



RELIGION

Scripture of the Week

Matthew Chapter 10

GROWING IN GRACE AND WISDOM

BY MATTIE ANN CALLIER-SPEARS

So often we find that as people grow older they tend to desire less of the world's influence and begin to praise God more. But that's only if they are born-again into the family of God.

As I've traveled through the various communities of Portland and other states, I have had occasion to find not one but many senior citizens who evidently never really understood the true meaning of growing in grace and in wisdom.

I shall share a few of those stories with you. This is the first: There was once a young and beautiful girl, in her early teens, who no longer lived with her mother but now resides with her great aunt. Her great aunt actually began caring for the girl when she first began walking.

The mother of the girl is in and out of prison because of drugs, theft and prostitution. The mother sells drugs and she uses drugs. Even she was once as beautiful as her daughter but now the drugs have erased her beauty. Her face is scarred from the drugs and fights. Her eyes are yellow and blood-shot. Her hair is barely covering her scalp because of the drugs in her system. The mother is frequently seen walking the street at late hours and during the evening hours peddling her wares.

The last time I saw her she had on an old cruddy wig. I didn't recognize her. I had stopped at the intersection, on Union and Alberta streets, when she came to my car. She didn't know it was me. She asked me for a ride. As I turned my face toward her, she was ashamed to find out it was me she had flagged down. She told me "Never mind" and walked off.

It really doesn't matter how she gets the money for her stuff. The mis-use of her body, to her, has become a valuable commodity. When that doesn't yield enough cash, she walks into a store, any store, and removes part of its merchandise. She later sells it on the street corners, in grocery store parking lots, in front of a church on Sundays, at the coliseum during large events or any place

she feels she can operate unnoticed. When her daughter or her aunt needs or wants something, she'll just go out and steal it. No big deal!

In the meantime, the daughter is experiencing a life that is unlike that of a normal child's growth, development and environment. The elderly aunt did all she could to raise the child but the mother was also living there. In and out. In and out. Each day she witnessed her mother with other men. She heard and saw things that is ordinarily shield from our young ones.

The elderly aunt died and the young girl is then subjected to a life, alone, with her mother's life style. She's sold to a 'john' at a very high price-because she's a virgin. And she is very young, 10 years old.

One night there was a raid and the young girl was placed with the paternity grandparents because the mother has been placed in police custody, again. I spoke to the paternal grandparents. Their comments were "We just don't know what to do with her. When she' around her little boy cousins, she can't be left alone. She acts so-o-o differently from the other children." Well, I would suppose so. This child has not been experiencing a NORMAL childhood. If the father had exerted more concern and care... If the mother had been reborn into God's family... If! If! If!

STORY #2: As I was driving down Union Avenue, last year, on my way to church, there were girls on every corner. On some corners, they stood in clusters. I had my children in the car with me and together we witnessed the display of flesh-on parade. The ages ranged from teens to the early 30's-it appeared. One of the boys shouted out the window "Go Home!" His brother said, "Man! They don't even have respect for Sunday". Then, we saw her. As we continued our drive, we saw a female; who must have been in her 60's or 70's. She was clad in a red after-five dress, a fur coat, gloves, a long cigarette holder in her hand, high heels and a frilly hat. Everyone in the car exclaimed, "Oh, NO! What's that?"

My response was "I guess she's showing the young ones 'the right way' to be a streetwalker". At that moment a feeling of sadness and disgust came over me. The saying goes "...With age comes wisdom." But here was somebody's grandmother or great aunt or whatever. Anyways! You'd think after all these years she would have had a time to learn about the ways of the world and how evil allures you. Don't you think?

There is no wonder why the young people don't respect their elders-when you see this kind of an example. It makes you wonder how prevalent this kind of moral decay has spread.

I discovered that 40 to 50 years ago when there were few blacks in Portland a very few jobs available, Portland was well known for its prostitution and gambling. It was a way of life. I've also been told that many well-to-do black families, here in Portland, secured their wealth from their prostitution and gambling ventures from the 30's and 40's. They did so well, at what it was that they did, they were able to invest their money, secure property and are living quite comfortably...they think.

Unless you repent and ask the Lord's forgiveness; then, receive Christ into your hearts-your souls shall never find peace.

