

A New wineskin, new wine and the work of the Lord ...

As I have traveled around the world in the last few years there are some things that I have observed that God is doing. Seeing all the wonderful things the Lord is doing has really affected my life and worldview. One time I said Lord, I want to be a part of everything you are doing, and he said, “***you are, you are my body and it's a mystery.***” This brought me to tears, because Jesus is really doing a lot globally right now. This article is a brief testimony of what the Lord is doing in the here and now in the nations of the earth. This certainly is just a small piece of what he's doing but it seems to be a commonality despite nationality or social and economic differences.

What God is doing is not new but ancient, but for much of the church it is very new. What fascinates me is that God who has no need to change at all, desires to change everything but him. Jesus will not only change people, but he will change heaven and earth and make all things new. That's pretty good news, huh? That alone could fascinate me for about 20 years. Many people are sick of playing church and hiding our lamps under a bushel. Many people are beginning to desire what Jesus intended the church to look like, which by the way is Him. When we truly learn to abide in Christ we will go into the entire world and preach the Gospel. We will not only preach the gospel to those who can give us big offerings, but we will preach the gospel and become an offering. Much of western Christianity is more about ideology than lifestyle. I will give you a brief example what I am speaking about. If I were preaching the Gospel on streets of New Jersey and a wealthy businessman came up to me and said, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” I would say, pray a prayer

with me and I will see you on Sunday morning, if I am not out preaching in another church. Jesus would say, ***“Sell everything and follow me”***. That’s what he said to the rich young ruler; remember he’s the same yesterday today and forever. The gospel has been greatly reduced in the west, but God is coming to bring revelation and change. Revelation always comes before change.

What I am saying is that we have greatly reduced the gospel into ideologies instead of a lifestyle, explained by authentic doctrine according to the Scriptures. Instead we have had doctrines with no real gospel lifestyle. Our theology and biography is all too different. Jesus would call that hypocrisy and he would be right as he always is. This is just as dangerous as false doctrine, if not more! The reason I say that is because false doctrine is easier to detect than our own hypocrisy. I have been greatly confronted by the gospel Jesus preached. It’s all or nothing; it’s not a gray area, whatever I feel led to do lifestyle. Following Jesus demands complete obedience and radical sacrifice. I am starting to realize that this is our greatest privilege. To know, love and obey Jesus is vastly incomparable to anything in the vanity realm. The message Jesus preached drew a crowd but only a few people stayed with him. In this hour Jesus desires real disciples, disciplined followers who will lay down their lives for him, and those created in his image.

Time and time again I have seen people try to disciple people, yet they are not disciples. All this produces is chaos and craziness that leaves people with a real distaste for church. We cannot give what we don’t have. The same way we can’t reproduce what we are not. Not to love our neighbor, is not to love Jesus. Not to care about the unborn and the poor is not to care about Jesus. If all we do is go to church

and we aren't satisfied with our life, imagine how Jesus feels? Many people leave church disappointed. No one ever left Jesus disappointed except those who resisted him or didn't want to sell everything to buy the pearl in the field. Many people who aren't thrilled about church really love their neighbor and Jesus pretty well.

Unreligious people can smell hypocrisy a mile away. God wants to rid my life and yours of this horrible leaven, which Jesus called hypocrisy. I love the church and I love Jesus and I love the lost. If we are going to really love Jesus and our neighbor, than we will have to go to them instead of waiting for them to come to us. I mean, really, who do we think we are? Jesus himself, God in the flesh, came to us and we need to go to them "if" he really lives in us. We should go to them as he came to us!

"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" is a command that can't be ignored. Get into debt for a church building that most people will never want to leave, certainly is not a command of Jesus. I love nice church buildings with comfortable seats and good sound systems, but we must wake up and obey the gospel if we are going to call ourselves Christians.

In the book of revelation, Jesus commanded the church of Ephesus to "return to their first work" because they "lost their first love." Perhaps our first work and our first love are completely inseparable Biblically. I believe with all my heart Jesus is saying this to you, and me right now! The first work Jesus is referring to is preaching the gospel, it's called the labor of love or the work of faith. There are over a billion people who have never heard the gospel and Jesus has chosen you and me to bring it to them; scary huh? That is all part of the Good news. I am assured Jesus has more faith than you or I. He actually believes in us and has entrusted us with

himself and the very Spirit that raised him from the dead. He has also entrusted us with the gospel of the Kingdom. The scriptures say that after the Gospel of the Kingdom is preached in the entire world the end shall come. The end time judgments of God are released through a praying and preaching church. The good news will judge the world righteously in the fullness of time according to the will of God.

