

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 473

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will be about a message delivered at the North American Christian Convention on July 17, 1987. The speaker on that occasion was the late Wayne B. Smith and the title of his message was "Christ's Church – One Power."

Wayne was a popular preacher who helped start the Southland Christian Church in Lexington, KY in 1956. Under his leadership the church grew from 152 to over 3,700. Wayne **officially retired in 1996, but continued to speak from coast to coast for banquets, revivals, conventions, business gatherings, and churches. He passed away June 29, 2016.**

Wayne's message at the NACC began with this Scripture: **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."** (Acts 1:8)

Here is a brief vignette from that message.

The word "power" is central in my topic and the key word in the first phase of my text. The church desperately needs power, corporately and individually. The Birmingham, Alabama paper had a headline on the sport's page: "The Most Exciting Moment of My Life!" It showed a picture of Jack Nicholas writing a \$5,000 check for charity. As a matter of fact, it was his second \$5,000 check that day. I'm not a golfer, but I know Jack Nicholas is considered by some to be the greatest. He makes the headlines "The Most Exciting Moment Of My Life!" and it involved a game he lost.

Let me share some background. A man by the name of Charley Boswell lives in Birmingham, Alabama. In 1937 Charley was the captain of Alabama's Rose Bowl football team. In World War II Charley was a captain in the infantry. He stepped on a land mine and blew his eyes out. Charley is stone cold blind! But for nine holes of golf he can shoot par. He hits a ball he cannot even see. The caddy rattles the pin in the cup, and the noise tells Charley how to putt. Charley says he does it by "holding mental pictures."

Jack Nicholas went to Birmingham to help raise money for a Boy's Ranch and gave \$5,000. They had a banquet to honor the great Nicholas for helping the fund-raiser and for his \$5,000 check. Halfway through the meal Charley Boswell stood at a table in the back of the room. "Mr. Nicholas, they tell me you play a little golf." There was silence. "Yes, I've been known to play a round or two." "So do I, and I think I can beat you! I'll play you nine holes of golf. If you can beat me, I'll give \$5,000 to the Boy's Club. And, if I beat you, you give another \$5,000. And to make the contest fun, exciting and fair, you choose the course where we play, and I'll chose the time when we play day or night." Guess what time old Charley chose? The Birmingham paper had a full length picture of Nicholas writing out his second \$5,000 check. The headline said: "The Most Exciting Moment Of My Life!" Someone asked Jack about that statement "The Most Exciting Moment Of My Life!" Why? You have won every trophy, award, honor, and accolade. Why would this be so exciting?" Nicholas replied, "I met a person today who refuses to let fear control his life."

The only cure for fear is faith. The kind of faith that produces power. Many here tonight have heard of that power, read about it, want it, but we don't have it. Fear grips our lives and our ministries. Some within the sound of my voice are recovering from physical and mental abuse because

of fear . . . A preacher of years past, told about his own life, and said “There came a time in my life when I prayed ‘God, I want your power.’” Time when on and the power didn’t come. One day the burden was overwhelming, he couldn’t stand it any longer. He got on his knees and said: “God, why don’t you answer my prayer? I want to see your power in my life and you haven’t seen fit to give it.” And he said it was almost as if he could hear God whisper back to him this simple reply: “Carl, with plans no bigger than you’ve got, you don’t need my power.” Isn’t that true? If we don’t dream big dreams, ask God for great things, we will never be motivated to make his power central in our lives . . .”

Permit me to add a few comments to the eloquent words of Bro. Smith. Paul pointed out to Timothy that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (1 Timothy 1:7). The word translated “fear” is “deilia” and means to be timid or cowardly. It is never used in a good sense. God does not make us timid or cowardly! God gives us power! Paul prayed for the Ephesians that God would open the eyes of their heart to this power. That is to **“His incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Jesus when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 1:19-20)** May God also open our eyes to this power!

Jesus specializes in giving visions to young men and dreams to men who are older (Acts 2:17). Jesus can do amazing things through us because His power is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (Eph. 3:20). Please dream a dream so big that without the help of God it will be impossible!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce