

“Let’s Go Deeper” Part Two

Preface

“Deeper life” may be defined as the depths of the life of Christ revealed in us and expressed through us. Depth is when the Person of the message possesses our inward parts by His nature. This is a deep person, one who is conformed to the Lamb.

The Belly of Hell or the Presence of the Lord /Womb of Transformation

“Whither can I flee from Thy Presence” (Psalm 139). Job 38:16-18

“For Thou hadst cast me into the deep, into the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about, all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me.” “The waters compassed me about” (Jonah 2:3). “Then I said, I am cast out of Thy sight; yet will I look again toward Thine holy Temple” (Jonah 2:4). “...And my prayer came in unto Thee, into Thine holy Temple” (Jonah 2:7b).

Where we left off Jonah was fleeing from the presence of the Lord and being tossed into the sea. Jonah was fleeing from the presence of Someone he did not yet fully know. But God wanted him to come into a greater comprehension of Who He really was so that Jonah would bear His presence to others. The true presence of the Lord was soon to become Jonah’s refuge from the waves that would encompass him. Instead of his destruction Jonah would find God’s presence as his salvation out from deep darkness. What he was fleeing from he would soon flee into as life.

There was a deeper entering into of the Temple that Jonah needed, and his cry from the great fish was towards the presence of the Lord that is found in the temple. *“Then I said, I am cast out of Thy sight; yet will I look again toward Thine holy Temple” (Jonah 2:4).* Yet only a partaking of the Lord’s death would open those chambers of fellowship into the Lord’s heart in such a manner for the presence of God to dwell in Jonah.

God desired for Jonah to be carried deep down into union with greater depths of Christ’s death. So many of us desire to know the Lord more in this way. We don’t want just to be sprinkled with the Cross (refreshed) but completely immersed and pulled into the plummeting work of Calvary. There we will remain at the “bottom of the Jordan” where the stones once lay until the complete sanctification of His sacrifice puts the old away. Jonah had to go into great depths to for a deeper change within. He had to touch * the bottom to become beautiful of nature within. These waters brought him down into the core work of calvary . The greater the immersion into the waters of Christ’s death, the deeper the effect of His death in us. The greater Calvary’s touch, the deeper the change. Even one touch by the Lamb will begin to define our salvation, yet a continued saturation in the eternal spirit of His sacrifice will bring us into greater conformity to the true beauty of His Person. Beyond bearing the issues of God’s message, Jonah needed to bear the image of God’s nature. Only the great work of God through His Cross can effect such a change in any of us. As this conformity to His image happens, we will no longer be obedient to a message and a calling, but come forth transformed and united with another life.

We are to be obedient unto the Spirit of His death, not just to sacrificial living. In that sense, our call is not to Ninevah, but to partake of the Lord's mind and true nature. Setting Jonah on the right course was not for him to get immediately turned around and carried to Ninevah in the belly of a sea monster submarine. This prepared vessel of a fish took him down into death so that he could come up in the right spirit.

The plummeting down was not meant to be his ruin, but a prepared vessel of God doing its job to help carry him where he really needed to go. Our true destination in all things is forever and always first the Cross. In this purpose, we can allow God to take us to a place where conformity can finally happen, where we can truly be touched by His death and receive the spirit of His death in us.

Ministry Minded or the Mind of Christ

Man's way is to just go do the ministry rather than to come up from a deep conformity to Christ in newness of Life that will fill all the ministry needs. In the beginning of the book of Jonah, God was asking Jonah to minister in Ninevah. Along the way, God moved to work in Jonah the power of His resurrection to equip his ministry to Ninevah. Jonah probably did not understand the full emphasis that what God was working out in him was meant to bring Life to others, specifically Ninevah. Jonah may have been surprised when Ninevah turned so easily at the word of the Lord. In his mind, Jonah may have felt his only part in the ministry to Ninevah was to be God's spokesman. Jonah may have felt that his responsibility in being called to Ninevah was simply as a man sent from God to sound an alarm to a wicked city. He may have felt that once that task was accomplished, Ninevah was on it's own to either turn or burn.

But God does so much more than just shout out a warning to us. He sent His own Son into the depths of Calvary's suffering and into the horrors of hell to secure that we will have a sure entrance out of our own destructive life into the Bosom of the Father. God's words are backed up by the merit's of Christ's death and resurrection. Jonah himself had experienced the wonder of this salvation in the belly of the whale. He was then sent as a vessel to bear that same salvation to others. He stands as a symbol of one that was not just sent with a warning but that had come up from the depths in resurrection life. He could then have displayed the vastness of God's mercy to all men.

