

How To Have A Baby

Westminster Abby



On Saturday, April 12, 2008 the team that went to Africa with me attended a service at Westminster Abby in London. The structure was magnificent and the solemn service was reflective of 1000 years of service exactly like it. It was sweet and hallowed. I attribute the impact of the scripture reading and service that day to the emptiness I had from pouring out over thirty teachings the week before in Africa.

Truly when you are dry, any kind of the Word of God is good to drink. In saying that I do not want to be so arrogant to take away from the Word of God being

spoken there. I realize that the Word of God, no matter what venue, is a glass of good, cold water to the thirsty soul. I have a new appreciation, or maybe respect for the tradition of some churches. I just question the process of turning their parishioners from thirsty souls to thriving saints.



In retrospect I understand better now the shaping and challenges that must have taken place when anyone thought church needed to have a different or additional expression. Thus, Holy Trinity Brompton.

Holy Trinity Brompton & Tim Huges

I also attended Holy Trinity Brompton Church in London England with our team last Sunday, April 13, 2008. I was so excited to attend a service where one of the most admired worship song writers was leading worship, Tim Huges. He lead a few of the songs he had written and what we at Cornerstone Church would openly dance and overly express our worship toward God with, but there, the songs were sung and then stopped, very reverently and very much in order. To be honest, it was a sweet, sweet Spirit, but it seemed a little short of what I had experienced with the same songs at our church. I thought through what it must be like for those of Westminster Abby to observe Holy Trinity Brompton, just in architect alone you can see the bright and loud expression of Holy Trinity from that of Westminster Abby. Westminster Abby probably think the folks at Holy Trinity are way out there and those at Holy Trinity are possibly wondering how far to they continue to go. But in my perspective, they were still so much alike.



Perspective

Please excuse my attempt to elaborate on the idea of "perspective" using these two churches in England as an example. If you placed two people facing each other two feet apart at the back of our church, 75 feet from our stage, while yourself, standing on the stage, and hold up your thumb and index finger in front of your eye to gage how far apart they were, your thumb and finger would probably be no more than a quarter of an inch apart. But if you brought the same two people to stand in front of you, the same distance apart, but placed them only two

feet in front of you, you would see that your perspective has change and it would now take two hands to gage their distance two feet apart. They haven't changed, in distance, only my perspective has. This is how we often view things in relationship to our own experiences. When you are attempting to get perspective from where we are as a church and where your life experience comes from, we have people gaging us with fingers and hands. We all come from different perspectives. Some feel like we are miles apart from where they come from and others only see us a quarter of an inch from where they hope we will go.

We are all changing, and hopefully drawing closer to God and that will have a great influence on our perspective. If your experience is tradition then you will view us in the differences between the two. If your values are beyond the past but passionate for the future, you will gage the distance between the two in a different way. You may feel like you have made such great changes in your life, but in reality, with some outside perspective, you may have made very few changes in the expanse of what could happen in your life.

The importance of making mention to any of this is not to place more focus on change alone, but to make the little change you may have made, to be changes that make you more affective in expressing God to others and making God easier to be found. Many people are frustrated with their experience in church and attempt failing changes without making any difference because you've only exchange one dead program for another. The problem with this is that you will eventually have to exert an extravagant amount of hard work to change what you have done rather than where you want to go. But if you are making or seeing desired affect and differences because of your changes, no matter how big or how little, then you can be confident that God will continue to lead you more in similar direction that will glorify His name. Perspective and change, two varying entities that are often viewed at different angles pending from the position that one looks at them from.

Is It Time?

As I was preparing this message I really felt like there was a need to address the great concern that we feel, a heaviness of sort, of our economic situation here in America and around the world. Things are happening so strangely and unpredictable that it leaves us wondering...and potentially worrying. We struggle today is the dominoes are going to continue to keep falling. Air Lines are folding, gas is increasing and would you ever believe that they would be rationing rice? How do we respond to this?

Jesus spends three chapters talking to His disciples, (John 10-13). He is explaining to them about what is about to take place. He is not talking in parables, but He is explaining clearly, exactly what is going to happen to Him and them. Bu they don't get it. Now He shares a parable, an earthly story for a spiritual truth, for them to dwell on.

Parable of a Woman With Child, Her Time Has Come

"A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."

John 13:21-22

When our time has come there is PAIN:

- Pain is an indication of discomfort, something out of place, something that needs to be resolved.
- We have a tendency to only see pain as a problem that needs fixed- but there is a pain that brings life. It's important to know the difference!
- How do you know what is going on inside of you is good or bad?
 - As I was preparing this message I was praying to God, "What is it that you are trying to tell me?" I was struggling with this thought and that, wanting the true Word of God for today. As I was praying I was crying out, "God, which one of these statements in my mind and heart are yours?" Immediately God spoke to my heart John 10:4

"When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice."

