



RESURRECTION CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

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EVANGELIZING THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER

Letters of Faith

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*“My Bride is beautiful to Me!
You don't see her beauty
because you don't see her the same way I do.
Where you see her ugliness, I see her immaturity.
Through My eyes of love and faith, I see My Bride's increasing glory!
That which is beautiful to you in nature shows you
what is beautiful to Me in the spiritual.”*

Dearly Beloved,

I have lately been sharing at every opportunity my conviction that “we aren't doing church right, yet.” My conviction is primarily based on the fact that most church services today are so “organized” that there is no opening for the Holy Spirit to manifest His presence and present signs and wonders that bring us to Jesus. As true as this may be, it is important to us and to Jesus that we love the Church even as it is, even as He does!

The Lord is telling us in the above prophetic word that He wants us to behold the beauty of His Bride the same way that He does. That means that we are going to have to look at her with different eyes: with the eyes of the Bridegroom — the eyes of Agape love — instead of with the eyes of a Miss America Pageant judge appraising her good and unattractive qualities and abilities. He is also telling us how we will see beauty in the Bride where we haven't before: by applying the principles of observing the beauty we already appreciate and admire in nature — His creation.

There is beauty in contrast and variety. Much of the beauty of our beloved farm, Eagles Nest, was in the incredible contrasts of color, contour, and composition of land and foliage. Even in the depths of winter, there was a russet hue to the weeds and grasses in the open pasture areas that complemented the sprinkling of snow. The golden color of the late afternoon sun brought out the residual tones in some of the withered maple leaves, reminding us of their recent autumnal glory. The deep green of the pines we had planted stood out sharply against winter's leafless trees in the woods, and in the spring, they provided a deep anchor to the different shades of brilliant greens in the willows, oaks, maples, walnuts, river birch, hickories, and sassafras that outlined the fields and bordered the streams. Under a deep blanket of snow, the beauty of this place was dramatized by the stark and almost two-dimensional contrast between the brilliant white and the somber blackness of the trees.

The view of our valley fields and creeks was enhanced by the rolling contours of the wooded hills that surrounded them. The occasional stark outcropping of rock

made the mossy creek banks even more attractive. Constantly changing patterns of light and shadow accentuated the gullies and ravines.

We need to learn that God sees contrast and variety in the Body of Christ as beautiful too, just as we see beauty in the contrasts and variety in nature all around us! We must constantly remind ourselves of God's Word that there is beauty in variety with unity. **"For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."** (Romans 12:4-5)

Beloved, if you can hear this as from our Father, you will not lose your love for the Church, the Body of Christ, by attempts to bring conformity to certain "currently acceptable" molds of "church" practice and performance that lead to constraint instead of freedom in the Spirit.

An early Church Father said: *"In things necessary: unity! In things doubtful: liberty! In all things: charity!"* In those things of the faith that are really necessary, we are praying that God is bringing us into a full unity of faith and understanding at the levels of our mind and heart. But in those things that are peripheral to His plans for the Body of Christ, we need to insist on exhibiting grace for unity of spirit in diversity of expression, while we get many of the practical details of expression straightened out to the Bridegroom's satisfaction. And in all things, we must flow in love for one another, until we all come together in accordance with His understanding and preferences.

There is beauty in productiveness. Cultivated crops are beautiful in their abundance and weedless order, and yet there is also a wild kind of beauty in the woodland's abandon to weeds and bushes and brambles that provide the seeds and berries for wildlife (and for our breakfast jams).

It is the abundance of sheep and cows that make the lush pastures in England and Wales so incredibly alluring and restful. This abundant combination of fertility and life give these lovely, pastoral, scenic places a special beauty and peace.

So it must be with the Bride of Christ: there must be a vibrancy of the life of Jesus in her that is not found in the world around us. There must be both food for the spirit, and food for the soul. It is the frequent lack of the manifestation of God's productive power and strength in our church gatherings that has me constantly provoking leaders to encourage the saints to publicly testify of the Holy Spirit's recent actions in their lives.

There is beauty in adornment. The wildflowers carpeting the woods and garnishing the pastures at Eagles Nest Farm were so abundant, so brilliant, and so varied that they would take your breath away on a bright, sunny spring day. We saw in them God's unique beauty hidden away and unseen by the world around us, created by Him simply for the sake of their beauty whether they were seen or not. The Word says that Solomon in all of his oriental splendor was nothing compared to the lilies of Israel's fields. When we first went to Scotland, we were in absolute awe over the hills of fuchsia and purple heather that were in full bloom. Yet some who talked with us about our plans to go up into the far north of the Scottish Highlands said it was dull, barren, and uninteresting. Their eyes weren't yet open to the glory of God in His handiwork.

We mustn't be afraid of adornments in the Body of Christ, but I believe that we Christians — the very members of the Body of Christ — are to be the primary adornments of the Bride, not expensive stained glass, banners, well-produced performances, or ornate structures.

There is beauty in peace and serenity. There was a particular beauty in the peace and tranquility we found in some very special places at Eagles Nest Farm. That is why we always said to the saints that came for restoration, “Don't bring your radios and your portable TVs and your Walkman tape players! Learn to drink in the beauty of the Godly quiet, the conversations of the birds, and the soothing sounds of the creeks. Come to appreciate how much more beautiful the Bride is when she is at peace, than when she is anxious and full of striving.”

There is beauty in change. There is constant change in nature all around us. There is change from season to season, from week to week, and even daily if you have eyes to see it! The change in the Bride that is the most beautiful to the Lord, however, is her maturing. To become the mature Bride for whom the Lord is coming back, we must all grow into the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). That is going to take some major growing up for most of us! We are convinced that one of the most beautiful things in the eyes of the Lord Jesus is seeing this Godly growth in us, His Bride.

Finally, *there is beauty in fruitfulness.* There is nothing more beautiful to a parent than seeing their newborn baby. There is a glow of glory in the face of the mother who has just given birth. The reproducing saint is especially beautiful to the Lord! We, the Body, need to start bringing forth “babes in Christ,” and then nurturing them, and making them disciples. And we who are more mature already, must continue to grow up and start letting the Holy Spirit bring forth through us new signs and wonders that signify the victorious power and productivity of God in the midst of His holy people.

The multitudes around God's throne are even now starting to proclaim: **“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.”** (Revelation 19:7 emphasis added). He is coming for a Bride who is beautiful in her contrasts and variety, in her productiveness, in her adornments, in her peace and serenity, in her maturity and growth, and in her fruitfulness. But, Beloved, we are all far from being made ready yet!

Beloved, we call on each of you to let the Holy Spirit work in your heart to show you how to make yourselves more beautiful in His eyes, and ready for His coming and claiming you as His Bride! That is the only way we can each assist in bringing forth His reviving return. And: *Lord Jesus, please open our eyes to see Your Bride the way You do!*

Huge Hopeful Hugs,

Paul & Janet