A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE

by Dannie Byrd

At the end of December, our family sang and ministered at a youth camp in Hesperus, CO, sponsored by Kingdom Seekers Ministry. As a sixteen year old, I would like to share a young person's perspective on how the Holy Spirit united the young people and the leaders in a heart changing move of God.

Most of the 75 or 80 kids at the camp ranged in age from twelve to twenty-five, though there were a few younger. Many of these young people were already on fire for the Lord when they arrived, but were to be stirred to a greater commitment than any of them had ever expected.

The camp lasted for three days and four nights. Each day was packed with classes that dealt with subjects ranging from abortion to home schooling; from Biblical law to government. (Did you know that 75% of the Bible deals with government?) Each night two young men gave thirty minute presentations. The Lord really worked through these young men to inspire their peers, and for several who had never spoken before, 'preaching' was a great learning experience.

This camp was not like any other we had ever attended. The Holy Spirit did a convicting work in the leadership that flowed over to the eager hearts of the young people. Men who have taught and preached for years repented of such things as prideful attitudes and other seemingly small things that become huge stumbling blocks, especially to young people who seek to follow.

We had a prayer session one night that was optional, and because it was during free time after a long day of classes, only a few people were expected to show up. To the surprise of all, everybody came, and a session that was only supposed to last 15 to 30 minutes lasted for nearly two hours! The tearful cry of the young people was that God show them what they were to do to fulfill His calling in their lives. It was obvious that each person who came was filled with a new excitement for the things of God that we all pray will last!

Speaking as a teenager, it is such a blessing and encouragement to see God raising up a commited group my own age. We will have to assume responsibility when our parents' generation passes the torch of leadership of both our nation and the Church of Jesus Christ on to us. We must prepare for that responsibility now, for our own childrens' sake.

Psalm 78:1-8 tells us that it is our Job to instill the commandments of God in our children that they might not forget God and become rebellious and hard hearted like previous generations. The camp at Hesperus was a landmark in discipling young people into the ways of God. The young people who attended will be an inspiration to all who come into contact with them as God continues to work in the hearts and minds of us all! Please pray for all of the youth of our nation, that God will send them radically commited men and women who can disciple them into the Kingdom of God!

ALL HAIL KING JESUS!

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THY KINGDOM COME

by Barry Byrd

This will be the first in a series of articles that will share what God has shown me over the last 15 years concerning His plan of the ages -- to establish His Kingdom in the earth.

The battle of the ages deals primarily with one question: Who will be glorified, worshipped and exalted, man or God? All of history is a grand battleground where the monuments of the evidence of the eternal struggle abound, with man ever the looser, reaping death and destruction punctuated by an occasional glimpse of the inherent blessings that come to men and nations when they exalt an all-wise God.

Each generation must decide, either actively or by default, where it stands on this issue. Those of us in the 'baby boom' generation are no exception. Raised in a time when the ways of the world have been extolled above God's formula for life as found in His holy Word, we find ourselves almost unable to discern the difference.

We have seen this confusion illustrated graphically in the last few years as many who appeared to be working for the Kingdom of God have instead proven that they were building their own kingdoms. The Jim Bakkers and Jimmy Swaggerts don't surprise most of us that much, but our family has been shocked and disillusioned to find the same thing among those who are preaching a much more timely and anointed message -- those to whom we would wholeheartedly say "Amen!" We are compelled to ask ourselves, "How does this happen, and how can we tell whether or not the messenger and the message are one?

In order to answer the first question, we must go back to the beginning of the adversary's strategy in the Garden of Eden and restore some foundational understanding of what the battle to establish the Kingdom of God in the earth involves.

Adam and Eve were told NOT to eat of only one tree in the garden. Instead of choosing unconditional obedience, they were tempted by the serpent and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their reason for accepting the sophistry of the serpent was that they desired to make their own decisions concerning life rather than relying on the counsel of their Creator God.

Now, the tree of which they ate contained the knowledge of *both* good and evil, and the result is that man is capable of understanding and teaching many good concepts and principles separate from submission to the purifying and cleansing of the Holy Spirit. However, the tree of life was an entirely different tree from which Adam and Eve were separated by God when they were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Thus, they had not had the opportunity to partake of life.

We begin to see, then, how we may have a ministry with a good message or program that is tarnished with a deadly motive -- self-exaltation. The inevitable end of such a ministry is death and destruction after many sheep have been fleeced, wounded or deceived by a wolf who masquerades as a shepherd.

How can God's people discern the wolf from the shepherd? The answer goes back to the original question that we must always ask: "Who is being exalted, man or God?"

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