John 10:4

God said, "Neil, my sheep know my voice. I want to put my Word in you as a seed in the womb, to impregnate you with my will and purpose, but you are struggling. Why are you struggling? Why are you hearing so many different voices? Why is there so much seed in your spiritual womb?"

I didn't now how to respond, I just said, "I don't know." Then He spoke to me in an incredible loving way, unlike any kind of rebuke I had ever gotten. Sweetly He said, "You don't know the direction because you don't know the voice. And you don't know the voice because you don't know who the daddy is of the words you are hearing." Again, with a kind voice I hardly understood that I was being rebuked but He again spoke to my heart, "The reason there are so many different words that you are contending with, each one wants to take root in your Spirit and dominate the direction and decisions of your life. But the reason that there is so much seed in you is because you have adulterated yourself with someone other than me." OUCH!

Again, I need to stress the way I heard God. See, He was revealing something to me that has always been in my life at different levels. So, this instance was not an unusual event. But He spoke to me in love and in revelation. He clearly wanted me to understand that this is what is going on. God's Word is a seed, it's purpose is to go deep in our spirit and impregnate us with His plan and vision. It comes through intimacy with God. Some mistake Christ coming into our life was for the purpose of freedom, but His true purpose was for relationship.

Every time that Jesus spoke or did something, something came alive, was healed or was revealed. When He spoke His voice penetrated the normal mental capacity of man's mind and went deep into the heart. He would give you life and give you something worth trading that life for.

"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made know to you."

John 15:15

A servant doesn't necessarily know what His master is doing. They don't have insight to the masters plan. All they know are the task-oriented details that the master releases at the appropriate moments. Their main goal is obedience.

Friends, that's a different matter. Obedience is not the key factor for a friend while at the same time always very important.

"You are my friends if you do whatever I command you."

John 15:14

But friends have a different relationship with the master. Obedience is important, but what is more important is not disappointing. The shift from servant to friend is to shift the focus off the commandments onto the relationship. I'm not as concerned about disobeying Him as I am disappointing Him.

On the other hand, God responds to us when we have a heart toward Him. His wooing, His calling us is toward an unfamiliar position with God. One that we may even be uncomfortable with. This call may cause us to move back into servant mode because we cannot understand the words that He is addressing toward us. It is something when God, as our friend looks at us and says, "I'm talking to you as Lord now. Don't misunderstand my appeal toward your heart."

We are admonished in the New Testament to...

"Come near to God and He will come near to you."

James 4:8

Notice, who comes near to God first? We do. It is not until we first draw near to God that He in turn comes near to us. God is always wanting to reveal Himself to us and our coming to Him first is the means of achieving that goal.

John Bevere mentions in his book, "A Heart Ablaze," that we often define our encounter with God in a real and powerful way as a **visitation**. But God wants more than a *visitation* with His people, He wants **habitation**. We like all the goose bumps and sweet existence of His Supernatural presence, but he wants us to acknowledge a residence in us, not just on us.

"For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: 'I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.'"

I Corinthians 6:16b

Look what God will do:

- I will live with them
- I will walk among them
- I will be their God
- They will be my people

This God who created the universe, the sea, the sky and land wants to live in and among us.

"And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit."

Ephesians 2:22

Too often we are impregnated with a thought, goal or passion and we don't know where it came from, we don't know who the daddy is.

"So leave the corruption and compromise; leave it for good," says God. "Don't link up with those who will pollute you. I want you all for myself."

II Corinthians 6:17 (The Message)

Many ministers today are careful to deliver a positive message that will attract the multitudes; they forgo a strong, reproving message that will bring the changes we need to face a holy God. God wants the promise of His Word to be dropped into our Spirit, to take root and bring forth fruit. He wants us to bear much fruit...not to be mistaken for performance, but relationship! But far too often we are polluted with so many other things that we cannot distinguish who is talking and where we are headed with each and every issue of our life. We don't know who is trying to give us seed!

"Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God."

II Corinthians 7:1

Being Really Free

We find Moses encountering God at a burning bush in Numbers 3:3-4. It was a revolutionary event for Moses and he would for ever change the Jewish history because of that encounter. God instructed Moses to go to Pharaoh to demand freedom from the enslaved Jews. Israel's deliverance from Egypt is a reflection of our deliverance from the slavery of sin. Egypt is a type of the world's system, and Israel is a type of the church. When we are born again, we were set free from the iron clasp of the world's system.

Here's a good question, "Where was Moses headed with the children of Israel after they were liberated from Egypt and Pharaoh?" Most people who would respond to this question would usually respond, "To the promise land."

But that is not what Moses said. He wanted to take them to Mount Horeb, or Sinai. Six times God's word to Pharaoh, through Moses, was...

"Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the desert."

Exodus 7:16; 8:1, 20; 9:1, 13; 10:3

What has happened in many of the teaching that is going on today is that the emphasis has been placed on the freedom rather than the relationship. Moses had at one time attempted to save the slaves of Israel which got botched up and he had to eventually run away from Pharaoh into the desert. But now he looks at the current Pharaoh and demands that the children of Israel be set free, to do what? To go out in the desert and worship God. Why? Because he found out that a relationship with God is better than freedom without God.

