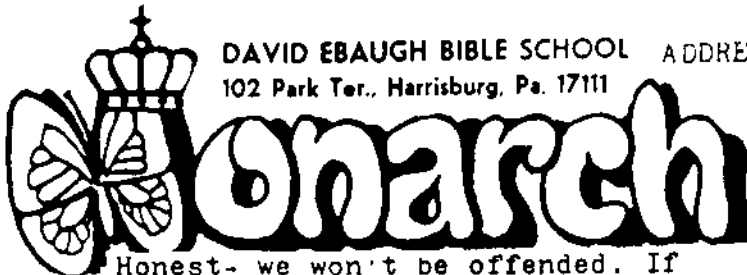


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Honest- we won't be offended. If you don't want this, then please check here and return to us.

A VISION

Several years ago I had a vision and now is the time that I think you should know about it.

The vision was of a running stream of water, like a little river. The whole creek ran over a water wheel which was used to power a grinding mill. That was fairly ordinary, but the next part wasn't. The stream continued to run after powering the water wheel and after it rounded a few bends it came to another water wheel. At that point the process repeated. After that, the brook powered many, many more milling operations - more than I can remember, perhaps it was endlessly repeated.

THE INTERPRETATION

An inner voice said, "The stream represents the Holy Spirit. The water wheels represent the established churches (denominations).

The church (water wheel) receives its power from the flow of the Holy Spirit (branch of water).

The move of the Holy Spirit does not stay with any particular established church or denomination - rather the water (Holy Spirit) moves on to empower another established church down stream, then another.

As each established church (water wheel) does its work, it knows very little about what is going on downstream (or upstream).

In fact, each spoke in the wheel (established church member) contributes to the success of the local church by pivoting around its axle (pastor, board, elders, leaders) and provides power to the whole operation, but it knows very little about the total process.

The spoke was fashioned by GOD to go round and round, receiving power from the stream (Holy Spirit) and transmitting power to the axle shaft (established church). But some spokes seldom feel like they are getting anywhere. They often feel like they are going back to the beginning. Other spokes are perfectly happy in their slot."

PREDESTINED

So we see that some people are predestined to go round and round in the same denomination, forever working and producing for their churches, but never advancing themselves.

And GOD has made some other people to be a part of the move of the Holy Spirit and participate in each and every work.

The voice said that there are some people who wade in the stream way past their ankles and past their shoulders to a place where there is water to swim in. They become more attached to the stream than to their mill. In fact, they become a part of the stream by providing a mind and body through which the Holy Spirit manifests His power in the earth realm. (Ezek. 47:1-9).

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy and I do believe that this vision was a genuine prophecy because of the clarity, impact, circumstances, and direct application to the problem at hand. (I Cor. 12:8-10).

The apostle Peter said that, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (Acts: 2:17).

Though the vision was a decade ago, I still see visions and have very few dreams, so maybe the young men-old men difference refers to young at heart, or perhaps young in mind. If I ever get old and dream dreams rather than see visions - then I'll let you know. (That's a joke, son.)

GO ON - NOT BACK

I think that we should amplify the thought about the future tense when our GOD said, "I WILL pour out of my Spirit." Up to that point in time the women (daughters) had no voice in spiritual affairs and the young men had not prophesied before that time, either. The point is that our GOD did lead them on to a place where they had never been. Our GOD did NOT lead them back to the time when the spiritual communication used to come from the sons of Levi. Now, in the future, it would come from ALL flesh.

TWO KINDS OF CHRISTIANS

As I have traveled these 48 states in the last two years, I have noticed a conflict between two kinds of Christians. You don't have to be a detective to hear people who are dedicated to their own church denomination take pot shots at others who are not so dedicated by calling them "church tramps." I've heard it said, "They just come when the church has something special to offer. They are fair-weather Christians because they don't put their hand to the wheel and pull their full load."

And I've heard the super spiritual folks chide with the wheel spokes saying, "You'll never get anywhere! That church takes everything out of you and never gives it back. Why don't you set your load down and come away with me while we visit another work?"

After the vision I think I can see both sides of the picture.

It takes both kinds of Christians, 1.) "the stay at homes" and 2.) the gadabouts."

Without the "stay at homes" there would be no structure at all. Without the "gadabouts" there would be no carrier for the Holy Spirit.

It is easy to think that your own kind is right and the other type, wrong.

And to make it ever more complicated, some people don't like their lot in life and want to change from a "stay at home" to a "gad about" or vice versa.

That is where the story of the potter and the clay comes in.

Our GOD is the potter. We are the clay. He molds us according to His purposes - not ours. In a sense, most Christians are predestined. Some must be "stay at homes" and some must be "gadabouts" because our GOD made them that way. (Rom. 9:13-23).

I hope that our students have noticed that I'm careful to not find fault with either type of Christian. I believe that the scripture, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth," does speak to us on this issue. Our GOD created both kinds and both have work to do.

CHURCH PROBLEMS

Most pastors are oriented toward the problems of keeping the water wheel operating smoothly. On the other hand, many prophets, evangelists and teachers seem to have more interest in the flowing stream.

