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Teaching Archives

“The Valley of Vision versus The Valley of Decision” Rev. Gerie Martin

The first question to be asked as we walk in the valley of vision is this: Have we received Christ into your life and acknowledge that He is our savior? Do we understand the call He has upon our lives and know we truly belong to Him?

The second question to be asked in the valley of decision in the life of a believer is this: Are we truly willing to let go of the world and totally abandon ourselves as a “love slave, the Dulos (Gr.) of God?”

The church in America is today is at a very unique place. We stand at the crossroads of eternity as God is speaking into our lives as never before in the history of our country. The future of our nation rests now in the hands of those who truly belong to God and have given their lives over to Him, unconditionally.

Why would I say this? Look at the scriptural pattern of those who “have influence with God.” The ones who were able to change God’s mind, the ones who were able to influence His decisions for mankind were those who were totally dedicated to Him and were obedient to Him, not just those who acknowledged he was God, or even their God. It wasn’t those who could preach a good message or gave a lot of money or even volunteered their time. This kind of influence comes only from a close, personal relationship with their creator. One who knows they are the “friend” of God. One who knows they sit in heavenly places, in the divine counsel of God and understands they have the right to speak to Him as such,

Therefore, this nation’s fate lies in the hands and prayers of those who love and serve him with all their hearts and are fully committed to him.

Everywhere I go, as I travel across this nation and around the world the name that speaks of hope and promise for a better tomorrow is the name “America.” While it is hated and reviled in many nations, still that name “America,” evokes dreams of opportunities unlimited and people everywhere are willing to pay everything they have and even face death in their attempt to enter into what America has.

Here in Southern California we hear of this almost daily. The people from around the world are entering into Mexico and crossing the border into the United States in every way you can imagine. Crammed by the hundreds into shipping containers and trucks, digging tunnels under the border, walking across hundreds of miles of arid desert in the most extreme conditions.....anything to get here and have the opportunities we have; and dying by the hundreds in the attempt. Yet still they come. This is a commonplace announcement in our daily papers and news reports here in the southwest part of America.

The forefathers of our nation understood what these people are dealing with today. We were a nation birthed out of religious persecution; Persecution of those who truly loved God and desired to live honestly, in covenant with their God and one another and to live in the peace, joy and prosperity that the word of God brings to our lives.

They understood the phrase “the valley of vision.” They understood what it meant to be a people of God and it caused them to want to live in that covenant relationship, they saw him as their spiritual savior and they loved him. They saw a nation, under God, to which they were fully committed.

But it was the decision to do what God called them to do that made them the “love slaves”, the “dulos” of God. The decision, the firm commitment in their hearts and spirits is what enabled them to load themselves, their families and all their goods onto tiny little wooden vessels, brave the north Atlantic and land here in a “new world.” The understanding of Him as Lord enabled them to make that decision and then live it out.

It was their obedience to their “Lord” that caused them to cling to a covenant based way of living in the face of bitter winters, lack of food, illness and death. They had a vision from their Savior and they had made a decision for their Lord and lived it out. In their minds there was never a question of turning back, even if it meant death.....they were....fully committed.

Why do I make such a differentiation in those two words, savior and lord you may ask?

Listen to what they mean.

Savior: one who has made another free; one who has delivered from....

To give life to what was once dead. In other words, He took us out of the kingdom of darkness; He delivered us out of the pit of death and gave us eternal life in His kingdom. However, that action indicates total love from His side of the equation only, because we didn't really know who He was until He did this for us. “While we were yet dead in our sins and trespasses, He died for us.” “For God so loved the world He sent his only begotten son that whosoever would believe on Him would have eternal life.”

Lord: our sovereign one; controller of our lives; master of all things pertaining to us; absolute ruler over us, etc. In other words, we don't do anything or say anything unless we are under the approval of and the authority of our Lord. This is how Jesus lived while upon the earth.

He said in several places in scripture “I do nothing of my own volition; I only do what I see the Father doing. I say nothing of my own volition; I only say what I hear the Father saying.”

This is the example we are to follow if we are truly “disciples.” But do we?

This nation and the God-given purpose for which it was established have been under attack since the very beginning of its inception. Why? Because the church in America, with a few exceptions, has never operated in the fullness of his power and authority as He intended. The fullness of His word has been preached only sporadically throughout our history. But every time it has, revival has broken out. Every time some man or woman dared to go “outside” the boundaries of conventional behavior of knowing Him as just “Savior”, and introduced the concept of “Lord”, the power of God has manifested in this nation.

The power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the individual believer has largely been unknown or untaught because it wasn't “politically correct or there was incorrect teaching.” It wasn't popular to be so radical and we feared what people would say about us and would ostracize us. We wanted to be like everyone else, rather than the ‘peculiar people’ God tells us we are.

