

## ***SOUTHWEST ASSEMBLY***

### ***A CULTURE OF HIS PRESENCE - A GOOD NEWS CULTURE - LK 4:18-19***

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In Luke 4 we have the account of the beginning of Jesus public ministry. He comes back home - verse 14 and this is what He reads Luke 4:14-21. Part of what was so stunning in this proclamation was Jesus literally defining His ministry - which is the Ministry of the God head! To Proclaim Good News! That paramount to what nature of the God head is all about is to declare Good News!

This is a direct reference to Isaiah 61:1-3 and an indirect reference to Isaiah 52:7 How lovely are the feet of him who brings good news....

So here is the context -

We see this fleshed out in 2 Sam 18:19-27

- David is awaiting news of the battle that involved his son Absalom
- News of the Battle would come from 2 messengers
- On reporting good news - normally Run
- The other with Bad news - normally not run as fast.

The Isaiah 52:7 reference was concerning the time of the Assyrian Exile - when God's people would be so anxious for news of the return to the land of Promise....

- Gods people in the context of Restoration of His promise - was PRECEDED by a messenger of Good News!

This is clearly the context of Luke 4 as Jesus says

- I am the a messenger of Good News.....from the God Head....
- I am not here with Bad News - but Good News.....

His message was NOT - you have gone to far....you have strayed into sinful territory to long....

**I am here to Proclaim - The Year of the Lords Favor....**

Which by the way the proclamation has not ended!

- This is significant - Jesus Proclaims
- The Promise and Provision of God has arrived!
- This beloved is the Good news of the Gospel!

Interesting isn't it that Paul uses this same picture in Romans 10....how beautiful are the feet of him who brings Good News....?

Beloved a Culture of His Presence - is not determined by building or bylaws

- It is a Culture Good News!

**This is Fundamental to a Culture of His Presence is the proclamation of the Good News of What He has done to bring Freedom and Life to His Beloved!**

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*And the secret is simply this Christ in you!  
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Now Paul makes this very pointed connection in 2 Cor 5:20

- We have become those Messengers....of Good News
- What News - 2 Cor 5:17-20

**Now this is soo important!**

- Truth be told - too often we the Church have not been known to those around us as those who carry Good News..!
- But messengers focused on the brokenness of the world around us....!

As one of my friends has put it we have at times made God out to be a Moral monster more concerned with pointing out our weakness and failings than the God who has pursued us from Eternity to reveal.....Good News!

My point is that we have gotten so focused on the the if only's ..... its almost that we have communicated that good moral living will produce the Kingdom of God.....and beloved it does not!

**Establishing a Kingdom Culture is not about the perceived strength and momentum we bring to the equation!**

Consider the Children of Israel coming to the edge of the land of Promise – Twice!

- The character of God, the promise of God and the purposes of God.....all the same from the first time they came to the land of Promise as when they actually went in.
- **The ONLY thing that changed.....was their thinking!** They repented - changed their minds and lived out of the Truth of Who God said He is and who they are!

Beloved the Birthing of Kingdom Culture in a time of incredible opposition is **NOT** about the political, economic, spiritual or dare I say even the biblical season we find ourselves in.....

- It is a Changeless Reality into which we are invited to live.
- This gospel of the Kingdom is as relevant and real for the 'end times' as it was in the beginning times of the early Church!

My Passion is this - we are just as called and capable to birth this Kingdom now - One World Government rises - America falls into an heap - economy fails.....or.....somehow America rebounds and we experience and transformational revival!

**Our call and identity is remains the SAME Beloved! To Birth and Establish a Kingdom Culture and lifestyle of His Presence.**

- **How is a Kingdom Culture birthed? Participating with His heart..... to see the invisible realm to become visible.**

Part of my story takes me on more than one side of what I will call religious extremes. From a traditional reformed setting to flaming pentecostal. The summation of all that I seemed to glean from my experience on either extreme was **remarkably similar**

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- God is going to judge bad behavior and reward the good...so you better get it right - yes that is massively oversimplified.
- But in the end we communicate a system of relating to God that is all about what we can control.
- A God that if we get it right - we control outcomes....it was never about our outcomes.

**Beloved what we are asking the Lord to birth is the invisible eternal Kingdom** - as it is in Heaven let it be upon the earth. So we see Paul in Ephesus - Acts 19 - and the gospel is birthed in Epaphras who takes it to Colosse. When Paul writes to the Church of Colosse He indicates that this was something birthed not out of strategy but out of a prayer meeting in Ephesus.

Beloved part of what I am asking the Lord for is that we learn more and more what it means to be a womb for the invisible Kingdom to be established but also to be a voice to the Church of the west calling her to this message - we beloved are called to establish the Kingdom upon the Earth.

I do not know how we are going to get the Church of the west here - that **Kingdom Culture is 'normal'**

- Part of this is about us moving from 'doing' Christianity to a Lifestyle in the Grace of God that is anchored first and foremost in the work of the Cross.

**Beloved it is a Lifestyle that is all about the birthing of a totally other than Culture upon the earth!**

**Not something we build - but it is something we get to Participate in!**

**Establishing Kingdom Culture is about a people who are committed to a Lifestyle – To be Messengers of Good News!**

- **Col. 1:25-29**
  - *25 Of this church I was made a minister (messenger) according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, 26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, **which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.** 28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. 29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.*

**How do we become Messengers?**

When I was younger – I was told you go to Bible College.....

