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Personal Notes Excerpts 1968-1969 : Letter to Mike

Landon Brady Saunders

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Dear Mike -

Apr 69

Out of deep distress within me I try to understand and express my thoughts. I spent two hours with Zebedee Bishop this morning and shared deep fellowship with him, a depth that reached beyond color lines and years of being unknown to each other, in a word -- Brothers. From there I spoke to a group of ministers at a luncheon in Detroit. Oh, what heat hit me on entry! My mind reeled. I was supposed to speak -- but what could I say? Hot, sleek, comfortable, clever... Oh, Lord, what could I say? Shouldn't we just pray? Yes, we should just pray, pray... Out of the depths, though, I spoke in measured tones. My soul was so overwhelmed. So many pressures felt by the preacher. So many stinging. So much labeling and pigeon-holing after the witch hunt. So much pride and jealousy and envy. Hell isn't known by painted fires. Painted fire aren't hot. Nor is ~~ward~~ painted mercy, justice, faith, love. Our hearts are really what is on the line. Tested and tried. God, look within us. Help us see ourselves. Oh, for the disciplines: prayer, fasting, reading, worship, witnessing... Then we prayed. Following a few moments of deep stillness, the meeting was over. An older brother then asked for the floor. Oh, how he missed what I tried to say. Introduced generative gap. Called it a speech, or talk or sermon or something.

And as he went. Oh, God, what is the hope...
Mike, our hope is in the crucified One. We must hear
His voice and His alone. He calls us into the street
and byways, into broken heart, anguished and
agonizing hearts, into despair. Christ was there.
Am I there? Oh, learning. What can I say to
you?
I must seek the Lord...

10/Apr/69

At 12:00 night I cannot honestly talk of joy in my
soul. I am alone... Inside I am empty and have that
sick feeling. Am I really conquered? Is "every thought"
in "captivity" to Him? I have still tear at my soul,
springing up suddenly and without warning. I
perched bright but something is missing. Life
with the Lord... Daep are not properly disciplined.
Not enough reading the Word and prayer. Perhaps
this is why I long for a person... Oh Lord be
merciful...