

SOUTHWEST ASSEMBLY

A CULTURE OF HIS PRESENCE - FAMILY ON MISSION

Continuing in a series of messages about building a culture and lifestyle of His Presence.

Seek God for The City 2015 began on Wednesday with this cry...

'Dare we ask that You would revive Your people once and for all? Revivals in earlier generations have come and gone, blazing intensely and then sputtering out. Can Your unfailing love bring an unceasing revival?'..... 'Show us what Your enduring love can do.'

This led us in a discussion that day among some pastors about 'why' certain moves of God seem to fade. Why do we often lack power, authority and effectiveness to not just keep momentum but to see a region and nation impacting move of God. Now while I don't want to offer a response to that question that sounds like I have this figured out - I am convinced that it is not God who is the problem in this question. But rather our weak understanding and revelation.

So what I want to talk about is what I would call a foundational value to building a culture and lifestyle of His Presence - understanding our identity as Family On Mission.

My wife and I have been in an ongoing discussion with one of our children about questions they are facing as it pertains to the 'role of women' in the Church. They have been in debates where scriptures are being shared back and forth...and while I have not time or intent to go into any details my point is quit simple.

The struggle of that conversation would be muted if it began at the correct point. In the midst of difficult issues in our life we can begin to interpret God and His purpose from our vantage point. My friend shared of a time when he was going through a difficult time financially and as he came to visit his earthly father was reminded that it was Jesus who said.....if that is how your earthly father treats you how much more will your heavenly father care for you!

Here is the deal with my daughter and others who have labored so hard over this discussion....we have often heard passages like 1 Timothy 2 Paul talks about women....and we set this as a benchmark based on a how we have been taught to relate to God.

That His is a singular person relating to a singular person.....and we have in turn related not only the Gospel but the Church in this individualistic context.

So we look at Gen 1:27 and the Lord God looks and everything He has made is good.....except one thing....that Adam was alone. We begin to read into this things that are not in the text. That God says mmmm ooops I made man alone - we even hear it in a singular tone.....I better fix this....so we see Eve as the fix to mans problem of aloneness.....

Guys Gen 1:27.....God.....Who is a FAMILY.....who has forever lived in a family community said let us....make Man in our image.....was never intended to be singular and alone but just what He made....A Family.

And the secret is simply this Christ in you!
Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.

Col 1:27b JB Phillips

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Now watch this.....(Chart)

Gen 1:1-3.....Family Matt 3:15-17.....Family

The Father - Son - Holy Spirit - Family - Family of the God head wanted to become

- Visible
- Accessible
- Partner

That is exactly how the God head choose to represent themselves!

Jesus incarnation consider this....

- Came From a Family
- Into a Family
- To Represent a Family = **built and cultivated a Family!**

Beloved The Good News is about these two Core realities

- **Covenant Relationship**.....Restored to Relationship in the Family of the God head
- Invited to **Represent** the Family of the God head – The Kingdom!

May I submit that the Nature of the Kingdom is not primarily about....

- Power - authority - gifts - offices.....

If Jesus came from a family - into a family - to represent a family He built and cultivated a Family on Mission.....

Beloved I want to submit that the Nature of the Kingdom must first reflect the Nature of the God head.....

So to build a culture and lifestyle of His Presence - doing what Jesus did.....

- **Build and cultivate a Family on Mission....**

I am repeating this over and over because part of what we need to get a grip on in our Western Individualistic Culture.....

- Personal Relationship with Christ
- Personal Walk
- Personal Journey
- Personal Battles
- Personal Victories.....

Time to possibly rethink the very Nature of how we thought about Church.....as a place where we call each other to our personal mission and response....

Nature of the Kingdom - **Gen 1 = Family on Mission**

God Head - Visible - Accessible - Partnership

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We miss the context Dare I even say the context of scripture if we take a purely personal interpretation.

Jude vs 3 - Make every effortcontend earnestly for the faith....

Beloved these 2 words

- Not a call to 'contend' or gain what we have already been freely given as a gift Eph 2:8-10
- Passage....in the original text is about resisting anything that is a misrepresentation.....

