

SOME DROUGHTS ARE PREVENTABLE

I hate a drought! I know that there are people in the U.S. mid-west and around the world who have had so much flooding this year that they are praying for a drought so they can repair or rebuild their homes and businesses and perhaps replant their crops. I am grateful that I have only had to personally endure one flood situation in my life. I remember Mama and Daddy trying to put all the beds and furniture up on blocks, but to no avail. I can only imagine how they must have felt trying to raise six young-uns and see everything they had under water with no flood insurance.

Though I am indeed grateful we do not have to deal with flooding, we are experiencing one of the most severe and prolonged droughts since the early 1980's. We have gone over two months without any significant rainfall along with record setting high temperatures. Everything is brown. All the fruit trees have shed their fruit. The entire State is under a 'no burn' order. Dry ground corn, cotton, soybeans and peanuts are either lost or severely damaged. Hay is critically short and the cows are hungry. We weaned calves this week to take pressure off the mamas, but the ground is so dry that the electric fence does not keep the calves in. Yep, I can honestly say I hate a drought!

There is another type of drought besides the lack of rainfall that I hate even more, which is completely avoidable, yet which I sometimes find myself in the midst of--Spiritual drought! This results in a weak, dry and barren feeling in my soul. I thirst. I thirst for the flow of life giving water of the Word of God and the comfort of the presence of the Holy Spirit, but I have clasped my mouth shut, have deafened my ears, and have so neglected my relationship with the Lord Jesus that I can neither hear the voice of the Holy Spirit nor partake of the joy of His presence. This is not to say that He is not ever present in my 'self imposed' drought, I know for a fact from having been here before that He is, but I find myself unable to enjoy His peace in my spiritually malnourished state.

I know it is a weird analogy, but as I reflect on these times of spiritual drought, I compare them to going to family reunion and leaving there hungry! More fine food than you can shake a stick at, more than I could ever eat or need, yet for some reason in the presence of so much delicious and nutritious food, I leave there having not eaten.

The times I find myself in these spiritually dry seasons is when I am the busiest doing the Lord's work. I guess it is like the old saying, I am so busy doing the Lord's work, that I neglect the Lord of the work! Unlike a weather drought where the rains do not come and we cannot do anything about it, our spiritual droughts are most often self inflicted in the midst of spiritual plenty. In my case, it is because in my 'busyness', I do not take time to be alone with God and in His Word, thus removing myself from His companionship and the spiritual nourishment that I need and even hunger for on a daily basis. Every day I find myself saying, "I can't today, but tomorrow, I will take time to be alone with the Lord."

This reminds me God's warning to Israel which I believe is also a warning to the Church and to America today. He warned of a spiritual drought that He would inflict upon His people if they continued to reject His Word and His will and follow their own wicked ways.

"The days are coming, declares the Sovereign Lord, 'when I will send a famine through the land—not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the

Lord, but they will not find it. In that day the lovely women and strong young men will faint because of thirst.” (Amos 8:11-13).

Israel had not wanted to listen to the message of the prophets, and so God said that He would silence them. Only when Truth was absent and they were desperate, would God’s people develop a “hunger” for God’s Word. They would wander throughout the land in a futile search, not for food, but for someone who would proclaim the Word of the Lord.

It seems that in the church today and in our culture, many are willing to stand up and speak in God’s name and quote excerpts from the Bible, but their messages are neither from Him nor true to His Word. How many of our young people today are searching for unchanging, uncompromising ‘TRUTH’ in our churches and are walking away malnourished, disillusioned and unchanged?

Billions of others are experiencing a “famine” of the Word of God because they live in countries closed to the Gospel and the Word of God. Even more tragic is the case of those like us who have easy access to the Scriptures and suffer a spiritual famine out of neglect and complacency. We have so many Bibles and so many churches, yet we take the Gospel for granted and we neither know nor abide in His Word.

While a lack of food can lead to disease and death, a famine of God’s Word will produce eternal death. Without access to God’s Word, we lack wisdom for life and we miss the message of eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Mankind is literally starving for the truth of God’s Word, trying to satisfy their spiritual hunger with everything else. Let us return to God so we can be channels of life giving water to others suffering in spiritual drought.