



Gracestoration

# Update

BOB AND DOTTIE (Connor) BINGHAM (303) 761-5005 Fax (303) 761-3682 e-mail: cupbearers@shepherdinggrace.org VOLUME 9.1, MARCH 2003

## CUPbearers / Gracestoration Annual Memorial Day Retreat May 23-26, 2003

Please see the enclosed brochure regarding the details for our retreat. This year's theme: "**He Himself Is Our Peace**" [Shalom] (Eph. 2:14).

# SHALOM



*"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace."*  
(John 16:33)

## The True Christian as a Good Soldier --

The specter of war with Iraq has most Americans involved in one way or another. We are all impacted whether in direct involvement, support services, prayers, or in opposition.

A Chinese reporter recently asked Secretary of State Colin Powell if he was a hawk or a dove. His answer was that he hated war. As a general in the army, many of his friends had died fighting; he also had to send young men into battle to die. But if he had to, he would fight to the end. He then turned it back to the reporter and said,

"You decide whether I am a hawk or a dove."

Most people who are directly involved in combat also hate war. Only those who profit from supplying the materials that support the war effort, or those who profit from the spoils afterward, like war.

War is a consequence of the sinfulness of mankind and the lust for power and control. The Apostle James agrees, *"What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel"* (Jas. 4:1-2).

The Apostle Paul uses the metaphor of a soldier as a model of the faithful follower of Jesus Christ. He refers to himself and others as good or fellow soldiers, *"I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier"* (Phil. 2:25). He writes, *"to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house..."* (Phm.1: 2).

Paul is not referring to Christian soldiers engaged in an earthly war, but one in the heavenlies, *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places"* (Eph. 6:12).

The Western Christian's worldview rarely includes the reality of this supernatural and spiritual battle between God and Satan continually going on in heaven and all around us.

We sometimes blame God for some of the adverse circumstances that happen to our family, our friends and

ourselves that may be caused by the enemy our soul.

Human eyes are unable to see the enemy of our soul since he is a spirit being with supernatural power. Nevertheless, our enemy is real and is identifiable. He is called the *"Prince of this world"* (Jn. 12:31; 14:30). He masquerades as an *"angel of light"* (2 Cor. 11:14). He works *"with all power and signs and false wonders"* (2 Thess. 2:9). He is *"the accuser of the brethren"* (Rev. 12:10). He is our adversary who *"prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"* (1 Pet. 5:8).

The Apostle Peter continues in verse 9, *"But resist him, firm in your faith knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world."*

The Apostle Jude, in his epistle (verses 20-23), speaks of the Christian soldier's responsibility for himself and toward others who are ensnared by our enemy, *"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh."*

A good soldier knows his enemy. He wears his protective equipment and he is skilled in using his weapons. Our enemy is Satan and his cohorts. We Christians are the focus of this battle whether we are aware of it or not.

However, we are clothed with Jesus Christ -- He is our armor. Each piece of armor mentioned in Ephesians 6 speaks of His protective provision for us. The sword speaks of His Word that enables us to stand firm. Prayer,

entrusting ourselves and the battle into the capable hands of the Lord Jesus who won the victory over Satan, is our only, but very effective weapon (Eph. 6:10-18).

The saints mentioned in the Book of Revelation “*overcame him (Satan) because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death*” (Rev. 12:11).

Remember that whatever country our nation may be at war with, Satan and his cohorts are our true enemy and not the people. So we may stand firm and pray to the Lord Jesus Christ for His victory. “...*We overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us*” (Rom. 8:37).



### **We're Home--Finally!!**

It seems like we've been on a roller coaster for quite some time, but I can honestly say, we're home--finally!! The trials have been many these last several years, but God's blessings have returned ten-fold.