The most miserable people in the ministry whom I meet as I travel, are people acting as pastors who really have more interest in what the Holy Spirit is doing - rather than who is keeping the rules, and how well.

The most disagreeable people I meet are those people who are pastors of churches and who have absolutely no knowledge or concern about what the Holy Spirit is doing in other churches or denominations. Those people nearly always teach the gospel of the circumcision - a mixture of law and grace. They seem to be scared to death of the gospel of the uncircumcision - the pure grace message (Gal. 2:4-7).

Their mixture message of law and grace seems to do a pretty good job of keeping the wheel spokes in their own slots and of making their members scared of drowning in the stream.

GOING WHERE WE'VE NEVER BEEN

I believe that our GOD is bringing forth ministries that we have never heard of - like the electronic church. I do believe that Pat Robertson's 700 Club, Jim Bakker's PTL Club, Robert Schuller's Hour of Power and Oral Roberts- are just as much in the present move of our GOD as is any local established church, that I have ever seen. And I'm very glad that our established church fathers were not successful in shutting up women ministers like Aimee Semple McPherson, Kathryn Kuhlman Roxanne Brandt, Freda Lindsay, Eileen Bennett and a host of others. (Forgive me for not finishing the list. That was dangerous for me to start, wasn't it?)

I believe that our GOD is taking us to places where we have never been.

Most of our students have come to the place where they have decided to NOT reject the technology advances that our GOD has given to us. They are not trading their automatic washers for a washboard as a few are. They do not fight the revelation that the world is round, as our church leaders of the past did. They recognize that when the enemy develops chariots of iron, then they must walk in that new technology too, or they will lose the battle. (See Judges 1:19).

They are starting to embrace the new home video recorders for the kingdom. Some are even eyeing the new TV satellite dishes. They are determined to continue to walk with GOD into uncharted territory, never seen before. They were even willing to sail with Sir Francis Drake on the first circumnavigation of our globe. Some are turning into Christian astronauts, or at least satellite technicians.

THE REASON

Now I see that some jealous preachers found fault with everyone who was not directly involved in building or supporting their own water wheel. Their vision was of their own water wheel and nothing else. Even though they were good men, great men of the gospel, their eyes could not see

what our GOD was doing, outside their area of control.

SOME ARE RETURNING

There is a move among some Christians toward the idea that our GOD is returning the present day church to the original order of the church of the first century. They desire to restore the order of the 5 fold ministry, ie, 1.) apostle 2.) prophet 3.) evangelist 4.) pastor 5.) teacher. The idea is kind of like a point on a wheel that returns back to its starting place after one revolution.

I've got friends in those groups and I will not condemn or throw rocks - but I want it understood that this Bible teacher does not see any signs at all that would lead us to believe that our GOD is leading us back to where we came from. Presently, I have not been able to find any Bible stories that show a pattern that our GOD ever took us back to anything we ever left.

DOES OUR GOD RETURN US?

Sure, there are many exhortations in the Bible for us to return to our Father GOD. But, I can't find any that tell us to return to places that our GOD has led us through.

For instance, our GOD led our father Joseph into Egypt, first for salvation and later for captivity. When we needed captivity again, we were NOT lead back to Egypt - this time it was on to Babylon.

The scripture, "That ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way heretofore" (Joshua 3:4) seems to speak to us in this matter.

I do not believe that our GOD is leading His church back to the 5 fold ministry. I don't think our GOD is limited to 5 or to any other number.

SOME ARE FLOWING ON TO THE UNKNOWN

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which GOD hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 3:9) seems to describe what I am seeing for the present day church.

I see our GOD leading us into places where we have never been before - rather than leading us back to where we came from.

ALL WORK - NO PLAY

But I have noticed that some Christians are so taken up with working in their own structure (water wheel) that they never take the time to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit to a work down the street or to attend a meeting or convention outside their own denomination. Now I see that they are wheel spoke Christians and I can't help but have a chuckle when I hear them say that they are getting dizzy.

PLAY ALL DAY

Conversely, I've seen Christians who are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good. They flip and flop from place to place to get and get and never give. They never make any kind of commitment to the ministry they receive from. And they seem to cry the loudest when things aren't going right somewhere. When I reflect on the way each of our four babies cried when their warm bottle turned cold, I think I can connect the reason. Some people are just too immature to accept responsibility and commit themselves

to a solution. If you know someone who is not supporting a successful ministry, even in a small way, I think you'll know what class they are in.

BALANCE

Some people are blinded by the law of the church - while others are overly in love with the freedom of the Spirit.

Our students are trying to keep a balance without being trapped in the rotations of the water wheel and without being drowned in the stream.

It could be very helpful if each student tries to decide if their own personality and Christian experience is more oriented toward the water wheel or toward the flowing branch of water. Each student will find that their own decisions concerning future plans for their own life will be easier and even clearer after they know which kind of Christian profile they seem to fit best.

This ministry exists because you support it.