Yeah! Yeah! You may think that you are doing 'OK' and just as long as you don't upset anyone, kill anyone, just stay to yourself, lead an honorable life in the community and just all-around appear to be good...Do you know that that is NOT gonna work? You must go to God. Ask him to forgive your sins. Claim him as your own. Change your walk. Change your language. Just because you have been "cussin'" all your life-it doesn't make it all right. Once you've accepted Christ in your life, you must study the WORD, practice living a life of humility and praying daily. God will change your talk, your friends, your interests, the places you go and your walk. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

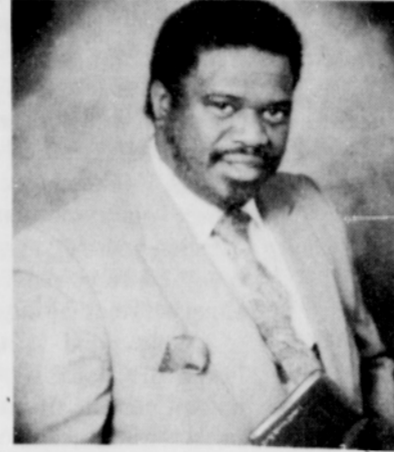
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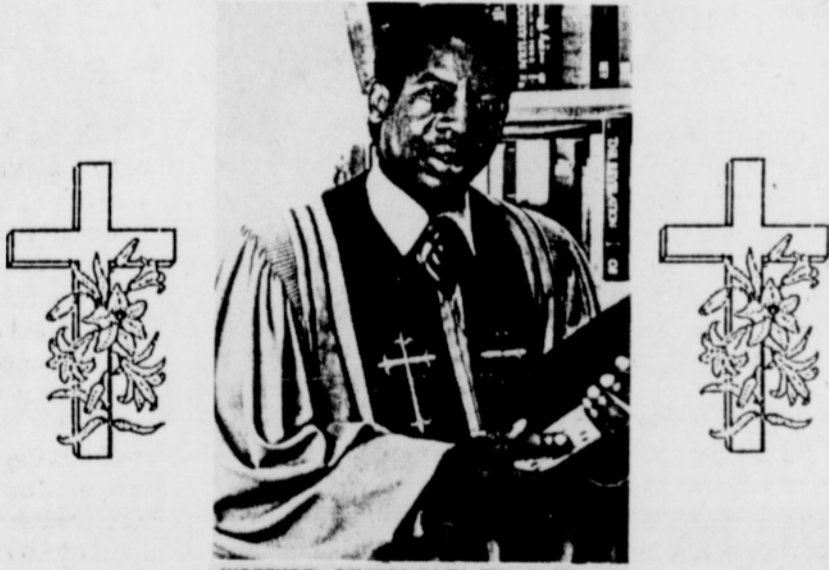
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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, October 10.....7:00PM.....Singing & Preaching
Thursday, October 11.....7:00PM.....Singing & Preaching
Friday, October 12.....7:00PM.....Singing & Preaching
Saturday, October 13, 1990, beginning at 12:00 Noon there will be a Fellowship Family Festival and Old Fashion Gospel Song Fest and Dinner.
Sunday, October 14, at 3:00PM, we will be releasing out our Third Year Anniversary with The Reverend Robert C. Houston Sr., Pastor of The Greater St. Stephens Missionary Baptist Church bringing the message.

For further information contact one of the following people. If you are unable to reach any one of them you may call the Church at the above telephone number.

Sis. Nancy Smith, Chairwoman (503) 282-5114
Rev. Johnny Pack, IV, Pastor (503) 284-9195
Bro. Lawrence Turner, Co-Chairman (503) 289-1365

Last Day to Register
to Vote for this election
is October 16

MARANATHA CHURCH

4222 N.E. 12th Avenue
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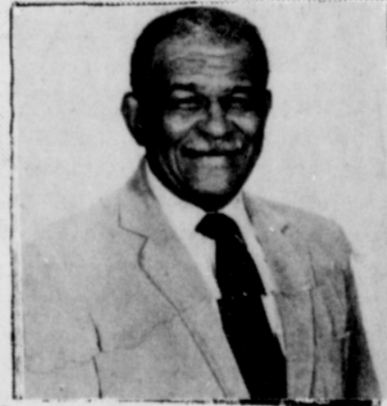
Sunday Services

Sunday School
9:00 A.M.

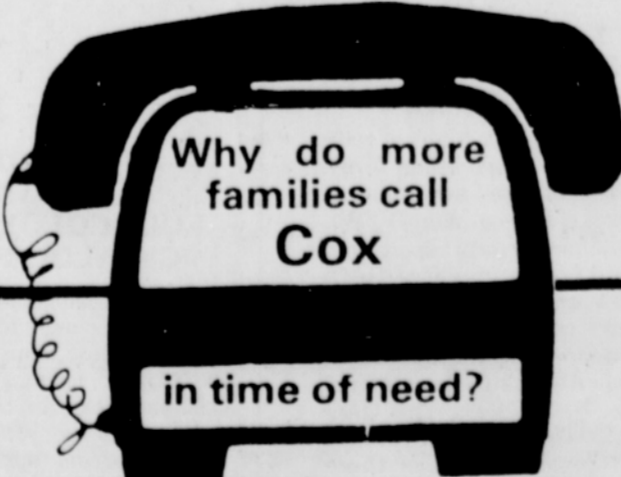
Morning Worship
10:30 A.M.

Maranatha School of Ministry
6:30 P.M.

Mid-Week Services - Wednesday
7:30 P.M.



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