I believe the next move of God will look a little different than the last few moves of the Spirit. If this move of God would have a name perhaps it would be called "*good works and greater works*". It will come by the grace of God. We don't pray it in or wait it out. It's God who meets us in our prayers and waiting with his grace. The wind of the Spirit begins to sovereignly blow on all those who are willing to be led. This move of the Spirit will be and even is now being fueled by intimacy with Jesus. Intimacy with Jesus leads us to being strengthened, and being strengthened leads us to doing exploits as we co-labor with the Lord Jesus for the Father's glory. Matthew 5:16 KJV "*Let your light so shine before men, that they see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*" Here the people doing the good works become invisible and God the Father is directly glorified by what his people do. As we obey Jesus the Father is glorified. The only way the Father is glorified is when we obey his Son. It's pretty interesting how people do good stuff and God get's glory. Isaiah teaches us how our light will shine. Let us learn how to shine our light so we can obey Jesus. Isaiah 58:6-8 KJV "*Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,*

and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy rearward." Not only does the Father get glory when our light shines, but his glory becomes our protection. Meaning what he receives in heaven protects us on earth. Paul in Ephesians 6 describes the whole armor of God. There is no protection for our back because we are supposed to only move forward. The glory of the Lord that the Father receives from our light shining is the very thing that watches our back as we move forward into more good works. When God is not getting glory from our humanitarian efforts they are worthless. There are many people out there doing good works, but if they are not done in the name of Jesus the Father is not being glorified and it's just a waste of time. Good works done in the name of Jesus are a part of what Jesus purchased for the redeemed on Calvary.

One of my heroes said this about doing good works. "[Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.](#)" **John Wesley.** I believe this to be a real key to God releasing his power. If we don't do what is in our power to do, why would he do what is only in his power to do? If we with our extra clothes can cloth a whole poor village in Nicaragua, maybe he would heal and save a whole village, and radically transform their quality of life and give them eternal life while he's doing it. The move of the Spirit now is putting the focus back on our lifestyle, not just our verbal profession. Many people have enough truth on there

statement of faith to believe they are not deceived. James said, "If we hear the word and do not do it we deceive ourselves." Much of the church is in deception with great doctrine! This is scary and Jesus will bring light to his church once again.

As we co-labor with the Lord in his harvest field and do good works, the Father will be glorified and he will take us and make us the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy to his disciples. Here's what he said *"Verily, verily, I say to you, he that believes on Me, **the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father.**" (John 14:12)* The prophecy is in bold red print. This must come to pass simply because Jesus said so. The agenda of Jesus is the Father's glory through his name by our simple obedience. Those who really believe simply obey. Those of us who really love him will just obey him. We don't have to walk around with an "I love Jesus" t-shirt; our life style will clearly proclaim our message of Christ. Besides most Christian t-shirts are less than favorable to the eyes, sorry for being honest. Good works and greater works are definitely in the Lord's agenda in this hour. We must be about our Father's business, if we are not we truly are unemployed. Being unemployed in the economy we live in may not be the best things. Working with and waiting for him is our assignment. We must be working in the harvest field and waiting for the Lord's appearance. If not, our life is out of balance. If we don't know him, it's no fun to work for him. The more we get to know him the easier it becomes to labor into the rest he's prepared for his people. I want to encourage you to put your hand to the plow and never look back. The work of ministry is always and only fueled by intimacy with Jesus. Our intimacy with Jesus becomes reality to others when we obey the commands of Christ Jesus. Jesus said

“you are my friends **if you** do whatever I command you to do.” Friendship isn’t earned, but we have the privilege to show Jesus how we feel about him by what we do for others. Some people say, “I am not called to preach the gospel”; others would say, “I am not called to pray all night.” I would say those two are called to be friends or the church will cease to exist. We need to lay down our inaccurate perceptions of people and become busy waiting on the Lord, and doing what he tells us in the time of our waiting. Waiting and working, fasting and praying, preaching and healing; it’s all pretty simple. The moral of this short story is, you are what God is doing, so do what he’s put in your heart to do!

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