

## WHAT SHALL I CRY?

By Bill Irby December 2, 2008

God told Isaiah "Comfort, yes, comfort My people" (40:1). The prophet provided that comfort by telling the people that there was a voice coming. It was a voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord" (40:3). Those people then had and all of us now have the opportunity for true comfort. That real comfort comes because of the coming of Jesus Christ, preceded as it was by the voice of John, the harbinger of the Lord.

God told Isaiah and by way of prophecy, John the Baptist, to "Cry out!" The question was the raised, "What shall I cry?" Here we find the source of the echoes in 1 Peter and James: "All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows upon it: Surely the people are grass, the grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever" (40:6-8). The responsibility to proclaim that message did not end with Isaiah, John, Jesus, James and Peter. It is our responsibility today to "cry out" this same uncomfortable message.

We know this message. We know it intellectually. We feel it. We experience it every day. Flesh is grass. We are not invincible. We are not designed to last forever. Not only so, but all that is of material existence is temporary. The rich man's riches will not last much longer than the rich man himself. Only the word of God stands forever.

If ever there was a message for our times it is this: Life is temporary and so are all the things that pertain to it. Ours is the richest nation in the world. Most of us are thankful for that. But we have seen in recent times that to trust in these uncertain riches is foolhardy. Money and other things of value can indeed evaporate. Only the word of God stands forever.

Jesus said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matthew 6:19-21). If we invest ourselves emotionally in material goods (the love of money Paul spoke of in (I Timothy 6:9-10) we are sure to be broken-hearted one day. If we invest our whole heart in heavenly things, we will always be whole and glad.

Yes indeed, only the word of God stands forever. Cry it out.