

The Fertile Spring

by Wayne Goff

Spring is definitely here among us, and the constant need to mow the lawn, weed the garden and flower beds, and watch the vegetables, fruit and fauna grow are testimony to the fact.

Spring reminds me of **youth**. As an older preacher now, I am constantly looking back to my early years of preaching and comparing the two mindsets. No matter how hard a young man studies, learns and understands God's Word, he is not going to have the wisdom, understanding and abilities of a seasoned veteran. I remember how frustrating that realization was for me when I was in my twenties, and I longed for the *respect* I perceived older preachers received. But even then I did not long for the *age* that went with the territory! And I was correct, for one gets older soon enough.

Now as an older preacher, I am greatly encouraged by some of the young men I see coming up in the ranks. They have that youthful zeal, exuberance, and naivety that gives them the ability to march enthusiastically forward to a spiritual battle they only vaguely see at the time. It is a good thing to have your whole preaching life in front of you. Diligent study, preparation, and meditation can be done tirelessly by the young.

Having compared the two, I have decided that I wish for the **impossible** — my present spiritual mind and ability plus the body of a 30-year-old! But for some reason yet unlearned by me, God does not will for it to be that way.

Each preacher has his own unique skill set, and the listeners can learn something from each stage of his life. Youthful Timothy had to be reminded by Paul how to be a faithful preacher (see 1 & 2 Timothy). Paul himself sometimes lost his patience with others, and yet often looked back on his own life with some disdain (see 2 Timothy 4 & 2 Corinthians). The Bible is full of lessons from preachers — **powerful** Moses, Elijah, Elisha and John the Baptist! — the young, **weeping** Jeremiah — the **priestly** Ezekiel — **angry** Jonah — **farmer** Amos — **righteous, godly** Habakkuk — **proud** Peter — **benevolent** Barnabas — **selfless** Timothy — etc. God the Father uses them all in His manifold wisdom. We should sit up and take notice.

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