

Ezekiel Ministry

A Ministry of Hope and Healing



“Then the angel said to them, ‘do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.’”

Luke 2:10

December 2011

“You have moved my soul far from peace, I have forgotten prosperity.” (Lamentations 3:17)

“O Lord, you have pleaded care for my soul; you have redeemed my life.” (Lamentations 3:58)

At times, we feel that our souls are removed far from God. We feel that we pray and our prayers are not going anywhere. We feel that God has left us. Which He will not do because His promise is that He will never leave us. But, it does feel that God is not listening. It does feel as if God does not care. These are the dark nights of the soul. These are the times that God is shaking up our lives. These are the times that God is getting us out of our comfort zone. These are the times that God is telling us that there is change coming in our lives.

The journey toward union with God starts in darkness. Just as our life started in darkness. “The infant in the womb is propelled by natural forces from its comforting dark world in to the blazing light of the outside world, it’s movement is not a matter of choice.” (Donald Burt)

These dark nights are times of growth. Times that God is telling us that we must move forward. We must leave our comfortable life and move to the abundant life that He has for us.

In my thirty years that I have been a follower of Jesus Christ, I don’t know of many times that God has allowed me to be comfortable for long. The peace is there, but God is pushing me to go farther with Him. To learn more about Him.

To serve Him more or to start something new to serve God better. It seems that God is always telling me that I am not where I should be with Him and that I should move forward. If you feel this way, it is not a bad feeling. I believe it is because God loves us so much that He wants us to be closer to Him, so He is always pushing or it may better be said pulling. He is pulling us toward Him. With every step we take God wants us to take the next step so that we can be closer to Him.

At such moments in life we have a feeling of emptiness. The process of searching for satisfaction must begin with dissatisfaction. If we never sense the hollowness of our lives, we would never feel the need to move forward. If we were not dissatisfied with what we have or who we are, we would never move forward.

Just as in Lamentations, in the first part of this scripture we see that he writes God has moved his soul from peace, then he sees the light and he is coming out of the darkness and God has redeemed his life and he moved to a closer level with God.

How wonderful that God loves us and wants us to be closer to Him. Praise His Wonderful Name!

Listening

“I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me, and what I will answer when I am corrected.” (Habakkuk 2:1)

As we move out of darkness into the light, we come to a point where we need to listen for God. We have been in that place where we could not even believe that God was with us, but as we move forward toward God His presence becomes more real and we can feel His love more and more. We learn that it takes a teachable mind to hear and learn what God is saying to us. Our mind must be open to God’s message for us. At times, what God is telling us just doesn’t seem reasonable. He is telling us to step out, to get out of the boat and have faith that we can walk on the water.

God speaks to us in many ways. He speaks to us through our friends, He speaks to us through a message that our preacher gives, He speaks to us through books we read, He speaks to us through that still small voice that speaks to our spirit and He speaks to us through His Word, the Bible. No matter how He speaks to us His message should always be verified by the Bible.

God speaks to me through His Word many times. The other day I was feeling depressed and I felt just down in the dumps. As I prayed and asked God to give me the scripture that I needed, He directed me to this scripture in Nahum, ***“He who destroys has come up before your face. Man the fort! Watch the road! Fortify your power mightily!” (Nahum 2:1)*** I would have never found this scripture without God’s leading. This was just what I needed for the time I was going through. It was an attack from Satan. God gave me the message I needed to have victory over Satan.

I was out of the ministry for many years and God would tell me that I needed to get back to working for Him.

He would tell me that I did have a call on my life and that I could not get away from that call. I told God that if I was to go back into the ministry I needed a personal letter from Him. I did start back in the ministry without the letter, but a few months into the ministry I received an email. It was from a man in East Africa. We never completely figured out how he got my email address. We corresponded for about two years. There is no doubt that this was my letter from God. This man knew more about the things I was struggling with than I knew.

