THE Watchword

"On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen;
All day and night they will never keep silent
You who remind the Lord, take no rest for yourselves,
And give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

Isaiah 62:6-7

XXXVIII

The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage prayer and passion for a true revival of Apostolic Christianity. The following material is offered in the hopes of provoking zeal and providing a vision of what the Church could be if we would fervently pray.

PRAYER MAKES HISTORY

The central fact of true Christianity is a Holy and intimate union with Jesus Christ. Uncle John Vassar was never content with anything less than true Christianity. First and foremost he was a loyal lover of Jesus. John Vassar was known as the Apostle of Personal Evangelism because of his fervent and constant witness to the Saviour's worth. Loving Jesus was his principle, his passion and his one antidote against every sin.

*"One day he came out of a church where a noted minister had preached, and with a grieved, disappointed look and a quivering voice he said, **'Oh he never mentioned the name of Jesus once.'"** "Deeper than the love of home, deeper than the love of kindred, deeper than the love of country, aye, deeper than the love of life, was his affection for that Redeemer who had first loved him and given Himself for him. He did not talk so much of heaven as many Christians do. He talked of being with the Lord and like Him."*

Out of John Vassar's tender love for Christ grew what was probably the most prominent feature of his life - a constant habit of prayer. A close friend of his describes for us his fervency in prayer. *"He absolutely prayed day and night. I have roomed with him night after night, and I rarely went to sleep without hearing him at prayer, or awoke without finding him at prayer. He seldom, if ever, came into my house or study that he did not propose a season of prayer. . ."* Uncle John Vassar's gift of prayer manifested itself along roadsides, in shops and in homes. Wherever a

Uncle John Vassar

need could be found John Vassar could be found praying. A. J. Gordon, the famous Spirit-filled minister of the 19th, century recalls Vassar's prayer life. *"When he came occasionally to work among my flock, he at once took the whole church and people on his heart and began to travail for them in prayer, as though his very life depended on the issue. This intercession continued night and day with tears. He never said he had prayed all night, but I could hear him again and again breaking forth in the darkness with strong crying unto God. I know what the burden was, it was this congregation, strangers to him till today. It was this flock, not one of whom he had ever seen till now. This habitual prayerfulness was something so wonderful that I wish to emphasize it as furnishing the true secret of his life."*

Calloused knees produce courageous hearts. Uncle John Vassar's prayer habits made him a man of great faith. *"He did not believe simply in the God of ages ago. He believed in the God of today. He could not be persuaded that the wonderworking Spirit finished His operations at Pentecost. He could not be convinced that the supernatural was no longer to be looked for. He would get a church or a schoolhouse open, and then invite people out. Almost invariably a revival would commence. Often God would triumph gloriously. Converts would be multiplied. There would be apostolic work because it was underlaid and pushed with apostolic faith."*

John Vassar's zeal and consecration were so intense that it often astonished and offended those who called themselves *"Christians". "Despised, rebuffed, and persecuted he held right on meekly and joyfully, in his simple and faithful way with his little worn New Testament in hand and his single eye fixed on Jesus. Coldness and insults were nothing to him, save that they made him sad for other's sake. No harshness could quench the ardor of his affection."*

Uncle John Vassar's life displays for us the balance of zeal mixed with mercy and passion mixed with patience. Many within the modern Church have strayed, believing that they could choose between such things, pursuing one virtue while neglecting others. If our churches are to meet the needs at hand, we must, like John Vassar, first be lovers of Jesus given to constant prayer. Second, we must receive joyfully ALL that the Master has laid before us, absolute holiness and joy, purity and patient love. The Church must become one with Christ, balanced with both His goodness and severity.

References Used -

"Uncle John Vassar; or The Fight of Faith" by T. E. Vassar

"They Knew Their God - Vol. 3" by Edwin and Lillian Harvey

Church Be Still!

by C. H. Spurgeon

The Church would soon be healed of her sorrows, and delivered from her divisions, if she would for a while be silent; **but the voice of a favorite teacher is heard by some, and the voice of another master in Israel is listened to by others, and so God's voice is lost amid the clamor of sects and the uproar of parties.** Oh, that the Church would sit at Jesus' feet, lay aside her prejudices, and take the Word in its simplicity and integrity, and accept what God the Lord only declares to be the truth. I invite the members of this church, and urge the members of all the churches to see to this, that we cry unto the Lord for a blessed silence in His presence, till we sit like servants waiting for the Master's word, and stand like watchmen waiting for the Master's coming. Lord send that solemn silence over all Your people now.

