

# RELIGION

## Totally Committed

### God Can't Use Complacent Christians

BY MATTIE ANN CALLIER-SPEARS

When I was a very little girl, growing up in the south, I can remember some of my grandmother Mary's unselfish actions, in the once small community of Gonzales, Louisiana. I can remember a time when we had gone to stay for the summer; as we did on a yearly basis.

My Granny and Papa John loved us dearly. When we would arrive, via a big black train called the "owl", our Papa John would flag down the train by standing on the tracks and waving a kerosene lantern, late in evening, or by waving a large piece of cloth, in the day lit hours. The big train would slow down and the conductor would gather us up and hand us down, singularly, to our grandpa who was standing at the door with out stretched arms. I do believe that we had the bibbiest grandpa in the whole world; but, that's an entirely different story.

After Papa John had extracted us from the train, we would be transported in a big horse drawn wagon or, later on, in a big black automobile that was so big and spacious that our feet couldn't touch the floor.

When we would arrive at the farm, Papa John would blow the horn to announce our arrival. Then, as we pulled up to the big, wide gate, to the outer yard, Papa John would get out and open the big gate. We, my sisters and brothers and me, would try to peer over the big seats in the car to see what Papa John was doing. He would yell, "You chullen, se' down in dey!" We would scurry back to our seats and wait for Papa John to drive the car into the yard.

Papa John removed us one by one from the car. He would instruct the taller ones to open the gate to the inner yard while he got the luggage out. Our Grandma Mary would be waiting in the doorway with a dress on that had yards and yards of material. When we would hug her, we would all hug at once like little piglets crowding around a mama sow at meal time.

After kissing every child, she would ask, "Are you hungry?" Our Granny would have so much food prepared just for us. She knew what each child liked -- so, she would have something for each appetite. The big middle room, heated by a giant wood stove, had a table laden with goodies. The smells that just lingered in the air were unmatched by anything anyone would ever smell in their whole, entire lifetime. "Hum-hum good!"

One year, as we were awoken in the morning, Granny came into our room and told us that she would not be at home because she had to go to Miss So and So's (can't remember her name) house because she was ill. We saw Grandma Mary take a satchel, put on her coat and leave the house. We lay there, in our beds, and quizzically wondered what we were going to do with Granny out of the house. Papa John had already gone out into the field to do his morning plowing.

Before Grandma Mary left the house she reminded us each to be good children. She also gave each child instructions for the day. Plus -- Papa John was still about. Granny was gone for nearly a week. She would come home in the evenings, prepare

dinner and adequate food for the next day. With a hug and a kiss, she would be off again.

We knew that our Grandma Mary loved us -- but, her love for us did not detract her duties as a strong Christian woman. As she sat in her big rocker with one of us nestled on her wide, soft lap, she would explain why she had to go off like she did. She said that, as Christians, we are obligated to take care of one another. Miss "So and So" had no children. She had no one to take care of her. So Grandma Mary felt that it was her Christian duty to care for her until she was able to get about on her own. She said that God would be pleased with what she did even if people did not think well of what she did. She oft times said, "We have to do what pleases God."

My Grandma Mary was a totally committed Christian woman. She took care of her home and she made time to care for others in the community. She made it her business to know what was happening in the community so that -- if there was anything that she could do to assist, she would be right there in the thick of things or she would walk over to someone's house and solicit their assistance. She said that we had to help one another.

I can remember my Grandma Mary organizing a sewing circle to make quilts or pillow cases and sheets or clothing for those less fortunate. She would cook extra at dinner time so she could send some food over to someone's house. She would stand on the bayou bank and pray for the sick. My sisters and brothers and me would

stand inside the fence and watch her as she would lift her arms into the air as she prayed.

She had unshakable faith. My little brother, Ronald, had asthma real bad. Mommie and Daddy had taken Ronald to many doctors without any results. Grandma Mary told Mommy to send Ronald to her. Mommy sent Butte' (Ronald) to Granny. She knew that prayer would bring about change.

Grandma Mary took Ronald down to the bayou. This time she took her fishing pole with them. It was just she, Butte', the fishing pole and the Lord. As she prayed, she baited her hook, flung it into the bayou. She continued to pray. She caught a large fish with a big, big mouth. She held this fish in her hands and instructed Butte' to breathe into the fish's mouth, while she held it opened. When his breath went into the fish's mouth, she hurled it back into the water. She believed that God would let the asthma go into the fish and away from Butte'. She believed. She stayed on that bayou bank and thanked the Lord for blessing her grandchild. Ronald has not had asthma since that day.

Don't be afraid if you appear different to everyone. As a Christian, you are different. The scripture tells me that we are a peculiar people. [Deut. 14:2 & Titus 2:14] The dictionary defines peculiar as "uncommon, unusual, distinguished in nature or character from other (others being transgressors or sinners).

Don't worry about it if people talk about your not being like the

others. You don't want to be like the others any way. People are going to hell in a hand basket. That's right! All bunched up together. They are wanting so badly to be like the others not taking into account where the others are leading them. Have you ever tried to turn around in a crowd and go the other way? You can't do it. The crowd's continued movement and occasional pauses affords you no way out until you have reached a destination. Many times you find that you have arrived some place and it wasn't your intentions to go that far.

Be careful that you don't become too comfortable in the world and start taking on the appearance of the world.

Think about it! Pray about it! Ask yourself this question. Is this what God wants me to do? Stay on the path of "righteousness". Matthew 7:13 reads -- "Heaven can be entered only through the narrow gate! the highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide enough for all the multitudes who choose its easy way. But the Gateway to Life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few ever find it." [TLB] These words were spoken by Jesus Christ to the multitude in his Sermon on the Mount.

Big is not always better! Be totally committed! Dare to be different for the Lord! I remember a statement that Rev. John H. Jackson made during one of his many sermons, he said, "Don't worry if people are talking about you. When you should worry, is when they stop talking." If no one is complaining about your Christian walk -- then, maybe

you have joined the crowd and you look so much like them that you are not noticed. "Oooo-oooo-oooh!" Now, that's real bad when you can't tell the Christians from the sinners.

Stop sitting by watching things happen, sticking your head in a hole like the ostrich and let the world go to hell on a greased slide.

Christians! Wake up! Stand up and be counted! Do the work of Him who sent you. Christ said in Matthew 7:24-26, "All who listen to my instructions and follow them are wise, like a man who builds his house on solid rock. Though the rain comes in torrents, and the floods rise and the storm winds beat against his house, it won't collapse, for it is built on rock. But those who hear my instructions and ignore them are foolish, like a man who builds his house on sand. For when the rains and floods come, and storm winds beat against his house, it will fall with a mighty crash."

#### PRAYER

Dear Lord  
Hear us as we pray!  
There are many  
who need you this day.  
But more than that  
our Master and Friend,  
Be a shield  
around us each day.  
Protect us  
from the fiery darts  
we pray.  
In the Holy and precious name  
of Jesus.  
Amen!  
Scripture Of The Week: Mat-  
thew Chapter 7

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