As a result of this “lack of knowledge” spoken of in Hosea 4:6, we have had a slow, gradual eroding away of the foundational truths of God’s word in the lives and thinking of the majority of people in this nation. To the point that approximately 25% of the young people in America do not truly know who Jesus is. They do not understand what Christmas is all about and think it is just another holiday. They seek out the spiritual things through witchcraft and other demonic means because they are being taught it is right to do so. The average believer in America does not have the power of the Holy Spirit at work in their lives. They are saved and going to heaven, but they have no spiritual authority over demons, no healing flowing in and through their lives and in general, are powerless when it comes to things of the Spirit. Once that work of erosion of truth took place, when the great majority of people said they believed in God but not His Son, nor the power of the Holy Spirit, then the flood gates of Hell were opened upon this nation.

Once the dam of individual righteousness broke down the filth and degradation of sin began spewing every kind of lie the enemy can bring forth upon our people. Sadly, for the large part, nothing was done to stop it for years, in the interest of “not wanting to offend.” Some battled in prayer, but the majority of the Church ignored the battle, choosing to “not get involved.”

However, we must realize that as a nation we are no longer “under God.” The majority of people in this nation no longer truly serve the living God. False idols have come into our nation and are served with relish. I said truly serve because many say He is their Savior, but will not serve Him as their Lord.

We are laughed at by most of the world’s leaders behind our backs, while they gladly accept our money. How did we come to this? We, the believers, abdicated our spiritual authority in this nation. We allowed the enemy to come in and do his work and he has done it well.

Then this begs the question, how can we, the believers in Christ, who see him not just as our Savior, but as our Lord, turn this nation around and back to the purposes God intended in the first place? How can we participate in what God wants to do? What is our part in it?

There is an example of a nation in scripture that went exactly the same way and I would like to share that with you. Turn to John 4:35-38 in your Bibles.

Vs 35 “do you not say, there are yet four months, and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are ripe for harvest.

Vs 36 already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; life, in which he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

Vs 37 for in this case the saying is true, “one sows and another reaps.”

Vs 38 I have sent you to reap for that which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into that labor.

Looking back to the beginning of the chapter we see that Jesus was sitting at a well in the early evening, resting after a long day. He was hot, tired, thirsty and hungry. He was in the country of Samaria, near a city called Sychar, close to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son, Joseph.

This city was originally founded by Omri, an Israelite king about 880 B.C. History tells us he was a very wicked king. He in turn, was followed by Ahab, who married Jezebel. This is the same Ahab and Jezebel who supported 400 prophets of Baal. These were the priests who were overthrown and destroyed by the prophet Elijah on Mt. Carmel.

We are discussing a people who originally were part of the 12 tribes of Israel who married idolaters, and in doing so, became a mixed race, contaminated by sinful practices and idol worship.

The city and country which had been started by the anointing and appointing of God had been overtaken by evil. God's people had been given the land but were overtaken in sin by "marrying" the evil practices of the ones with whom they mixed. Does this sound familiar?

We find Jesus sitting by the well as a woman comes to draw water. It is very unusual for a woman to draw water at this late afternoon hour. All the other women drew their water early in the morning.

She came at this time because she knew they wouldn't be there to call her names because she was a harlot, who had been married five times and was currently living with a man who wasn't her husband.

Jesus knew this when she approached, spoke to her, gave her understanding of who He was and when she accepted His words, she ran back to her town to tell anyone who would listen that the Messiah, the Christ of God, the anointed one was in their midst. The first evangelist of the gospel was released! The first advent was openly proclaimed by one who believed!

What am I trying to say to you?

Jesus, in spite of being a "good Jew" by keeping the law on all counts, knew His primary purpose was to make known the heavenly Father to all who would listen. In spite of the fact that she was an outcast among outcasts, He loved this woman. In spite of the fact that she was a known harlot, a female and a hated Samaritan, Jesus saw one whom the father loved, regardless of what she was and who she was. He stepped outside the boundaries of the law, and extended God's grace to anyone who would listen and heed, even when it was not "politically correct and socially unacceptable to do so." He broke all the "taboos."

After she had run into the town to tell of Him the disciples approached Jesus to question him and to offer Him food. I'm sure they wouldn't have anything to do with her because they too knew that good Jewish boys don't speak to women alone, don't speak to harlots and don't come near the hated Samaritans. They had the understanding of the law but not the love of the Spirit as yet.

Jesus was attempting to build the Father's heart into His disciples and He begins to teach them out of verses 34-38. He was attempting to let them know that there are those all around them who did not know God, or have walked away from God as the Samaritans had; who needed to not only acknowledge Jesus as their Savior, but submit to Him as their Lord and look for the coming of his Holy Spirit in power. They needed an "advent" a coming of the Messiah in their personal lives.

