

RHM Testimonials

Just wanted to say a big 'thank you' for posting all the resources on your website. I am a long-haul truck driver, and so I download the presentations onto my iPod and listen to them as I'm driving along. It has truly been a blessing to keep the wonderful picture of our God fresh in my mind, and continue to learn more about Him through your presentations. God bless you.—D

Thank Herb for his continued messages on how much God Loves us..We feel so totally blessed having his sermons. Much Love & Gratitude for "His" work thru him.—BP

Sermon of the Month



No Longer Under the Law – by Herb Montgomery.

Over a century ago a little lady, which many of us still respect, stated that the law in Galatians included also, not just the ceremonial aspects of the Old Testament Law, but the moral aspects as well. This caused a great stir and still continues to today. But many of us still fail to see what Paul was really trying to say to the believers in Galatians. Many of us are stuck in a rules based,

penalty vs. reward paradigm of relating to God when He is offering us something so much "Better." The old covenant works for children, but we are called to also grow up at some point. If you'd like to take your relationship with our loving Heavenly Father to a whole new level of intimacy and devotion, we encourage you to take advantage of this month's free presentation, *No Longer Under the Law*, by Herb Montgomery. (Given at Iowa-Missouri Campmeeting summer of 2009.)

OSchedule

April 16-17, 2010

South Louisiana Campmeeting
Hammond, LA
318.631.6240

May 30, 2010

Mt Vernon Academy Graduation
Mt Vernon, Oh

June 11-19, 2010

Arizona Campmeeting
Prescott, AZ
480.991.6777

May 14-15, 2011

Sylvan Lake SDA Church
Sylvan Lake, AB
403.887.2604

June 1-5, 2010

Iowa / Missouri Campmeeting
Centralia, MO
515.223.1197

June 27-July 3, 2010

Leoni Meadows Family Camp
Grizzly Flats, CA
530-626-3610

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Renewed Heart Ministries – PO Box 1211 — Lewisburg, WV — 24901

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Awakenings

The Official Newsletter of Renewed Heart Ministries :: April, Two-Thousand and Ten



by Herb
Montgomery



Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life." – John 4:13, 14

Recently I asked an audience a central question about this passage; what was the "living water" that Jesus mentioned? I received a myriad of answers, all of which left me wanting more. None of them fit. Maybe that's because truth is often so simple that we miss it. We have a tendency to make things more diffi-

cult than they need to be. The most adamant of the answers I received was "eternal life!" However, I want you to notice carefully that the living water becomes a fountain inside us, a fountain that springs up and overflows from within us, leading to eternal life. The water and "eternal life" are not the same thing.

So, then, what is this living water? Well, it has certain qualities:

1. It can only be received from God Himself. **2.** Once received, it satisfies so deeply that our insatiable "thirsting," our deep sense of need and void, is met and filled permanently. **3.** It then becomes something inside of us that flows from us to others. **4.**

[CONTINUED FROM FRONT] And lastly, it grows and develops into Eternity itself. Hm. Do you know it yet? Have you guessed it?

David too found that his “soul” was “thirsty” and that nothing in this world could satisfy it (see Psalms 63:1). Later, however, he found that every desire and longing he had ever felt was fully satisfied by this same “living water” (see Psalms 145:16). Do you know now?

Compare the following verses to the qualities listed above. **1.** Love is from God, and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God . . . for God is love. (1 John 4:7, 8) **2.** . . . And to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:19) **3.** We love, because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19) **4.** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. (1 John 3:14)

The living water is love! Genuine, other-centered, selfless, self-sacrificing, self-abandoning love. It hopes all things, believes all things, and bears all things. It only stems from God Himself, who embodies and exemplifies this kind of Love. Once we taste it, it satisfies so deeply that we truly feel we were created to drink it. Next, it immediately springs up and flows outward, toward others, changing us into its very image. It is at that point, when we have been con-

verted from self-centeredness to other-centeredness (see 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15), that we have passed from death unto life.

There is one more unmistakable proof that Jesus referenced God’s love when he spoke of the living water. This proof is evidenced in what Jesus said next to the dear woman at the well. Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water . . . Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.” The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.” He said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here” (John 4:10–16).

So far, we have made the claim that the living water Jesus was offering to the woman at the well was actually an encounter with the other-centered, non-condemning, selfless, genuine love that only comes from God Himself (see 1 John 4:7). We have looked at a series of evidences for this, but the strongest evidence is that when the woman finally did ask for it, in order for Jesus to actually give it to her, He had to bring up the subject of her husband. Why does the conversation abruptly take this twist? What was Jesus up to? I think it’s quite simple and obvious if one thinks about it for just a moment.