Don't Fake what God didn't make

Jonah's ministry to Ninevah required a deep change in Jonah. It is important that we don't fake what God hasn't made. To do God's will requires God's Son in us Who always does that which pleases His Father. It is natural to flee from God's Presence when His ways can seem so contrary to our own understanding, but thank God for those who will allow themselves to be cast into the deep where God can begin to form the mind of Christ within. Don't look down upon Jonah just because he didn't pretend to do something that was not in him to do. Jesus Christ Himself honored him as one who represented Him in death, burial, and resurrection. It is important that Christ in us become our only hope for bringing God glory. It can be easy to become satisfied with an

obedience that has yet come forth from the very Life of Christ in us. Yet the scriptures declare that “Christ in you” is the only hope of bringing God glory (*Col. 1:27*) Some of us spend so much time ignoring the reality that what we are doing is not in our heart to do that we miss experiencing God’s wonderful working in the deep. Instead of trying to justify our lack, we need to be casting ourselves upon Him Who is our Salvation. We can allow God to bring us into the depths of His Cross and to work in us the Spirit of His Nature.

It can be scary to realize that you have a calling to “Ninevah” and you don’t even care about Ninevah. In fact, you feel repelled by Ninevah and to make it worse, you know that God is going to be merciful to them. Then to make it absolutely unbearable you know that God wants to use you as His vessel to show forth His mercy to them! How could anyone fake a good attitude in a situation like that? Maybe God was not just asking Jonah to try to be agreeable and act nice so that he would have a kind missionary to Ninevah. Maybe all along God knew this calling to Ninevah would require Jonah to first be changed deep within so that the life of Another would move His heart towards Ninevah. Where God guides, He provides. But what exactly does that mean? What does God provide? Did God provide money and a visa, or His Lamb? God provided His Lamb. Where does God provide His Lamb? First for us on the Cross and then in us as our Life! Once Christ is revealed in us then His life within will cause us to go where we would not go and constrain us pour our lives out for that which we once counted as foolish or our enemy.

Now maybe we can more clearly see how important it is to “go deeper” in the Lord! Without Christ formed in us, Christianity is not just hard and hypocritical... it is impossible. We will not love the ungodly. We do not understand God’s merciful kindness. Before we are sent forth as missionaries we must realize that we are the mission field God is first concerned with! Jonah was an Old Testament missionary sent to a foreign nation and Paul was the New Testament apostle sent to the Gentiles. Both men disliked or persecuted those to whom God was sending them before God began the process of conforming these men to the image of Christ. You can see in these examples that God’s choosing is not based on our own personal merits but God’s mercy to bring us into the true expression of His presence, the Lamb as our Life.

It’s Not Fair!

“Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry” (Jonah 4:4).

In Chapter four Jonah is angry because God was merciful to Ninevah. Even though the work of the Cross had begun to take effect in Jonah, the way of the Cross was still foreign to him. In other words, the work of the Cross had been wrought in him to some degree, but the Lamb Spirit that embodies this Cross was yet a mystery to him.

Jonah made a little booth outside of Ninevah to sit in and watch what would happen to the Ninevites, but really it was God Who was waiting to see what was going to happen in Jonah. God’s real work was to continue to impart His mind and spirit in Jonah, but this work would require Jonah’s agreement. To help Jonah understand the Father’s heart,

God prepared certain things such as a gourd, a worm and a wind. These things were external elements meant to expose internal motives that would draw Jonah out so that he might allow God's mercies to fill him. The true preparations were for a heart that would yield to the nature of the Lamb and allow God to express His tender mercies and care for others time and time again.

Each day with all of its little circumstances do not have to be wasted and seen as only trivial. They can work together as things that God can use to speak to our hearts and thereby prepare us to partake of the Lamb and embrace His altar. If our hearts are towards the Lord we will see His care in even the little things that can help in making us ready to be a part of His great ministry of Life to this dark and needy planet. Yet, if we only see things based on our understanding of the situation, then we can become confused, depressed, and like Jonah... not see any purpose for our existence and deem it all as failure.

When Jonah went down into death it saved the whole ship. At that time he didn't fight to save his own life. All were spared because He went into the deeps. His time in the belly of the whale was meant to form this self-giving nature in him so that this same principle would prevail in him towards Ninevah. But instead of Jonah remaining in that sacrificial spirit to bless others, he separated himself outside the city because God was so merciful these heathen people.

Outside the Camp, Outside the City, and Outside the Tree of Life

"Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach" (Hebrews 13:12-13).

Outside the camp, outside the ship, outside the city is where we go "unto Him" to bear suffering for those in the camp, the ship, or the city. We are to be separate unto the Lamb, as firstfruits unto Him that follow Him whithersoever He goeth (). Our place is with Him outside the camp bearing reproach for others. We are to find the very Essence of His Heart and Mind and join with Him in His purpose to give Life to others. Our place is no longer inside the city receiving blessing, but the outside the city in the Lamb filling up his sufferings for His body's sake (), and manifesting His impartial sacrificial love to all men. Because our husband's altar is outside the camp, we must go outside the camp unto Him to partake of it. This is the spirit that Jonah missed. The bride bears his reproach , the dying of the Lord Jesus in her mortal flesh. Our place is now with Him outside the camp.

