



October 30, 2009

Dear Friends:

### **PARTY HEARTY**

I'm convinced we don't celebrate our victories enough. Guess it is not as much fun.

The old adage, "Bad news travels fast" seems to be true and it could be added, "...and it sells, too". In a time when the populace has dummed down to get most of their news from People Magazine, Entertainment Tonight and the silly hens on The View, the appetite for high tech gossip grows daily and the stuff that sells best leans strong on the rumor, scandal and all things salacious.

In the media world, it is profitable to cater to the base desire of needing a fix of the thrilling. It also acts as a vicarious connecter between the famous and the great unwashed. The lucrative sales of the Supermarket "rags" prove we just love human train wrecks.

Our senses are seared by the sensational. Consequently, we have grown insensitive to the simple, victorious things that we should be celebrating and it seems this carnal character trait is also alive and well in our Christianized circles. We love our information and the more gossipy, the better.

Right now, I'm looking at words on a Dell Computer screen but my mind is seeing faces; faces of those who, like grocery tabloids, are anointed disseminators of a different kind of gospel, the stinging kind. And in those faces, I see shipwrecked lives, families, finances and futures yet they seemingly sail on clueless and unfettered because their information often gets rewarded and they feel so good that even Pavlov would be flabbergasted.

After our flood soaked trial and during the subsequent recovery process, one dear "leader" was compelled to stand before a congregation and joyfully announce information about what poor wiped out Michael and Linda would be doing. Never mind that I never even got a phone call, but the pious prognostication was deemed worthy because it was based on the tittle-tattle sources that fed our buddy who, in turn, Polly Parroted the news in prayer request form. Junk travels fast.

We all face enough of what can be called bad news on our own and we certainly don't need any more help. The truth is we are supposed to be in the Good News business! The very message we espouse and evangelize for is called Good News! I'm not naive, we will all fight battles but I'm here to remind you, we have more Good News to focus on!

Right now there is a big time dearth of Good News. This is because natural man is looking for natural man to bring the good news. This is all wrong, James calls it asking amiss. Looking for Good News? The Enquirer can't help, Oprah can't help and that Washington nitwit who announced that her guiding principles come from Chairman Mao's writings can't help either. No good news here.

Just this week, I have cried and rejoiced. I like the rejoicing better.

A few days ago, I was talking with someone who was fighting waves of discouragement and despair. While hearing an impassioned, real cry, I was moved and so wanted a quick, snap out of it answer. While praying and waiting for that Eureka moment, I began to point to past answers of other intercessions and the blessings that had ensued. I encouraged the remembrance and the celebration of those times of God's loving favor. We really do have some things to rejoice about but we forget to celebrate.

In rejoicing category... For weeks I watched my friend suffer in pain. The progressive debilitation seemed to increase each time I saw him and at times, all I had was a hug and a simple sounding "I'm praying for you". We pronounced and declared but relief did not come. My friend is not a spiritual "Johnny come lately" but a seasoned person of faith who was really hurting while hanging on to the "By His Stripes" Word. When surgery day arrived,

my friend decided that this was one of those "every good gift comes from God" moments and that he would run to the healing moment with an unwavering spirit of faith and expectation. He closed his eyes clutching to the Good News. Well, my friend sailed through what had been promised to be quite rough and came out with a faith word and joyful face. The cloud of sickness oppression had been defeated and broken. God won and my friend got the overflow. He will spend the rest of his life trumpeting God's miraculous blessing. That's Good News, let's celebrate!

During this time, I was reminded of the Proverbs 15 words, "...the Lord hears the prayers of the righteous. The light of the eyes makes the heart rejoice and a good report brings health to the bones." We don't deny that bad news is waiting to attach itself to us but the Word is clear; this Good News makes us healthy and blessed. Think I'll run in that direction. It will be health to my very core.

"Finally ya'll, whatever things are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there is any virtue and anything praiseworthy, meditate (think about it, dream about it, talk about it, expect it to become part of you) on these things" MG's adaptation of Phil 4:8.

It is not a cruel trick but a marvelous treat of blessing that promises to even make our bones feel better. "Dem bones, hear the Word of the Lord!"

Spread the Good News and celebrate it. I'm convinced, we don't do it enough.

*Michael*