Paul 1 Cor 1-2 - Cross

- Context of Jude 2
False teachers

Contend.....misrepresenting the Gospel and Kingdom representation - Family.

Here is the thing - enduring moves of God have thrived....not out of the things we have often called success in thriving western Churches - attendance - giving - activity -these are hard ideals to give up....

Thriving Church - where the presence of the Godhead.....visible accessible and participation is happening.....China, Iraq - Egypt

So what does this mean.....

Family On Mission is not a Cause – but a lifestyle.....in the Grace of God

- It is not an Obligation or the latest means of growing the Church.
- We have unfortunately reduced the Missional challenge within the Church in the west to a special call for a few to go and a general call for the rest to support with our resource.
- Beloved the core of Gen 1 – Participation.

So how do we begin?

Our first prayer concern is the Church - especially in the west that we would have a spirit of revelation.

That this is not calling - but life destiny in the Grace of God.

- **Repentance** must begin in our hearts - this is not about 'doing more' so as to reach the 'target' - and at least for me it was all with this image of a God who was 'disappointed' that I had not done more.
- **The Repentance that I believe God is calling is not on the basis of what we have done but on the basis of what He has done!**
- **To become a Family that represents Him well – family nuclear but is also Church community!**

I really liked **Prince Caspian the movie** - towards the beginning of the book I believe it was Edmund who is fighting in the train station....and his brother pulls him away and asks something like..... **what is your problem?**

To which he replies....here they just see me as a kid....'In Narnia **I was King**' And of course the movie ends with his introduction (with his siblings) by Aslan as **King Edmund**.

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Beloved I am believe the singular reality that is needed as it pertains to the Family on Mission are not all the confrontational posters I made while I was on my college internship.

But a revelation of this reality -

‘You beloved are more than you ever imagined’

- You life - calling - direction only has perspective, authority, purpose as we bind our life and identity with this reality - ---
- Paul said it this way....**my life is about the Anointed!**

So often we a call of repentance ‘missing the mark’....oops I did something I should not have or have not done enough....my old way of looking at missional challenge of the Church....we missed something.

Yet Jesus....never was stressed out, overcome with emotion as to the needs of the ‘lost’, he did not live ‘weighed’ by the needs of ...not just his neighbors....these are the product of His creation!

- He did not freak out over the ones He did not speak to....or heal or reach....no stress!
- He was anointed with the oil of Joy...above others....my goodness the most joyful dude on the planet....yet fully aware of the mess - very very aware!
- He lived at peace and rest in the purpose of the Father....for this reason I have come! Your Fathers ate bread in the desert....I am that bread of life!
- He lived the Glory of the Father Full of Grace and Truth - John 1

Family On Mission is

- **about Jesus living His life through us!**
- **And living with a simply Faith in the Power of that reality!**

If there is anyone who understands this reality it was the Apostle Paul -

He went from having a very complicated life of obligation, demands and expectations....to this....

Philippians 3 (The Voice)

3 We are the true circumcision—those who worship God in Spirit and make our boast in Jesus the Anointed, the Liberating King—so we do not rely on what we have accomplished in the flesh.

4 If any try to throw around their pedigrees to you, remember my résumé—which is more impressive than theirs. 5 I was circumcised on the eighth day—as the law prescribes—born of the nation of Israel, descended from the tribe of Benjamin. I am a Hebrew born of Hebrews; I have observed the law according to the strict piety of the Pharisees, separate from those embracing a less rigorous kind of Judaism. 6 Zealous? Yes. I ruthlessly pursued and persecuted the church. And when it comes to the righteousness required by the law, my record is spotless.

7 But whatever I used to count as my greatest accomplishments, I’ve written them off as a loss because of the Anointed One. 8 And more so, I now realize that all I gained and thought was important was nothing but yesterday’s garbage compared to knowing the Anointed Jesus my Lord. For Him I have thrown everything aside—it’s nothing but a pile of waste—so that I may gain Him. 9 When it counts, I want to be found belonging to Him, not clinging to my own righteousness based on law, but actively relying on the faithfulness of the Anointed One. This is true righteousness, supplied by God, acquired by

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faith. 10 I want to know Him inside and out. I want to experience the power of His resurrection and join in His suffering, shaped by His death, 11 so that I may arrive safely at the resurrection from the dead.