Words, words, words: we have so many words, and they are chaff, but where is THE WORD that in the beginning was God and was with God? That Word is the living and incorruptible seed. We want less of the words of man, and more of Him who is the very Word of God. BE QUIET AND LET JESUS SPEAK. Let His wounds speak to you: let His death speak to you; let His resurrection speak to you; let His ascension and His subsequent glory speak to you; and let the trumpet of the second advent ring in your ears. **You cannot hear the music of these glorious things because of the rattle of the wheels of care and the vain jangle of disputatious self-wisdom. Be silent, that you may hear the voice of Jesus, for when He speaks your strength will be renewed.** The eternal Spirit is with His people, but we often miss His power because we give more ear to other voices than to His, **and quite often our own voice is an injury to us,** for it is heard when we have received no message from the Lord, and therefore gives an uncertain sound. If we will wait upon the blessed Spirit, His mysterious influence will sway us most divinely, and we shall be filled with all the fullness of God. Our strength will be renewed, if in silence we yield up to God all our own wisdom and strength. Brethren, I never am so full as when I am empty; I have never been so strong as in the extremity of weakness. The source of our worst weakness is our homeborn strength, and the source of our worst folly is our personal wisdom.

Lord, help us to be still till we have abandoned ourselves, till we have said, Lord, our ways of working cannot be compared with Your ways of working; teach us how to work; Lord, our judgments are weak compared with Your perfect judgment; we are fools, be our teacher and guide in all things. Crush out of us our fancied strength, and make us like worms, for it is the worm Jacob that You will make into the new sharp threshing instrument, which shall thresh the mountain. After this sort shall you renew your strength. Keep silent, you saints, till you have felt your folly and your weakness, and then renew your strength most gloriously by casting yourselves upon the strength of God. More than ever before let your inmost souls be filled with trust in the Arm that never fails, the Hand that never loses its cunning, the Eye that is never closed, the Heart that never wavers. [Trust in Jesus].

The Two Closets

If we neglect prayer, we neglect Christ. Prayerlessness is a sin against the heart of Jesus, which longs to be intimate with His Bride. (1 Samuel 12:23). Prayerlessness is not only a sin in itself, it is the nursemaid of countless other sins. **When we neglect prayer we nurture secret-sin and self-deception.** As one abandons the prayer closet he unknowingly constructs another kind of closet. It too is a secret place of solitude, yet it is not reserved for intimate union with Jesus. This closet is a place of darkness and shadows where evil motives, bitterness and uncleanness hide. Many Christians who claim to understand the necessity of a holy life still neglect daily prayer and as a result make provision for the flesh. Not only is the prayerless Christian more vulnerable to sin, he is also less likely to recognize sin in his own life. **Remember, to be absent from Christ's shining presence in prayer is to be surrounded by darkness and void of true discernment.**

The prayer closet is a spiritual greenhouse where holiness and charity can blossom in the light of Christ. As a Christian truly tarries in prayer every impurity is revealed and exposed. **In times of true prayer, one beholds Jesus in all His holiness and love, and therefore truly sees himself.** The prophet Isaiah clearly saw himself in the refining presence of Jesus. *"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." (Isaiah 6:1-5).*

To shun prayer is to embrace spiritual blindness! Is your closet a holy place or is it sin's hiding place? There are two closets; which one are you investing in?

by David Smithers

THE SAMUEL COMPANY

by David Wilkerson

Where are the Samuels who have heard the voice of God, who have been awakened by the Holy Spirit and have received a revelation of soon-coming judgments upon a backslidden Church? Why aren't all preachers of the Gospel grieving over the sinful condition of God's house? Why aren't all pastors and evangelists crying out as watchmen on the wall? Scripture says that Samuel was given a vision in which God pronounced the end of a backslidden religious structure, and *"Samuel told [Eli] everything, and hid nothing from him" (1 Samuel 3:18).* **I ask you, pastor: Are you telling it all? Are you holding back hiding the truth, afraid of offending your people?**

Yet in spite of those who are afraid to come forth with the full message for the Church, I believe that the Lord God always brings in a *"Samuel company"* who will hear His voice in a time of spiritual decline. This company is made up of men and women who care nothing for tradition, promotion or denominational boundaries. They represent pastors and lay people who have an ear to hear God's voice and know what grieves Him.

Without question the message of the Samuel company is not a pleasant one. *"Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision" (verse 15).* This vision was overwhelming; but Samuel could not help but share it with the one on whom judgment would fall. God would no longer put up with a form of godliness that did not have the power of holiness.