At the end of the dialogue with this woman, she runs back to her village and states, “Come meet a man who told me everything bad I’ve ever done.” What Jesus actually told her was that she had been married five times and, to put it bluntly, the man she was living with currently was just what my folks would have called “shacking up.” I don’t know if you’ve ever tried to talk to complete strangers about their marital past before, but I would imagine the last response to be expected would be for them to get excited about it (if it was much like this woman’s) and for them to go run off to all their friends so they could come and meet you, too! It’s a very odd story, to say the least. What on earth is going on here, and what does it have to do with Jesus’ gift of living water?

John tells us that the law came through Moses, but grace and truth were realized through Jesus (John 1:17). Grace and truth. Both. Put yourself in this woman’s shoes for just a moment and imagine how you’d feel as Jesus recounts all the mistakes you’ve made in your past. But something is different. As he lists all your mistakes, His expression never changes, the look in His eyes does not drift into disappointment, He doesn’t pull away, there is no censor, only acceptance, forgiveness, compassion and pure, non-condemning love. You begin to realize that He really does know everything there is to know about you, and, yet, He still passionately loves you with all of it. This kind of love is “living water!” When I grew up, people used to

tell me, “Love is blind.” And although I understand what they meant, I don’t need a love that’s blind! I need a love that knows everything there is to know about me and yet loves me nonetheless for it. A love that knows the truth about me, but the worse that reality is, the more His grace abounds. I need a love that is not just full of truth, but grace and truth. What this woman saw was the same reality Paul later encountered, too, that where “Sin abounds, Grace does much more abound” (Romans 5:20). What this woman encountered was the deeply intimate embrace of an all-enveloping love for her very soul, just the way she was. And do you know what the beauty of this kind of love is? Though it loves you just the way you are, it never leaves you quite the same as when it found you. It immediately begins to transform its object into the same exact image of itself. It becomes a fountain inside us, flowing out toward others as well. We immediately begin to want to be able to love like that! And when that takes place, then we begin to realize what “Salvation” really is. We, at that point, pass from death unto life, and enter a world of extravagant love, amazing grace, and an intimate relationship with the most beautiful Being in all the universe, a Being others have defined as — Love. [END]

- Herb Montgomery

MINISTRY UPDATE

Rochester SDA Church : Rochester, Minnesota

I received an email about a week before I left for these meetings to make sure we had understood which “Rochester” I was headed to and Yep!, we were on our way to the wrong one. We quickly switched that ticket and breathe a sigh of relief that the mistake was caught early enough to fix. And we are all still laughing about it.

But, I must stay, although Rochester, Minnesota is the home of the famous Mayo clinic (which is impressive to say the least), January is the coldest time to visit! I don’t think I’ve ever preached in 18 below temperatures, but a good time was had by all regardless. I will say, that the warmth Mother Nature lacked was made up for and beyond by the loving spirit manifested by this Minnesota church.

The weekend was comprised of four presentation on the gospel and then some lively discussions in between. I’ll share just a little of what the Pastor there (which I respect so highly) emailed me recently: “I want to tell

you that your presentations of the good news have impacted a number of members of the our church and it has been a blessing. We ordered 36 copies of your book and still have people asking about them as others tell them about it. May the Lord continue to use you to further the story of good news! Thanks for stepping out in trust to God to do this kind of much needed ministry.”

And to those who support us in doing this ministry, I want to personally thank YOU. We could not do it without you. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Lakeport SDA Church : Lakeport, CA

“Because of His great Love for us . . .” (Ephesians 2:4)

It seems like such a small point to many, but it makes a tremendously significant difference when we begin to view God’s relation to us based on His love for us rather than how well we live up to whatever standard we imagine is His concern. (That’s a different subject but quite related.)

This weekend at Lakeport we spent four sessions looking at some new ideas that I have been looking at over the past twelve months. I’m convinced that many of us truly don’t understand what the simplest verse in all the Bible is saying to us: “God so loved the world that He gave . . .” (John 3:16)

God is good to us, not because we are good but because He is good. God is kind to us, not because we are kind, but because He is a kind person. God loves us, not because we are loving, but because God is love and love is just what love does.

This weekend held many new insights for those who attended and it is our privilege to share the first presentation as this month’s free sermon of the month from Renewed Heart Ministries. It’s my prayer that you will share in the blessing too. “He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:45) I wish you God’s best. [END]

But this great sacrifice was not made in order to create in the Father’s heart a love for man, not to make Him willing to save. No, no! “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.” John 3:16. The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Corinthians 5:19. God suffered with His Son. In the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary, the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption . . . None but the Son of God could accomplish our redemption; for only He who was in the bosom of the Father could declare Him. Only He who knew the height and depth of the love of God could make it manifest. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the Father’s love to lost humanity.

- E.G. White, Steps to Christ, p. 13.14