

My parents began their married life together during the Great Depression. Many a time they shared stories from those challenging years with us, their four children. Because of their hard up-bringing, great value was placed on the smallest scrap of food, on pennies, on clothing, on “making things last.” I might have been in the sixth or seventh grade before I wore something that was not either a second or third hand-me-down.

Mother made all our clothes, including jeans. Shoes were bought much larger than we needed and we were told to take care of them, because we would be wearing them until we outgrew them. Saturday evening was always shoe-shine time, as we were all expected to have bright shiny shoes for church in the morning.

When we had breakfast, we were NEVER allowed to apply our own jelly. Mother explained that we were supposed to *taste* jelly, not *eat* it. When she was in the kitchen once, my little brother and I decided she only wanted us to smell the jelly. We obviously didn't speak that shared opinion.

Perhaps once a year we were treated to a small Dairy Queen ice cream cone when we drove the 18 miles to the store nearest us. Umm, was that delicious! If we did chores around the house or happened to be the oldest in the family who got to be a newspaper thrower, we earned a few coins a week. My goodness, how we made that treasured change last. I remember penny candy (a nickel could purchase a treasure trove of goodies), and if Noel and I pooled our change, we could buy a whole roll of Necco candy discs. I used to save out the white ones and then we would play “Mass” and though I was a little girl, I got to be the priest because I knew more Latin than my little brother or the protestant boy we bribed to be the second altar boy. But hey, if he would play along with us, we'd pretend he was Catholic and give him “communion” when the time came! One of my fondest memories is of my Daddy taking my little brother and me to the Nickel and Dime store in Rochester (Indiana) where once again Noel and I proudly spent twenty-five cents apiece to buy a divided glass condiment dish for our mom for Mother's Day. It has been interesting to see how the four of us siblings have adjusted or absorbed some of these values into our lifestyles as the years have come and gone.

Today all of us use way too much butter on our toast (that was a no-no growing up too!), and jelly is gleefully spread from corner to sweet corner. Several years ago my sister and I went on a trip together, and on the way home decided to stop at a Dairy Queen. Both of us were delighted to discover that each thought DQs to be the best ice cream in the world, and our favorite delicacy was – you guessed it, Peanut Buster Parfaits! How we laughed and enjoyed reminiscing about younger days.

I've been thinking about the lavish love the Lord wants to pour out upon you and me in unrestrained intimacy in these critical days of salvation history. I have become convinced that many of us have a kind of "depression" relationship with Him. Because our backgrounds were very "religious" and focused in large measure on "being proper," our relationship with Him has been more "broth" than "banquet." We have contented ourselves with "smelling the jelly" rather than slathering it generously on our spiritual lives. Why? Because we never knew there could be more. Since this is all we have ever known of His presence, we assume there simply couldn't be any more.

But how encouraging it is to hear that there is indeed more! God is invading our earth today, even as you read these pages! Testimonies are abounding how the Lord is showing Himself in actual manifested ways in communities and countries around the world. He is visiting villages and towns in Manifested Presence! And the result? Unparalleled joy, undreamt of repentance, an awakening of the slumbering love He calls His Bride, and the subsequent revival of the church! More than that, this is accompanied by a spilling over of His wondrous Presence into the streets and cities of these communities. There He accomplishes in a very short time what men have been trying to do for years, both men in government as well as with local church programs! He brings about real deliverance! Men and women, young and old turn to Him quickly; churches burst at the seams such that many groups simply meet in homes! Miracles abound, even to the point of resurrections from the dead! And can it be? Is this possible? Yes! Can it happen here in the United States? Yes!

Wouldn't it be awesome to see depressed folk enter into our churches and come out services filled with hope? Don't you long for the day when drug addicts and those gripped by sexual sins come to worship the Lord on Sunday and leave born-again, forgiven, delivered and set free? Can God do this? Yes! Can you believe Him for all of this? I can. I must. I will. I do.

Listen to the Word of the Lord. Listen - and let your hope soar! Believe - and begin seeking Him as you never have before! He longs to invade our lives. He yearns to pour Himself out upon us, upon our communities, our cities, our country!

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy."
Acts 2:17-18

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father." John 14:12

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. John 7:37-38

*Test me in this and **see if I don't open up heaven itself to you** and pour out blessings beyond your wildest dreams. **11** For my part, I will defend you against marauders, protect your wheat fields and vegetable gardens against plunderers." *The Message of God-of-the-Angel-Armies.*
12 "You'll be voted 'Happiest Nation.' You'll experience what it's like to be a country of grace." *God-of-the-Angel-Armies says so. The Difference Between Serving God and Not Serving Him Malachi 3:10-12 (The Message)**

*Are you tired? Worn out? **Burned out on religion?** Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Matthew 11:28*

So what *is* lacking in our lives that we are not experiencing the Lord in such transforming ways? Think about it. Pray about it. Seek Father about it. Check out His Word about it. And let's see what the answer is going to be.

In our next meditation!