

Chapter 8 The Revelation Deepens

Transition

This testimony was originally 14 chapters long and contained the story and reason I returned to the states, wisdom and lessons learned from thirty plus short-term mission trips over twenty-five years, mainly to Guatemala, Mexico, and Honduras, but also to Peru, Cuba, and Ethiopia, and some of my experiences during fifteen years as an inner-city high school teacher, which I just retired from. I read that one of the errors made by new writers is to put everything they know and everything they have done in their first manuscript. I made that error. I am also much more blue-collar than white. My first paper for English 101, after I entered the university for the third time (I had previously dropped out twice), contained 5 sentence fragments and was returned with a note from the professor that if I ever turned in a paper again in such manner, I would fail the course.

So – after 6 chapters of pruning – a very sincere and diligent effort (three rewritings in over three years and, a paid, and extremely patient, professional Christian editor) – much prayer and fasting to pass all that remained through the filters of love and kindness – it is time to bring what the Lord has entrusted to me to a close. But first, I *must* tell you, the *latest* chapter of this amazing work of God in my life.

Obedience and God's Fire

In the fall of 2012 a very difficult season began. I had been working on converting a school bus for a little over a year to take short term mission teams safely and comfortably to Mexico. Two other Christian brothers who have a heart for our family south of the border and myself had been meeting regularly to pray and ask God to lead us how we should minister. I had begun to invite several other men after asking God to guide the invitations. Just as the final plans were being made, I was informed by my elders that they would not be responsible for the trip. Because of all the dangers created between the two main drug cartels, they did not believe it was wise to go at this time.

My first reaction was anger and rejection. After a couple days of stewing, I wrote a very Pharisaical letter to my elders to vent and prove my case. Then, the two other brothers I had been praying with about going decided to pull out. I was ready to go alone, until one of my elders

spoke to me personally and said he had fasted for me and for the decision that was made. His words broke me, as well as my desire to be right. I was then led to write another letter to my elders, apologizing and asking for their forgiveness. The Holy Spirit had reached my humbled heart and I knew God was sovereignly involved. He said, “No”.

So I shut down the trip and decided I would not go with a team unless sent. My wife and I did eventually visit to apologize for not fulfilling my word. We were going to have some teaching workshops and never showed up.

Two months later, following the decision to submit to my elders, God revealed another step of faith that He wanted me to take. The nonprofit organization we created to minister in Guatemala had been kept alive since 1986 and used many times for different gospel outreaches. The Holy Spirit made it clear I was to close our bank account, give the money to someone who was serving Him, and contact the lawyer who handled our yearly paperwork to terminate the organization.

I had been wrestling with those thoughts for more than a year, and it was time to obey. So I closed the bank account and gave the money to an urban ministry reaching diverse cultures in my own neighborhood. I contacted our lawyer and asked him to close the nonprofit.

The next morning was a Sunday, and I awoke rather early. I felt the presence of God more than usual. I began to walk and pray in my living room, as I often do. About a half an hour or so later, the power of God penetrated my entire being like never before in my life, and forced me to my knees. At first, I thought I was having a heart attack. I was hyperventilating and bent over, holding my stomach. One moment I was weeping, and the next my heart was filled with joy. My wife (yes four years earlier God had provided a precious Proverb’s 18:22 wife who I adore), came from our bedroom to see what was going on.

“Don’t worry, my love.” I said.

“Go back to bed. This is from God.”

I wanted nothing to interfere because the presence of God was penetrating my every fiber and I did not want it to stop. I knew I was having an encounter with my living Lord and He was forever marking this day.

As the winds of God’s fire blew through my heart, He reminded me what the date

was. It was 1/27 again, twenty-three years after my first sovereign encounter with Psalm 127:1a. The Holy Spirit was supernaturally rewarding my obedience and empowering my heart to completely and finally end a ministry that He had not built.

This Book Was Born

When I got up from my knees I knew my efforts to bring about the promises of God for my life were over. I was free to trust and obey God's Word completely. The load on my shoulders was gone again and the rest and ease of being yoked with Christ was overwhelming. I knew what happened was not just for me, but was also to be a gift to His family. I knew I was supposed to write down the blessing of building a house His way.

I personally believe we are living among the generation in which the Lord will return. This book is in no way a rebuke for our sincere efforts to build ministries as servants who love Jesus. I believe it is just a very, very rough draft of the revelation that is coming, that will declare, that much, if not most, of our western way of doing Christianity will be replaced by the Lord's way. Deep in the hearts of those that desire to fully follow Christ, know that must take place.

There is coming such great change, that there will be absolutely no desire to do anything that has not been sovereignly, which means supernaturally, initiated by the Holy Spirit. There will be crystal clear and consistent revelation from God about who, what, when, where and how. We will be so convinced of waiting for that revelation that to go, to do, or to begin without those details, will be seen as ludicrous.

But we need not wait for a supernatural invitation to pursue intimate fellowship with the Holy Spirit. We have God's written Word and can dig deep foundations for our lives and teach young disciples how to prepare for the unprecedented storms that are coming (Revelations).

We can trust fully, that if we humble ourselves to God's Word and Jesus' teachings that the antithesis of Psalm 127a will be declared by God on our individual judgement day. That our labor was initiated and guided by the Lord and thus was divinely effective, supernaturally fruitful, and eternally valuable – that every; act of love, decision, thought, second, or cent that passes through the filters of obedience to God's Word will be eternally and outrageously rewarded by Jesus Himself.

Amen.