Yes, God was about to remove His presence from Shiloh, but He would do a glorious new thing in Israel. He said, *"I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever" (1 Samuel 2:35).* This verse describes the Samuel company of believers and ministers who share the very heart of God. They know the Lord's mind and His will, and they walk in fear and holiness before Him. The Samuel company is a praying people; it was while Samuel was in prayer that God revealed to him the fearful things to come. And because they are in touch with God they know and share His grief.

God is speaking in these last days to those who are shut in with Him. **He reveals His heart to those who hunger and thirst for more of Him, who pant after Him as the deer pants after the water, who have died to every selfish ambition and who have no goal in life but to bring pleasure, glory and joy to His heart.** I say this unflinchingly: God will not choose a denomination to deliver His Word to this last generation. He will not call on a committee to hear His voice and ignite the last-day gathering of the remnant. Instead, when the angels of the apocalypse go forth to smite the earth, denominations and religious leaders will be found hard at work protecting their interests and strengthening their authority, drawing up bylaws and making resolutions. But the Samuel company will be found in the secret closet of prayer, seeking their Master's will and sharing His grief over sin.

Samuel, the man God raised up to serve as judge and prophet for the Israelites, bore God's grief over His people to the very end of his ministry. The Bible says Israel eventually lusted after a king so they could be *"judge[d] . . . like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5).* At this Samuel fell on his knees, greatly displeased. God spoke these sad words to him: *"Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7).*

Samuel went to the people and warned them of the hardships they would have under a king, how he would conscript their children

(continued on next page)

and take their lands and produce, but the people insisted it was what they wanted. *"Make them a king,"* the Lord said, and their history changed again even as they broke God's heart.

Everywhere you turn now a growing number of God's people are rejecting the Lordship of Christ. They are clamoring to be *"like the nations."* That is the essence of compromise or mixture: to be just like the world. They are saying, *"We want God and the world, too!"* They want the world's recognition and prestige, the world's pleasures and the *"good life"* of luxury. But thank God for the protesting Samuel company! They have heard from God, and they know where all this compromise is going to end. They see the frightful results of apostasy ahead, and like Samuel they sob a piercing, heart-rending cry of grief.

Those who weep over sin in the Church and discern her errors are called doomsayers. Many who know them say, *"I don't like to be around them. They sound negative and morose and they look so sad."* But such onlookers simply do not know these weeping people. **They do not understand that those who truly grieve with God are given a leaping heart of joy in Jehovah.** *"Although the fig tree shall not bear fruit; neither should there be any provision on the vines; the produce of the olive should fall, and the fields not yield subsistence; the flocks should be cut off from the fold, neither should there be any herd in the stalls. Yet will I leap for joy in Jehovah. I will exult in the God of my salvation. Jehovah my Lord is my strength." Habakkuk 3:17-19, Spurrell Original Hebrew.*

Such joy comes from knowing that God will always have a pure ministry through a holy and separated people, even in the most evil of days. These people know that God will honor them with His constant presence. They draw strength from believing in the majesty and power of God, whose judgments are always righteous. With Habakkuk they can say, ***"Though all else fails, my heart will rejoice in God alone."*** Even when failure seems to surround them and they see little evidence of fruit, their grief gives way to ecstatic joy because they are near to the heart of the Lord. And, like Paul, this grieving remnant can say, *"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Corinthians 6:10).*

MAY WE FIND THAT OUR HUNGER LEADS TO THE PRAYER CLOSET TO SHARE HIS GRIEF, AND TO THE BODY OF CHRIST TO SHARE HIS JOY.

It seems that Samuel had little joy during the disastrous reign of Saul, the chosen king, for he continued to mourn for him (I Samuel 15:35). Finally the Lord said, *"How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons" (1 Samuel 16:1).* This was, of course, the young David, a man who shepherded Israel *"according to the integrity of his heart" (Psalm 78:72)* and who prefigured the Messiah.

It is, in fact, David's words that encourage us to believe that sharing God's grief will result in rejoicing. Speaking from his own wealth of experiences as one who hungered after the Lord, David said, *"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5).*

So may it be for the hungering people today! May we find that our hunger leads to the prayer closet to share His grief, and to the Body of Christ to share His joy.

by David Wilkerson
"Hungry For More Of Jesus"

*The **Watchword** is a free monthly publication designed to awaken the Church to her need for humility, repentance and revival. We gratefully welcome your prayers and financial support as the Holy Spirit leads. Please feel free to make copies of the **Watchword** for your family, friends and ministry use.*

Prayer Times
Friday; 6 to 7am (auditorium) · Saturday; 8-11am (prayer room)

ALWAYS REMEMBER

A truly prayerful and consecrated life unto God can only be established by faith. It is by trusting in the finished work of Christ that we are empowered to produce the fruit of love and righteousness.

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith." *(I John 5:4)*