

A woman's greatest desire is to inspire love.

Agatha Christie

In the church, when we think of the word "inspiration," I am sure most of us begin thinking of how God caused scripture to flow from the pens of men. We are somewhat more concerned with defending the Bible as the Word of God than we are actually being inspired by that word. We should be "inspired" ourselves, but we have somehow deadened the meaning of the word by limiting its meaning to how scripture was established.

Inspiration is a very powerful thing, able to stir our soul into a tempest of action. It is what every author, speaker, poet, or songwriter seeks. Have you ever wished that you could write or say something that so moved your listeners that they had chill bumps? One of my favorite movie scenes is where the character Jack Lemmon plays defends his girlfriend Jane (Doris Day) in the movie "It happened to Jane." The townspeople had turned against her for all of the wrong reasons but an impassioned speech reminding them of her contributions made them change their minds. I hope that if I ever have an opportunity like that my brain won't crash and burn. As in the quote above, I think that we all want to inspire feeling in those around us.

There have been many times when listening to certain music raised the chill bumps on my skin and really lifted my emotions. Even more powerful things can happen when you are actually playing the music, and your heart is thrown completely into the performance. I can remember one time a friend of mine was traveling with me and we were singing hymns in the car. Suddenly my friend found that he couldn't sing anymore and began to cry. When he could speak again he just said, "It was just so beautiful." Now it definitely was not my singing that he was talking about. But he experienced such a moment of inspiration that his soul took control of him for a while. I didn't understand it as much then as I do now.

I know that, unless you have a heart of stone, there have been moments in your life where you were overcome with emotion in responding to something truly Good that happened. When you see that movie "It's a Wonderful Life," do you not choke up near the end? You feel like a giant wave is washing over you. It feels like your soul is expanding faster than you can control it. If it is something great that happens in your life it feels like your soul has skyrocketed into space. It's a great feeling. I wonder if it isn't going to be the way we feel all of the time in heaven.

I wonder that Jesus probably felt that as he walked this earth. Several times he was amazed and at the faith of people. I think that he probably was caught up with emotion because of it, and got chill bumps, tears, and the choking sensation. We know that he was touched with compassion many times in his dealings with man and that he wept at the grave of Lazarus. He loved people who were trying to do good. And he wanted very much to inspire us to do Good.

We can all be inspired by those who do what is Good. We should surround ourselves and keep in contact with inspirational things. Mostly we should be inspired by the gift of Jesus Christ in dying for us on the cross. But we can also be inspired by God's word. William James once wrote that "The ultimate test of what a truth means is the conduct it dictates or inspires." If we truly believe the truth of God's word, then our inspiration should motivate us to do Good to all men, as we read in Galatians 6:10, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."