognized or they did not perceive Him. And so it is today: the Lord Jesus is coming in disguise and the natural man is not understanding the things of the Spirit. The scripture says concerning the comeliness of the Lord that there is no beauty in Him that we should desire; in Phil. 2:5-8, the apostle Paul admonishes the Philippian church *"let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation."* The Greek brings out that He emptied Himself. He took the form of a slave and was made in the likeness of man.

In John 6:41-42, we find the Jews murmuring against the Lord because He said He was the bread that came down from heaven, but they said to themselves, is not this Jesus the son of Joseph whose father and mother we know? They had a traditional revelation of Jesus; they could only see Jesus as the son of Joseph and Mary, whom they knew. They could not perceive beyond the natural. To many people today, He is just Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary.

In John 7, we find the feast of Tabernacles at hand and Jesus' disciples and brethren going up to the feast and they inquired concerning Jesus' going to the feast. They desired that He manifest works that they might see and believe. They said there is no man that doeth anything in secret and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world. In other words, those in His day desired that He would show Himself openly.

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The disciples went to the feast but Jesus went not up. Later in verse 10, Jesus also went up but not openly, but as it were, in secret. This is part of “coming in disguise,” part of the badger skin. Later in verse 14, Jesus went in the midst of the feast up to the temple and taught; revealing Himself, manifesting Himself. In John 21:1-6, Jesus reveals Himself to His disciples as He stood on the shores of Galilee, but they didn’t recognize Him.

In Luke 24:13-33, there were two disciples on the road to Emmaus after the death of Jesus and He joined Himself to them but their eyes were holden and they did not know Him. They conversed and were sad, and then Jesus beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded to them the scriptures concerning Himself. They drew nigh to the village and He made as though He would go on but they CONSTRAINED Him saying abide with us. He went in with them and as they sat at meat, He took bread, blessed and broke it and gave to them and their eyes were opened and they knew Him.

So it is today, that the Lord Jesus Christ comes to us in disguise. But it’s in the breaking of the bread, that time of communion that we can know Him. That time when He would make as though He would go on further, and those who hunger for Him, desire Him, will constrain Him, that He will come and abide and their eyes are opened to behold more of Him. Praise His wonderful name.

John declares in John 1:26, “There stands one among you whom you know not.” Many are the times Jesus is standing among us and we know Him not. We ask Him to manifest Himself, for a revelation of Himself, and we ask Him to give us a ministry and to use us, but He often comes in a form that is not recognizable to us, in disguise. He often comes in disguise to see whether or not we mean business, whether we are sensitive enough to discern Him and to know Him. There stands one in your midst whom ye know not. Many of God’s people are unaware of and insensitive to His presence and to the knowledge of His person because they lack the relationship and communion with Him. I believe this is the desire of the heart of God today—to have a people who will get to know Him, who will fellowship with Him, have communion with Him by spending time in His presence. Ω



Over the years we have asked prayer for Brother Joe and Sister Gloria Nieves. Joe is holding his own and is at home after 3 hospital stays last year and a few weeks in rehab. Gloria is recovering from a March car accident where she had some bruising and was shaken up because of the activation of the airbags. The Lord helped her to get a replacement car. In the midst of everything Gloria testified of the goodness of the Lord in their lies together. In June they will celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. 57 years ago, as a young couple, they set out in faith on a 1-year mission trip to Argentina, Peru and Ecuador. She spoke how they refused the traditional fundraising methods of professional missionaries and saw the Lord miraculously supply. “And this is how we always lived.”, she said. Keep praying for this dear couple. May they continue according to God’s will in His peace.

Please keep AnnMarie Faillace in prayer. She is facing a reoccurrence of cancer and has just undergone surgery which the doctors term as successful. Joe and AnnMarie have 7 children ranging in age from two years to twenty. The recuperation time from the surgery is 6 weeks. Joe and AnnMarie, back row, middle, in recent years have been pioneering a church near their hometown of Montague, NJ.

Please keep **Ric Vargas and Lou Pressman in prayer as they embark on a mission trip to Costa Rica April 10-18.** The Lord has opened the door to minister there as a result of last year’s trip to visit some precious saints in the San José area.



Urgent Need to Repair Bethany Christian Fellowship Church Building

(Home of Bethany Christian Fellowship, CMF Retreats, and our Women's Retreat)



“BCF was ordained in 1985 and purchased the current church building in the mid-1990s. The church was built in 1888 and has suffered through at least two significant flooding events, the last in 2011. Our small congregation, with God's grace and many hands, was able to repair the majority of the Church after the flood of 2011. The Church has been a host for multiple retreats for Men, Women, and the Ministerial Fellowship. We are seeking donations to replace the flat roof over the fellowship hall area, repair the stained-glass window in the sanctuary, and do some needed work in the bell tower. We hope to continue to be a beacon for the community in which we live. We are looking to the Lord to meet these needs. Thank you so much for your consideration.”

These words are on the fundraising page that Sandy Keeney, trustee of the Church, has posted on the GiveSendGo website. The immediate goal is \$150,000. As soon as this money is received, they will begin the construction of the roof area, which urgently needs repair.

Dear Pastors, would you consider publicizing this need in your congregation? This project will take a sacrificial effort throughout the Body of Christ. I would hope that we could encourage our brother Mark Waters and the sheep under his care by doing our best to help them in their time of need. After the devastating flood that hit the town of Athens, PA in September of 2011, the building there was inundated with 4 feet of river water and mud. It took years of work and thousands of dollars to be restored. Finally, the church was restored and Mark and the team at Bethany have graciously opened their hearts and doors to host two Christ Ministerial Fellowship Conferences and the Women's Retreat every year.

To help please send your check made out to Bethany Christian Fellowship, with “Building Repair” in the memo. The address is Pastor Mark Waters: 25 Warren Street, Sayre, PA 18840. Or you can use the Christian fund-raising site: https://givesendgo.com/Bethany_Christian_Fellowship . 100% of your donation goes to Bethany. They do invite you to support their site, but it is not mandatory.

Haggai 1:14: *And the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the LORD of hosts, their God* AEG