

## **Prophetic Words for May 18, 2008**

*Christopher:*

One of the most compelling arguments against the existence of God is the existence of pain and suffering in the world. God has provided two, if not answers at least a way out of that conundrum. The first of course is His Son. He knows all about our pain. Of all the religions in the world, it is only Christianity that bears to have God die and to understand all of our pain. He understands it all too well. He knows us and our weaknesses. The second solution is us. The only thing necessary for evil to continue is for good men to do nothing. So it is up to us. Of course, we require of God that He reigns and He does reign, but it is for us to proclaim that reign in the world, for us to do something about it in the world. Instead de-crying all the pain and suffering and asking where is God. God's asking where are you. You are my hands and feet. If you see something wrong, do something about it. I put you here for this. He's given us His Son so we'll have the power to do whatever. Because He has gone to the Father, we can do what He is doing and greater than He can do. So we may often ask where is God in all these things that happen in the world. That God is mentally reminding us that, we are often the solution to that problem. Where are you? What are you doing? I pray, Lord, that we will answer Your call.

*Miranda:*

This has just been a week where God has wept a lot. It's so easy for us because it's on the other side of the world; to not really worry about thousands and thousands and thousands of people in Myanmar or Burma, whatever they're calling it this week. Swept away by a typhoon and then swept away by the evil of their government that really doesn't care. It's more concerned about preserving its reputation. Therefore, we can't let aid workers come in because they'll see what's going on. So we'll just let everybody starve and die of typhoid and we don't have to worry about it. But, they're way over there, so we don't have to worry about them. Or the thousands and thousands of people who are buried under mountains and mountains of rubble in China, but they're so many extra of them anyway what difference does it make. Somehow we can feel it when it's right in front of us. And when it's right here, but when it's way over there it's just real easy to just not get too worried, because it's not our people. But it is our people. They're all our people. Everybody's our people; they're all our people. And God just weeps when any of His people are suffering. I have no idea what we're supposed to do about it or how we're supposed to understand it. God just wants us to know how much He weeps, for all those people and for us to remember that we're connected to them even if they are way over there. Help us, Lord to have Your compassion to remember that You are actually in charge even though it may not look that way all the time.

*Father Bill:*

The words we keep hearing over and over again is "put on the garments of praise" in the midst of things we don't understand. Put on the garments of praise is to declare

the truth. To say God is good, having heard the gifts a moment ago about the thousands and thousands perishing around the world, seems counter-intuitive, seems hypocritical even and yet when we put the praises of God before the pains of the people, we're declaring that God is in charge. We're declaring that God reigns. And we're allowing Him first to reign in us. For if He doesn't reign in us first, we are powerless to do what He is calling us to do. So this word, put on the garments of praise, is a word that I believe is for our congregation at this time. When the spirit of discouragement, the spirit of confusion comes upon us, to whom do we turn? If we turn to praise, if we turn to God in prayer and praise, admiration and we're allowing Him to reign, and to drive out that which doesn't belong, and to establish that which does. Put on the garments of praise. When the spirit of discouragement comes upon you, put on the garments of praise. When the things of the world seem so terrible that you can't understand them, put on the garments of praise. When the pains of life come directly into our own homes, put on the garments of praise and allow God to move in our home, in our lives, in our work place. In the midst of the trials and tribulations of daily living, put on the garments of praise. The Lord says and I will exalt you even as You are exalting me by the praises of the people.

*Jack:*

I feel like the Lord's saying this morning, if you're sitting here thinking ---God why are you silent on this? Why am I not hearing from you? He's saying, I'm not silent, I'm just really, really quiet. That's His way of kind of drawing us out. For us to be quiet and sit.

*Father Bill:*

All the things we've been hearing today, all the things about growing up, growing into the likeness of God. It's a temptation in the church to want to make Christianity very easy. That's the whole concept behind the seeker friendly church. Make it real easy for people to come to Christ, but if you read the scriptures, coming to Christ in one sense is really easy. It's just simply accepting Him as personal Lord and Savior. Being born is pretty easy in one sense, for the one who's being born. It's really hard for the mom. The baby doesn't have really much to say about it. He's coming whether the mom's ready or not, but mom has to do the work. The church is the mother. It's a lot of work to bring up babies and make them into responsible adults. It would be real easy if we wanted to just have it so that we could say, "Walk the aisle, accept Jesus, now live like hell." But that's not what our job is. Our job is to help one another, to encourage one another, to grow up in the fullness and the likeness of Jesus Christ, to be like Him in every way. That's part of the message of the Sabbath. It's not easy necessarily to take time, because we live in the world, but we're not supposed to be of the world, and to make time for God is an absolute essential for those of us who want to grow into the likeness of Jesus Christ. One of the reasons why this parish may be small is because we are expecting people to do that which is contrary to what the world says. If we want to grow up in the likeness of God, we have to be more like Him than we are like the world. And it makes us really unpopular and makes us really uncomfortable. But it makes us a whole lot more whole. I'm saying He is whole in making us like him. This is what this is all about.

This is a word. I pray it's the word of the Lord. I pray that it will come and bear fruit in our lives. I covet your prayers this week as I go to listen to God; that I might hear more clearly what He's saying to us as a whole, not just me as an individual.