Jonah separated himself outside the city, but he wasn't doing it to be with the Lamb. His attitude was one of offence with God. He saw only his own situation and how it affected him. He was sensitive to his own concerns, as the plant manifests. He was willing to receive mercy for his own comfort while retaining a harsh stance against the longsuffering and goodness of God to those to whom he was sent. The Father allowed nature to press him into another realization that would cause him to come face to face with his own motivations. The Lord's desire is always to draw us into Himself and not

push us away. His hope would be for Jonah to expand his realm of awareness and “repent” unto the mind of the Lamb. The same grace being offered to Ninevah was also being extended again to Jonah.

The true call into the depths of the sea and outside the camp is actually a call into fellowship with the Lamb. But the Lamb makes no good sense to the knowledge of “what people deserve”. And so Jonah, even though he knew the Cross to an extent most people do not experience, still had not yet had his mind fully renewed to the mind of Christ.

Conclusion

In Christ was have come into union with another Life and another Mind that will constrain us to go where we ourselves would not go. His Presence no longer draws us outwardly but fills us inwardly causing us to bear His image and function by His nature, in essence we become the place where His presence is now found. David cried, “Whither can I flee from Thy Presence!” Upon discovering that the Presence of the Lord is found in His temple, we then realize that we have become that Temple as the Body of the resurrected Christ. Jonah found the true Presence of the Lord was in His temple and in this Temple He found salvation from death and corruption. Yet to become the very expression of the Lord’s Presence is to understand His Nature. God’s Son is found filling the temple of His Body. His Presence formed in us is made manifest in the nature of the Lamb. A Lamb is enthroned in His temple, and the Lamb is what manifests the essence of the Lord’s Life in us. Jonah found the place of the Lord’s Presence, but had not fully comprehended His nature.

Jonah went down into death and even embraced the work of Christ to such a degree that Life worked in Him towards Ninevah. Jesus Christ Himself honored Jonah as a type of His own death, burial and resurrection. Jonah had found the Lord as his salvation but had not yet known the mind of the Lamb that brought forth this salvation. Jonah shows us that it is possible to understand and experience depths of the Cross and our death with Christ and still be offended with the Lamb.

One son from the deep can change a city in a day, but to conform just one person to the image of Christ can take a lifetime. But remember, God is faithful to draw our hearts out to know Him in realms of oneness with His nature that we may not yet be aware of.

Jonah ends in manner that makes you feel that there has not yet been resolution. If we can identify with Jonah in any way in our own relationship with Jesus, then may we seek to find the conclusion that would bring the Father pleasure. We can turn our eyes upon Jesus and behold the Lamb Who is now our very Life. We can choose to allow Him to be formed in us to such a degree that the Father can send us to others knowing that we will go as both a testimony of His Life out from death and also a sweet fragrance of the Spirit of Christ. We can choose to reject the knowledge of good and evil and yield ourselves as vessels that will bear the dying of the Lord Jesus so that life may work in others. Jonah’s story may be over, but ours is still being written. May the testimony of our labors be found etched into the Lamb’s book of Life. Thank God it is not about right and wrong,

but about the Lamb enthroned in His Temple and embraced as our way of proceeding so that all people might be gathered in. *

“To My Jonah”

For God hath pursued you with wisdom unseen.
Beckoning through waves out from depths rarely gleaned.
To Him you are not rebellious, just yet unformed
A son in the making upon whom His preparations pour.

Crying now, later you will coo
As the Spirit of His Son fills you.
For how could the Father force labor from that yet tamed,
Like a bird that was fleeing and would have to be caged?

God understands the ways of the deep
As under the sea He performs His mystery
And forms His Life within the hidden parts
Only when conformed to the Son can Jonah’s true ministry start.

His Presence will fill causing Jonah to arise
And then with wings he will take to the skies
And flying so high and flying so free
There will be no more desire left to cause him to flee.

For that from which once he ran
From which he turned away and made his stand
Will become to him salvation and life
Filled with God’s Presence, there is no more strife.

And having received grace as one formed in the deep
He brings up more than a report of the sea
But bears in his being and carries in his wings
The testimony of New Life that fills all things.

Sure, there’s still more to go that is yet to come
Greater depths to know of God’s Risen Son
To plunder and search and hold as our own
But trust that God is able to make you His home.

For it’s not obedience that He’s really after,
but the Life of His Son in you that to Him really matters.
And as you bear His Presence coming up from the deep ,
God’s life will flow to all nations as the Lamb is released.

Hey all you Jonah’s out there, ... you will fly!