Yet the call is upon all of us....to be messengers of Good News!

How? Col 3:1-2

- Seeing – The Right Realm!
- Hearing
- Agreeing

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1. Seeing and Hearing.....are a challenge!
  - Hear this – the Plot of Hell looks like this – to work to get every believer...focused in the wrong direction!
    - **To get those who whose lives have Forever been Changed....to become Focused on the Forever changing!**
  - To cause them to be addicted to the Visible realm!
    - This is how Ralph Harris puts it in his book – Gods Astounding Opinion of you!
      - *“So here's what happened: By demonic concoction, many of us have come to believe that our behavior and thought life reveals more about who and what we are than what the Bible says about who and what we are...as a result everything gets distorted when we exchange the unseen (always true and unchanging) for the seen (temporary and changing) including our own lives”*

#### **Birthing a Culture of His Presence means that we have Galvanized our Gaze!**

- **Begin to base our life on the World we are from! John 17:15-16**
  
- we need a continual vision of beauty that goes beyond ‘the highest form of earthly’ beauty.
- Psalm 16 - In His presence is fullness of joy ....and His right hand are pleasures forevermore!
- **Can I say this over us - we need to stop our incessant demand to justify extravagant and costly worship - encounter!**

#### **Beloved – the Kingdom is about those who SEE...**

- Our Alabaster box is not a once off thing
- What this western church culture needs most are those who are convinced that having eyes that have seen the beauty of Jesus is what this worship thing is all about....not the thousand other things we have allowed it to become - not a production!

#### **To See.....He really is better and More beautiful than we ever thought!**

- ‘Because He IS better than we thought - we need to change how we think’
- **Beloved - the Seeing Realm - was not for the purpose of a Platform.....but that our minds would repent and be in alignment with His thoughts!**
- **This is what you actually think about me....**

#### **People who See and Hear**

- **Are the very People who can speak the Truth in Love ( which bty is not an excuse to point out folks failures....its more about telling the Truth of the Fathers heart!)**
  - **You are not like anything you have ever known!**
- **Because what they have Seen is His beauty**
- **And in Seeing His beauty - they can see yours!**

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**Men and Women whose eyes are filled with the beauty of another realm....are not moved by the storms around them....**

**You see I was pastoring in the days that followed 9-11....and the prayer meetings were full.....because of what they saw.....they were not sustained because of what they did NOT see!**

- I am asking the Lord for favor on this....this is a powerful message to the body of Christ that needs to touch kids, adults, all.....to see the Lord in His beauty is the vision that will sustain give life and expression to a Kingdom Culture in every generation!
- **People who See And Hear**
- Jesus said clearly things like this - My sheep hear my voice - John10....

**Here is the deal - this is a Real God who is Really Speaking**

- Part of the Greek and Roman models that so heavily formed much of Church as we know it today...
- Much of it is based on an idea that people did **NOT** expect to Hear the Voice.....
- Maybe the clergy but certainly not the normal folk

So we make these statements that are not at all scriptural or in alignment with the promise of the God of scripture.....

- God is silent....
- 400 years of silence

**God has never been silent.....**

- The scriptural account says this.....visions and words were rare.....did not mean God was NOT talking it means people were not listening....
- Psalmist....clearly exclaims.....creation speaks day and day...
- Romans 1:18-20....speaks day after day

**Here is the reality of the Word of the Lord**

Ought to be more than verses out of the scripture

- Real Man
- Real Voice - who is the Living Word
- Speaks by His Spirit.

**Beloved I want to say this - especially in the prophetic prayer movement.....can we be reminded that God speaks....first to just tell us the truth of who He is.....'I will quiet you with my love'.....**

- I got to such a place in one part of my journey that I wanted....a 'word' cause I felt so insecure I wanted the reassurance....I've got the endorsement!

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- So again this element of a lifestyle hearing is not about a platform - ministry tape or even a directional word....other than the Father directing us back into His heart!

#### **Couple things here**

- How can we speak the Truth in love - if we are not listening to the Truth.....God says to Moses.....what I am going to do....is just tell you the truth about who I am.....I will declare My Name.....
- Now the opposite is also true - we don't have to believe everything that floats in our head! The Psalmist says this - The lord is on His throne - let the earth be silent.....
- **So to hear**....sometimes we need to shut off the unending noise.....listen.....Father you want to speak what do you want to say.

The last word I want to suggest for us to become a birthing place of establishing Kingdom Culture and Lifestyle -

People who See and Hear - and a people who **Agree...**

#### **3. Agree**

- This is not agreement that is based on the latest word we got.....
- Agreement with what we have slowed down to see and hear of the the Revelation of God
- Numbers 14 - Moses intercession before God was not about his personal zeal or reputation was all about the revealed character and nature of Who God Said He was!
- Beloved - Intercession's beginning point is not on earth but Heaven!
- Agreement is not so much about making something happen.....wow we prayed and now look!

**Agreement is is primarily agreeing with what has already happened!**

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