In one of his emails he wrote, “Brethren, what you are seeing happen in your life is not a dream by the influence of the unique power of God, He is changing your dreams to realities. God is going to astonish you just as Peter got astonished of everything he saw, and you will fully be convinced that God is real and does real things. You will know that this is no longer a dream but a reality of God’s doing in Jesus’ name. Peter confirmed and said, now I know for sure that the Lord has sent His angel, and He delivered me. The same God who intervened by sending His angel to deliver Peter in a unique way, He is working on your course of life and ministry which you received of the Lord Jesus. He will not disappoint you but will frustrate the enterprises and devices of the crafty one.” ►

God will astonish you with what He can do and at how He speaks to you. God may not send you a letter, but He will speak to you in ways that you never would have dreamed.

Be still, be quiet, listen close, God is speaking. Are you listening? ■

Truth

“Are you the king of the Jews?” Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world.’ ...Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are you a king then?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’ Pilate said to Him, ‘What is the truth?’ (John 18:33, 36-38)

“I am the way, the truth, and the life.” (John 14:6)

What is the truth? This is an age old question. People have been searching for what is truth since the beginning of time. Pilate knew the answer to that question before he asked the question. He knew that Jesus Christ was the truth. He knew that Jesus was the truth that men had been looking for. He just did not want to accept it.

As we travel on our journey toward a closer relationship with God, we learn the truth. As we come out of our darkness into the light and listen for what God is telling us, we come to the truth that Jesus Christ is the answer, the only answer to the emptiness that we feel in our lives. We come to the knowledge of ourselves and the reality of our world. If we are to grow closer to God we must accept the reality of our world.

Satan is the master of delusion. He wants us to live in a fantasy world that he wants to create. If we are to have spiritual growth and healing, we must face reality. The art of delusion is Satan’s way, but grounding people in reality is the way of God.

Satan’s most powerful weapon against mankind is delusion. In this way he can work on our minds and we will never even know what he is doing. By sending delusions, he can build strongholds that we don’t even know he has on us.

Life can only be lived to the fullest and in a way that brings us deep satisfaction when we are able to see things as they really are. Those who live in fantasy worlds of their own making, or of the devil’s making, do not cope well in the real world. They cannot cope well in the spiritual world either, because they do not have the mental tools to interact lovingly and intelligently. ►

Augustine summed it up when he said, “If at the very least I can come to realize that the still unknown God is near, ready to help in the journey that lies ahead, I am able to begin to pray. In my time of darkness I could not pray because there seemed to be no one there. In my time of listening there was a glimmer of hope that there is a someone who has the power and the desire to help me. My knowledge is not too clear yet. I do not know what God is exactly, but I begin to reach out to Him in hope.”

There are many lessons that we need to learn on our journey toward God. The first lesson is we must be free to believe, free of the earthly interests that, if they come to dominate our days, will rob us of the time and energy necessary for listening to the Lord. We are to be in the world but not part of the world. We don't allow the world to consume us.

The second lesson is that our search for God is never ending. There is no moment in our lives when we can say that we have arrived. Life must be continually turning toward our Lord. A faith that does not grow will perish.

The third lesson is that in our search for God we need some quiet time. God's presence is more like a gentle breeze than a hurricane, and it occurs deep inside each of us. If there is too much noise in our lives, we cannot hear what God is telling us.

The fourth lesson is that it will be stormy. Jesus allowed His disciples to go through storms. There were two, one was when Jesus was asleep in the boat and they had to wake Him. In the other storm Jesus came walking on the water to them. In both cases Jesus was there all the time. He knew what was happening and He never let them down. There may be times that we need to go through the storms if we are to grow closer to God, but always remember, no matter what storm you are going through, Jesus is there and will never leave you. ■

“Until a man dies to himself, he is an idolater. He worships an image which is subtly and unconsciously nothing more than himself. And he spends his life and energy seeking to get people to love, honor, worship and adore him.

When a person falls into the earth and dies—daily—he dies more and more to his own idolatries, as well as to those imposed upon him by others. He thus becomes free from others, and free to be to them.”

**John and Paula Sandford
“The Elijah Task”**

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