Little did we know that when we stepped out in faith and obedience and left Denver, that we would be where we are today. It has been an overwhelming refining process: blood, sweat, lots of tears, and terrible health, literally! God has grown us in so many ways--in wisdom and knowledge and discernment. The things from the Word are being buried deep within us. God has been pouring into us so abundantly that we often stand in awe at the touch of God's hand in our lives.

***Most of our conversations are less about their marriages and more about coming in line with God's will and His Word, and in understanding who they are in Jesus Christ.***

Kevin has been a part of a prayer group that is growing into a Bible study that he will lead. The bodies we're in are mere shadows of who we once were. God has changed so much in us and is showing us where He wants us. We are in a terrific church, an evangelical Presbyterian church. We are serving in the youth group as leaders, also in altar ministry (praying with those in need), and general helps and such. The kids are even serving...

Through the experiences we had in our marriage (when you disciplined us), God is

using that to minister to other women. (Part of me smiles inside because I think you knew this could possibly happen). I've never really shared much, but I've spent countless hours in prayer and study in the Word and allowed God to search my heart, to mold me and transform me from the inside out--ever since discipling with you. I've just waited on the Lord.

Without me saying anything at all about my marriage or my past, women are approaching me and asking for prayer and "help" for their troubled marriages. The majority is living in a marriage with a husband struggling with sexual sins (in many forms). They don't want to lose their marriages, but desire "healing." This is happening on a fairly regular basis and with women I don't know and in unexpected places. Some of these women have been married 20, 30 or more years who are living in pain with these secrets. In these encounters, it seems that the Holy Spirit pours an anointing over me and speaks to them through me. I have never had this experience and am very humbled by this. In my flesh I would want to offer "warm fuzzies," but that isn't what happens.

It's exactly like you kept teaching us; it's about becoming more like Jesus. The words that flow are very direct and go right to the core of the relationship each of these women has with Jesus. Most of our conversations are less about their marriages and more about coming in line with God's will and His Word, and in understanding who they are in Jesus Christ. I have to tell you that I never knew all that was in there, but God knew.

More than anything, this has really caused me to study even more, to dwell constantly on Scripture, to pray without ceasing and to rejoice that God is God. I feel so inadequate and unqualified, yet God continues to use me. I have no idea what will become of all this.

I have been approached about using this in a "formal" ministry, but I just don't know. So far no doors have opened, so I am just waiting on the Lord. I really do love the times I spend in the Lord's presence, in the secret places where I dwell and meditate on all that He gives to me. I would much rather remain "here" than take any step in my own strength and lose that preciousness.

I thought you might like to know these things since you have walked alongside us. All those times I heard you teach about the sheep and the vine are being put to great use.

In recent months we have been asked to stand alongside some pastors--in prayer and encouragement. This too has humbled us both.

As I'm sure you have guessed by now, Kevin and I are doing great. We pray together and do some study together which has been very beneficial. We both have grown in a passion to reach out to hurting couples dealing with sexual sins. If this is in line with God's will for our lives, then when He opens doors, that is where we'll take our next step.

***Debbie Lloyd for the family***

Check out our website  
[www.shepherdinggrace.org](http://www.shepherdinggrace.org)

### **Board of Directors Introduces New Associate -**

On behalf of the board of CUPbearers/Gracestoration, we are honored to introduce Deedra Bingham as an associate of the ministry. Deedra has recently relocated from Portland, Oregon, where she completed her Masters Degree in Pastoral Studies and Women's Ministry at Multnomah Biblical Seminary. She previously served three years as a Women's Resident Director at Multnomah Bible College (1997-2000). Deedra comes to us having served in various leadership capacities and with many ministry experiences.

Her responsibilities for CUPbearers/Gracestoration will include counseling and discipleship, particularly with women. She will also be available for speaking in churches, conferences and retreats.

As a member of the CUPbearers' ministry team, Deedra will look to the Lord to carry the responsibility of raising her financial support. We would appreciate your consideration in contributing to her support and in praying for her ministry.

Respectfully on behalf of the board members,

**Don Boesel-- Chairman**