I love deliverance ministry, but to free you from the chains of bondage just to help you wonder around in the desert is not the design of God for you. God wants you to come out of slavery into worship an almighty God. This is where the freedom begins! Many of their messages, many of my messages has been to deliver you into a better lifestyle attached with it, eternal security rather than calling you up to the burning bush of God so you can learn of and know the living God.

Our freedom is not so we will no longer be slaves, but that we might know God!

"When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his fellow Israelites. He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not."

Acts 7:23-25

Moses was compassionate toward all the people that he saw who were hurting and enslaved. He had attempted to "free" them from their slavery, but it back fired. He wanted so badly to be used of God to help, but they thought just the opposite. He was attempting to bring them to freedom but they refused his help. See, we must realize that all "good" ministry is not all "true" ministry. Our attempts to "save" the people do not always produce the revelation that people need.

Forty years later, after the burning bush event on Mt. Sinai, Moses realized something more important, more relevant than just being free, it was to worship the true and living God. But Moses was persistent with Pharaoh, and at last the children of Israel were released from Egypt. But it took them three months to arrive where it should have only taken ten or eleven days at Mount Sinai. Why did God chose to take them that route? The answer is simple, **God wanted them to experience more time alone to appreciate the time at home! In other words, they were tasting what freedom was like without direction, but God was going to change that. That is why America is so depressed, freedom without direction is a desert experience!**

They eventually arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai and the Lord called from the mountain saying...

"You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles wings and brought you to myself."

Exodus 19:4

The reason that God brought you out of bondage was **not just for freedom but for relationship. He wanted you to come to Him and He wants to come to you.** When we are consumed with the benefits of God rather than the relationship of God we are missing something. When we are wanting people to be free more than to have a relationship with God something is wrong. When we try to bring people into freedom without developing a deep relationship between them and God...something is not right!

Freeing people is not necessarily helping build a relationship with God, it is just helping them get released from out of Egypt, but we must learn how to get them to Mount Sinai. The goal of Christianity is not ministry, it is to lead people to have an intimate relationship with God through the work of Jesus Christ! You can cast out demons, heal the sick, and lead people to salvation...and still end up in hell, Judas did. In Matthew 10, Jesus gave Judas the freeing power to heal the sick and cast out demons, but he ended up in hell. Daniel prophesied how the evil one will come and attempt to destroy not only the temple but all the believers as well and Daniel responds,

"But the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits."

Daniel 11:32

There is a difference in having the power of God and knowing the God of power! Those who have not come to intimately know God may have good motives and hate the bondage of sin but they may not have the revelation of God and in doing so might lead many astray. It is easy to get our eyes on the blessing more than the Blesser. Freedom will never measure up to the grandeur of knowing the Freer!

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

Ephesians 1:17

"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and the incomparably great power for us who believe."

Ephesians 1:18-19a

I like the words of Bill Johnson in his book, Dreaming with God,

"There is no question that spending time with God changes our desires. We always become like the one we worship. But it's not because we've been programmed to wish for the things He wants us to wish for; it's because in friendship we discover the things that please Him- the secret things of His heart. It is the instinct of the true believer to search for and find, that which brings pleasure to the Father."

I believe that is what knowing God is all about. It is spending time with God, knowing God's voice, becoming so familiar with Him that you take on His desires and pleasures. It is easy to get impressed with God and that leads to the desire of wanting to impress Him.

In my attempt to know God, I can discount what is in my own heart and the desires that lay there in an attempt to prove my surrender to God. All the while missing what God may be placing in my heart. Since I have not understood where the seed thought came from, I maybe throwing out what God has put in.

See our entrance into this Kingdom is on a very straight and narrow road. We come on it crying out, "Not my will but your's be done." We come by way of the door who is Jesus Christ Himself and we lay all of our life at his feet in full abandonment of self. But on the other side of that narrow passage way lays a huge Kingdom for all of us to participate in. It is a place for the "friends" of God to KNOW the Father's voice and the Father's business.

"A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy."

John 13:21-22

Six Things To Understand About The Pain of Child Bearing

1. Understand when the pain is to give birth to life or death.
2. Understand when the pain is in the appropriate time or season.
3. Understand that the pain is temporary- there will be a birth, "...when her baby IS born..."
4. Understand that the pain is forgettable- your pain now will eventually be a thing

of the past. "she forgets the anguish..."

5. Understand that the pain has another side- "Joy," "...because of her joy..."
6. Understand that the pain is born in this world, you cannot escape it, we are in this world and it is the process that we function through for spiritual gain.

Look At God's Promise

"In that day you will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete."

John 13:23-24

In what day? The day of pain, the day of child bearing. In the day when things are the worst, God our Father will demonstrate His benevolent heart greater than ever before. You haven't seen anything yet. Don't be discouraged, don't fear, God is in control and He will have final victory!