

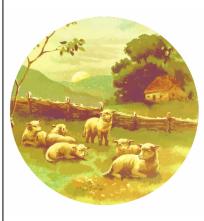
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Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
(Luke 12:32)



We are all subjectively influenced by the limited awareness of our daily events, for good or for ill. If you happen to live in a relatively safe and Godhonoring part of the country as we do, (not saying it is perfect, but it is not insane) the world can seem stable and even happy. The cries from Nigeria, Red China, or closer to home, like the Texas border, can be kept far away from our view, as we pass from moment to moment in a false sense of returning to normal. We shut out the suffering as if it is only a shadow of another world. Our momentary troubles may seem big, but are usually settled in a relatively timely and well-ordered way. We complain that our day was hectic or hard, but we don't really mean BAD. Even if we are facing a life-transforming grief, it is still within the boundaries of a safe and sane civilization, and we are preserved within it.

Someone just sent me a short video clip of the Gay Pride Parade in NYC where rampant lawlessness, supported by the elected city government of New York, is manifesting in the meaningless attacks on innocent food vendors. If you live in any liberal city led by such lawlessness, such as inner city Chicago, or increasingly so in inner city Charlotte, it's a different daily atmosphere. Crime is rampant. Murders are an every day occurrence. Your children are in danger playing outside, or even sleeping inside, because mindless hoodlums randomly shoot through walls. In such Black Lives Matter areas, black lives do not matter. Life no longer can flow because boundaries are not in their proper place. And reason has fallen dead in the streets. The worse criminals seem to be the elected officials. You just get through the day, even the moment, thankful you survived.

'Happy' people may be deceived by failing to acknowledge the reality of human suffering. Suffering people may be deceived by failing to believe there is another Kingdom both coming and already here. Both need a revelation from the Holy Spirit to see clearly. We all need our perspective adjusted a bit. Or maybe, for some of us, a LOT.

We are still in the shaking. The human tendency is to seek for relief and assume if we encounter a momentary lull or hit a nice smooth spot for a while that we are returning to normal. For those who listen to Jesus, we do not bounce back and forth from tragedy to triumph. We live in the full reality of both realms at once. We enjoy the blessings, while still remaining fully cognizant of the ongoing war. We live in the pressure while being stabilized inwardly by a Peace that the world knows nothing about. We engage the trouble carrying that Peace as that Peace carries us, and we positively influence the troubled realm by our very presence, because the Presence we carry loves through us.

I hear various camps refer to the 'new normal.' But I don't buy their definitions. The new normal I refer to is this: that everything that is shaking will continue to be shaken, and will go on shaking until the only thing that is not shaking is the Kingdom of God. So let us not grow weary in well-doing. We will soon reap if we don't faint. But the idea of 'going back to normal' where the daily atmosphere is set by the cultural norms and pleasantries of the recent past is no longer our focus or desire. Those passing shadows are not in the minds and hearts of a people who are looking for a city with foundations whose builder and maker is God. That city is not far up in a heavenly escapist realm. That city is coming DOWN to earth. So this is not a reference to flying away to heaven. It is a reference to rebuilding the ancient waste places and restoring the ruined cities. This refers to the healing of the world by the manifestation of the Kingdom of God. One person at a time. We are participating in the fulfillment of this every time we pray the prayer we were told to pray, and have been praying for two thousand years: Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In me. In you. In us all.

Are you fully awake to that reality? Can you see those visions of Scripture? Do you embrace this purpose of God: to bring Heaven to earth? Even to your little bit of earth? May we all become a fully awake and faithful family of God. Hopefully, we will not need a perspective adjustment very often. And you will not be discouraged by whatever 'non news' news you hear, whether good or bad. Your eyes will remain on that which is the heart of the Good News: the kingdoms of this world are becoming the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. And He shall reign forever.



Clearance!

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ONE PERSON AT A TIME

On Saturday, a young lady serving in a downtown restaurant observed a couple entering. The lady was in a wheelchair pushed by her husband. After serving them, the waitress felt gently directed by the Holy Spirit to invite them to her church on Sunday. They thanked her, and the next day she was delighted to see them entering the service. There was a guest speaker that morning, a man who goes around the streets and byways of whatever city he is led to, carrying the cross and sharing the gospel with the people he encounters on the street. At the close of the service he prayed for a few folks, and as people were leaving he asked to pray for the lady in the wheelchair. She had been bound to it since 2003. Her young son had never seen her apart from that chair. As the speaker prayed, she stood up!

When the pastor spoke with her and her husband the next day, she was driving herself to her mother's home to show her what had happened. She is completely healed of what had been diagnosed as an untreatable muscular deterioration. The guest speaker told the pastor, "I pray for lots of people as I walk the streets, and see many miracles and healings there. But I rarely see miraculous healings in churches. It's the street people who are hungry and humble, and miracles flow there." Thank God for a man who will speak the healing word in faith. And thank God for a young waitress who listens to the voice of the Holy Spirit and obeys. And thank God for each one of us, that we might be counted among the hungry and humble, living loved by Him, and loving others...one person at a time.

Closing Thoughts...



If every church in the country came into revival, it would still not be enough to transform the nation. We would still be merely salt in the salt shaker. No. What must come about is such a transformation in the hearts of all of God's people that we all become salt and light out in the world, out in the culture, out in the troubled dark rotten areas of every city. And THAT is what has been put in our hearts ever since we got the signal that the conferences were over. It was not the close of an era to us, but the signal of the beginning of something new. Let scripture speak for itself when it refers to some of what I see coming: ... I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids will I pour out my Spirit... And whosoever will call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered... (Joel 2:28,29,32) That is what is coming next!



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