

had it all mapped out. They knew what they wanted to do and their goals had seemed clear. But they never realized those goals. At a climactic moment in the play, the woman says to her husband, “Everything was always temporary with us. It’s as if we never were anything. We were always just about to be.”

We can not allow our *spiritual* preparedness to exist in a “just about to be” state. *Today* is the day to begin preparing for the time when our physical body will become “vacant.” There won’t be a better day. Failure to prepare *now* — could very well cause us to miss out in the end — waiting on life to begin.

Waiting On Life To Begin

He’ll be sixteen in a week. He’s gonna back down the drive
With his own set of wheels, he’ll come alive
He’s been counting down the days till he finally has his freedom
And it won’t be long, until that feeling’s gonna leave him

*He’s waiting on life to begin — To come around like a long lost friend
To let the seasons change — let them start again
He’s looking for a better day — Looking for another way
He’s gonna’ miss out in the end waiting on life to begin*

Well, his high school ring became a wedding band
And that ‘65 coupe became the family van
His letter jacket and his Ivy League dreams
They were all traded for more important things

*And He’s waiting on life to begin — To come around like a long lost friend
To let the seasons change — let them start again
He’s looking for a better day — Looking for another way
He’s gonna’ miss out in the end waiting on life to begin*

Every morning he’s reminded by the mirror on the wall
That time has never been his friend
And he’ll be 45 today and he’ll still be staring straight into the eyes of a man
who never found his way

*He’ll be waiting on life to begin — To come around like a long lost friend
To let the seasons change — let them start again
He’s looking for a better day — Looking for another way
He’s gonna’ miss out in the end waiting on life to begin
Yeah, he missed out in the end waiting on life to begin
Yeah, he missed out in the end waiting on life to begin*

“Diligence” is a privately funded publication of:
Dennis and Sherri Owens — Cincinnati, Ohio
diligence@gorfsystems.com — <http://diligence.gorfsystems.com/>



DILIGENCE

*“We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end,
in order to make your hope sure.” — Hebrews 6:11*

A ministry of Dennis and Sherri Owens

Volume 9

July 1, 2010

Issue 11

*“...you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It
is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”
(James 4:14 NKJV)*

Those of you who know us quite well, are already aware of the fact that our youngest son is a musician and singer/songwriter. Over his 27 years of life he has of course written *many* songs. He sent his latest “batch” to us a few months ago and there were a couple of songs that especially grabbed our attention. The lyrics of two of those songs were the inspiration for this article. Here’s the first of those two.

Not Quite Home

I made mountains of money — Been all around the world
I own mansions in the valley and cabins in the hills
But no matter where I’ve lived and no matter what I’ve done
It’s never ever going to be enough — It’s not quite home

My baby girl’s in college — in her senior year
She met a boy from Dalles. She spent her summer out there
The house sure is quiet with just me and her mom
And without our little girl here, it’s just not quite home

We sold daddys home in Charleston — packed up all his things
Now he’s in assisted living where he’ll live out his days
Bits and pieces of his past — his best days gone
Sit crowded in one room — It’s not quite home

*It’s not quite home though it may be hard to leave
These walls, rooms and doors are not as they seem
It’s got everything he needs and it’s a real nice place to be
Its not that something’s wrong — its just not quite home*

We said goodbye to mama — back in July
The woman’s so amazing, she didn’t even cry
She just layed there and smiled knowing it would be OK
Said “I’m excited to see heaven. This wasn’t home anyway”

*It’s not quite home though it may be hard to leave
These walls rooms and doors are not as they seem
It’s got everything I need and It’s a real nice place to be
It’s not that something’s wrong — its just not quite home*

Dictionary.com defines “home” as “a house, apartment, or other shelter that is the usual residence of a person, family, or household.” Most of us would say it’s *much more* than that. It might in fact, be difficult for us to put into words exactly what “home” means to us. It may conjure up feelings of comfort as a place for relaxing or of refuge from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Our home may also harbor multiple memories — memories of the place where we first brought our newborn son or daughter to — or memories of toddlers taking their first unsure steps — or even years of homework being done at the kitchen table — and — perhaps even a far quieter place after the children leave. Whatever thoughts — in this context — the word “home” might bring to each of us, we still realize that it is a physical dwelling place while we have time on this earth — exactly as *Dictionary.com* states — and that means it is subject to the wear and tear of this physical world.

On May 27th, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center (CPC) released its forecast for the 2010 Atlantic Hurricane Season. Their outlook calls for an 85% chance of an *above* normal season — with only a 10% chance of a *near*-normal season and a measly 5% chance of a *below*-normal season. A report released by Colorado State University’s Department of Atmospheric Science, states that the probability for a *major* hurricane making landfall in the United States and Caribbean is *likely* during the 2010 season. All of us are well aware that a hurricane has the *potential* of destroying *everything* in its path — including the *homes* of many individuals. To try to protect homes from total destruction, homeowners often go to great lengths to prepare their homes to withstand the beating expected from such a great storm. Unfortunately however, sometimes — it’s still not good enough. The home may be completely destroyed or left uninhabitable and — no matter how extensive the preparations — the occupants of that dwelling suddenly become homeless.

There is no level of preparation that can guarantee 100% effectiveness toward protecting our physical home from the physical forces of this world. Our home — no matter how many memories may dwell within its walls — can be gone in an instant. The *mortal* home — made of brick, steel, wood and mortar — that houses our physical bodies — *could* one day be uninhabitable and vacant.

Just as our *mortal* home is made of *destructible* materials, the “earthly home” that houses our *soul* is also made of destructible materials — flesh and blood. Death will one day take our soul from its earthly flesh and blood “home” and that flesh and blood home will then be vacant. If we’ve not gone to great lengths to prepare for that day, we are open to destruction — eternal destruction. So whatever thoughts or memories come to our mind when we think of “home” we must be keenly aware that it’s still *Not Quite Home*. One day — our soul will escape from its *physical* home to the realms of eternity.

As Christians, we should go to great lengths to prepare *spiritually* for the day when our physical body will become vacant. We must prepare in such a way that no storm

of life is able to destroy us spiritually. Our spiritual house *will be* tested by the hurricanes of life, and only the soul whose foundation is secure in our Lord and Savior will be prepared to withstand the beating. It is our *spiritual* preparedness to face the storms of life that matters the *most* since our physical bodies will one day be vacant of our souls. Our spiritual life *can* be built on a foundation that is indestructible.

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” (Matt. 7:24-27 NIV)

A faithful child of God who has gone to great lengths to prepare — will have no fear of the day when death renders his or her physical body vacant. The faithful child of God will have taken all of the precautions necessary to withstand the beating expected from “hurricanes” that have the potential to destroy *everything* in their path.

Have we sufficiently prepared to face the beatings expected from the great storms of life? We *know* that the earthly home of our soul will one day be vacant and we will *all* exist *eternally* in one of two places — heaven or hell.

“³¹But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³²All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; ³³and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’

“⁴¹Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;’ ... ⁴⁶These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25:31-34; 41 and 46 NASB)

The *good* news is that God *wants* us to live eternally in *heaven* with Him. (I Tim. 2:3-6). He has provided everything we need to make His desire a reality — but we must take the steps necessary to prepare us to reach that goal — and if we haven’t already started to do that — we *need* to do it — yesterday. We have no way of knowing *when* our final storm will come. Our life is in God’s hands and is uncertain at best. The truth is that we can not see even one day — or one second for that matter — ahead.

“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’” (Luke 12:20 NASB)

In a play by Arthur Miller entitled *The Price*, a middle-aged couple is reminiscing about their life that had turned out to be a disappointment. They *thought* they