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THE OVERFLOW

Sometimes the Lord has strange ways of teaching us things, doesn't He? I guess He has to speak to us right down where we live so we can get a clearer picture of what's happening. He used an old table top to show us some things that we had been wondering about for awhile.

It all started when Dave's Mother refinished this old, oak table top and gave it to us because we agreed it would look nicer in our dining room than in her storage shed back in North Dakota. Then, my sister told us about this antique shop on the other side of Monroe, Wisconsin that might have the legs we needed for it. So, we piled the family in the car and set out for a place called "Breezy Acres", which should give you some clue as to its location. Anyway, I didn't know for certain where this shop was located but I thought I had a general idea so after a short stop for a root beer float and some apples to munch on the way, we started off on our safari. Well, when we got to "the cheese capitol of the world", we discovered that the signs advertising this shop had been ordered removed from the roadside by the highway department and progress had re-arranged a few roads. I began to get the feeling that we weren't going in the right direction but kept hoping that the next place just over the hill would be the one we were looking for. To shorten an otherwise long story, we ended up in a little town called Jordan. Having passed through a place named Juda a little ways back, I started to wonder if the next town up ahead would be Jericho or Jerusalem.

We finally decided we should find out where we were. The first place we stopped was a quaint little house with a friendly lady who had about a dozen kids and obviously hadn't been to town for awhile since she wasn't at all sure where anything was. She thought the place we were looking for was back toward where we had just come from and off the main road about three miles. We asked to check her phone directory to make certain but, can you believe it? She didn't have a phone. (Wouldn't it be heaven sometimes?)

So, we started back down the road and just barely spotted a sign that said, "Breezy Acres Antique Shop-2 miles up ahead" (the highway dept. must have missed that one). Now, we realized that if we had followed the nice lady's directions, we would have ended up at least three miles off the main road and further still away from our original destination. We reached the shop in eager anticipation of finding these long sought after legs only to learn that the last set had been sold to some clown with no appreciation for square oak tables since he bought them to make candle holders or some weirdo thing out of them. The owner of the shop made a few phone calls to other dealers in the area to no avail. After scrounging around in piles of expensive junk and being amazed at the prices on things my ancestors hauled to the dump years ago, we decided to carefully head for the car since breathing on some of the fragile glassware could be disastrous and costly.

But, the afternoon wasn't a total loss because during the drive home, the Lord began to show us that this experience relates to the Cup in many ways. First of all, God gave Dave a burden for this ministry far greater than our desire to search for those table legs and He has not taken that vision away. We long to see the Cup become what God wants it to be much more than people long for those goodies in the antique shops. God promised us a long time ago that the Cup would be a media for reaching the lost and that it would become a haven, a place of rest for the weary, a shelter in the time of storm, a refuge for the down and out and that people would come from every direction, North, South, East and West. He gave us a vision of a place of ministry, a place of evangelism a place for fellowship and caring, a place for helping people find purpose, direction and meaning for their lives by applying God's Word to their situation and a place for using what God has taught us to help others become all that they can be in Christ.

The point is this: We know what God's destination for us is and we know that all this will happen in God's way and in His timing just as I'm sure we will find legs for that table. The main thing He's showing us is that because we lack clear-cut direction as to how God plans to accomplish His will at the Cup and there seems to be so many different concepts of what God really wants, we have to stop the car, give God a call and get more explicit directions before we can go any further. We don't want to keep wandering around trying one road and then another or miss a sign somewhere along the way and end up about three miles off the main road and further away from our destination than we've ever been.

We've had the idea for ~~some~~ time now that we were getting off course and weren't headed in the right direction. We also know that you can't do an effective job of running a full-time ministry with part-time people and halfway commitment. We know He wants to do a new thing in a greater dimension than ever before, but He is certainly delayed because when everyone has a different idea of what God wants and everyone goes in a different direction, it's pretty hard to end in the same place at the same time. We get lots of suggestions from well-meaning people along the road we're traveling and we appreciate the concern. However, if we followed some of the advice we get, we would have ended up at least three miles or more off the main road so deep in the wilderness we would never find our way out. So, please don't criticize the way things are going at the Cup or the way we do things unless you can offer a workable solution to the problem and will help make it work.

WHAT IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO IS THIS: We feel the Lord directing us to cancel our entire August schedule and stop all activities so that we can have time to really seek God's face and find His will for the Cup. During the month of August, will you join with us in prayer (and fasting if the Lord leads) asking God to show all of us what He wants and bring in the people to accomplish it? What Jesus said in Matthew 9:37 really applies to us: "The harvest is so great and the workers so few". The needs are there, people are searching for answers, but the needs go unmet and the people are still searching because of the lack of workers. However, verse 38 in that same chapter tells us what to do about the problem! "So pray to the one in charge of the harvesting and ask Him to recruit more workers for His harvest fields." (LNB) Pray that God will show all of us what He wants, bring in the workers and give them a unified purpose and supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory.

Our answering service will continue to be available to refer messages to us, so if you have a need or if God shows you anything that you feel will help, please call. Also, we will be at the Cup on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. for those who feel a commitment to joining us for some serious prayer.

God seems to be calling His people to real commitment which is vital if we are going to move mountains. You'd better believe the devil and his followers are united for a common cause and that is to thwart all of the believer's efforts to walk with Christ and add to His Kingdom. It's about time that Christians unite and start fighting for a common cause instead of fighting with each other. Now, God isn't going to call us all to the same ministry but He is calling us all to the same body and the same family. But members of a family aren't related because they think alike. My sister and I don't always agree but we are still sisters. The Scriptures say we are married to Christ when we become His disciples and we all know that the only marriages that really work are those in which both partners are committed to make it work and stick it out regardless of the problems. This takes real communication, honesty, loving and a forgiving heart. Likewise, the body of Christ must have this same relationship-communication, not just among its members but between the members and the head, Christ Jesus; Honesty, not only among members but with ourselves and especially with the Lord; Loving and forgiving, not because we think alike but because we are committed to a cause-the cause of UNITY.

We are looking forward to September with much anticipation of what God has planned. When He has you doing things you don't always understand, the results are always far greater than our human minds can comprehend. We always want to give Him the glory because we know without Him we could do nothing. So, please be patient with us. God's not finished with us yet!

In the interim, you might want to go to the Shrine Temple on North Main Street in Rockford, Illinois to hear Brian Rudd on August 28th at 7:00 p.m. Brian is one of today's most dynamic young ministers. But only a few short years ago he was leading a life of crime, sneering at the dedicated efforts of his minister father. After experimenting with pep pills & booze, he **was** introduced to robbery and serious clashes with the law until finally he landed in solitary confinement where he met Jesus and began his preaching career right there in prison.

Love in His Wonderful Name and Service,

DAVE AND PAT FOGDERUD, Directors

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