As a result of the Gospel....he says this in Acts 20:20-21

*I did everything I could to help you; I held nothing back. I taught you publicly, and I taught you in your homes. 21 **I told everyone the same message**—Jews and Greeks alike—that we must turn toward God and have faith in our Lord Jesus the Anointed.*

1. Here is what we hear in Paul's testimony in the scripture

- **My life is about the Anointed**
- I have One message - just One its about Him.
- Repeats this in different phrases in Col 1:23, Philp. 1:21

Perhaps one of the most powerful responses to the Missional Challenge in front of the Church today would be a revelation about this - I Cor 6:19-20

'The physical part of you is not some piece of property belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body.

I am not my own....my life is literally the Lords. And He is living His life through me. My life is about the Anointed One!

This revelation is enough to literally change life.....if I embrace this powerful reality...the Word is being made Flesh in me!

Next we hear this theme from Paul over and Over....

2. My life is about a different story....

- In this story God does not demand power, success or even wisdom to accomplish His goal!
- So while we like success, influence fill in the blank.....riches....etc
- 1 Cor 1-2....**God uses the weak, the foolish, the puny things to shame those things....**
- Galatians 6:14 - **Here is Paul's Missional Statement!**
But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world....the only thing that countsis a new creation....
- **And that beloved is what we are!**
- May I never put anything above the Cross!

Here is the next revelation - Church your mission if you should choose to accept it....**Live the story of the Cross. My life is about a different story - the story of the Cross!** The cross that has declared life, meaning and purpose.

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My life is about One message - One Story -

3. So Now what?

Here is how Paul spelled it out to the Romans – 15:1-8

15 1-2 Those of us who are strong and able in the faith need to step in and lend a hand to those who falter, and not just do what is most convenient for us. Strength is for service, not status. Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, “How can I help?”

3-6 That’s exactly what Jesus did. He didn’t make it easy for himself by avoiding people’s troubles, but waded right in and helped out. “I took on the troubles of the troubled,” is the way Scripture puts it. Even if it was written in Scripture long ago, you can be sure it’s written for us. God wants the combination of his steady, constant calling and warm, personal counsel in Scripture to come to characterize us, keeping us alert for whatever he will do next. May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we’ll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus!

7-13 So reach out and welcome one another to God’s glory. Jesus did it; now you do it! Jesus, staying true to God’s purposes, reached out in a special way to the Jewish insiders so that the old ancestral promises would come true for them. As a result, the non-Jewish outsiders have been able to experience mercy and to show appreciation to God. Just think of all the Scriptures that will come true in what we do! For instance:

*Then I’ll join outsiders in a hymn-sing;
I’ll sing to your name!*

And this one:

Outsiders and insiders, rejoice together!

And again:

*People of all nations, celebrate God!
All colors and races, give hearty praise!*

And Isaiah’s word:

*There’s the root of our ancestor Jesse,
breaking through the earth and growing tree tall,
Tall enough for everyone everywhere to see and take hope!*

Oh! May the God of green hope fill you up with joy, fill you up with peace, so that your believing lives,

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filled with the life-giving energy of the Holy Spirit, will brim over with hope!

- **Family On Mission is not about a Missions trip or giving to a Faith Promise.....its about living the life of Jesus....**
- **The Beauty and Glory of the Family of the God head – Visible – Accessible and Partnered in my life!**

The nature and purpose of the Church – The Glory Of God being known upon the earth....Presence being known and seen.

- **That every man, woman, boy and girl would have the opportunity to know they are loved of God and heirs of His Kingdom.**
- **That every member of the Church would live in open partnership with Gods intent over their life - to live in relationship and representation of His Kingdom.**

Rethink even some of the things we have said about family.....maybe this is the strategy of Heaven all along!

Close

- **Resist anything that misrepresents the Family of the God head in my life.**
- **Repent – begin to think of my life differently to embrace Family on Mission!**
- **Say yes to invitation to live Family on Mission.**
- **Say yes to Jesus telling His story in our life.**

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