He states in verse 24 what He literally 'lived for.' It was "to know the will of the Father and to accomplish it." This is the Savior and Lord principle God wants us to understand today. We tend to do exactly what the disciples did. We tend to stand back and expect the Church leaders to talk about Jesus to the "unsaved and backslidden." But in this exhortation to those who said they belonged to him, Jesus is expressly telling them that they are the ones who are to do the reaping.

He chides them somewhat in verse 35. "Do you not say there are yet four months, and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest."

He's trying to make them aware of the fact that they are seeing only with the eyes of the flesh, not with the spiritual eyes and purposes of God. You see only your time frame and your reference, but I see with spiritual eyes and I tell you there are people all around you, right now, in your life that need to be harvested into the kingdom of God and they need to be harvested right now! If you wait much longer it will be too late! Crops that are left in the field too long go to waste.

In other words He is saying, are you absolutely sure of what you are seeing? Wake up spiritually My disciples and see what I see! Look through My eyes and understand your part in the end time harvest of souls that is all around you right now!

Let's look back to the first advent of the Lord and see what the spiritual climate was like then. What was it like two days before the first advent? In the small, conquered, nation of Israel there was a census being taken and people were traveling to and fro, everyone was going home in order to be counted by the nation that had conquered them. Everyone was concerned with their own needs, such as finding a place to stay, finding food to eat, etc.

One young couple was slowly and painfully moving towards Bethlehem. They were walking slowly because the woman was fully pregnant with the greatest gift mankind would ever see, but only but the woman and her husband knew it.

It was two days before the first Christmas and the entire nation was focused upon what the worldly requirements were upon their lives. The expectations of meeting their own needs and not those of others around them were uppermost in their thoughts. The last thing on their minds at that moment was the possibility that the promise was nearly upon them, nearly in their midst. They were not focused upon the things of the Lord, but only upon the physical. *Jesus says to us that He will return again when we least expect it!*

It was two days before the first Christmas and throughout the entire heavenly realm there was tremendous excitement! The promise was about to come forth! The Messiah was about to be born! I can just see and hear the angels "buzzing" among themselves. "Which of us are going to be sent to sing the announcement to the shepherds?" Has the lord God selected you for this honor? I haven't heard a thing and I was hoping to be one of those chosen for this great honor." When Gabriel came back from telling the chosen woman and man they were to bring forth the promise of god he was in awe. He knew this was the beginning of the "advent, the first coming forth of God upon the earth." He could hardly speak to us because of this awe." I hope God chooses me to be a part of announcing his coming forth!"

I can just imagine what was going on among the demonic angels as they saw and heard all the excitement from the Holy angels. "What is going on? Do you know anything about this? Something very important must be about to happen! I haven't seen anything like this since the battle that caused us to be thrown out of heaven."

Now, once again, some two thousand years later, we are once again very close to the coming of the Messiah upon the earth. Just as the angels did way back then, we must pause and ask ourselves, "Where is our focus?" Are we eagerly looking for the second-advent? Are we looking up, focusing with awe in our hearts about the possibility of our participation in this coming of the Messiah? Is our focus upon the issue "what is our part in all of this?" How will God use me to help bring about the second advent of the promise? I hope and pray He will allow me to have a part in it."

People all around us are waiting for someone to bring them the answers to “what is going on in this world today?”

God is saying to us “look up!” Don’t be focused only upon what is happening during this time of celebration. Open your eyes and see by the power of my spirit into the spiritual realm. Ask me to give you the eyes and ears to hear what My Spirit is saying to the churches. The fields all around you are ripe unto harvest and this is the perfect time to bring them in.

All the world stops to pause at this special time of year. Whether they are believers or not, they are aware of this “moment in time.” They are aware of something being celebrated that involves God and his Son. They know something important is happening and they need to be made aware that the Christ, the Messiah will return again soon for those who are His!

You say, “I hope the Lord will use me to help announce the 2nd advent, the second coming of His Son.” Well, we are very close to the second coming and this is the perfect opportunity for you to do so.

We have not because we ask not! He tells us, “Ask and I’ll give you the nations as your inheritance.” The nations are right here, in our own back yard! The nation of America is ripe for the taking spiritually and if the believers in Christ don’t take action, the false religions will once again step in and rob God of what belongs to Him!

“Pray for the Lord of the harvest to send workers, for the harvest is vast, but the workers are few.”

Ecclesiastes 11:6 says this: “Sow your seed in the morning, and do not be idle in the evening, for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed, or whether both of them alike will be good. In other words, be working in the fields all the time. Take opportunity when it presents itself. Peoples’ hearts and minds are open at this time because of what is taking place all around the world. Take time to tell them about the 2nd advent and how it will affect them.

God tells us to “stir up the fallow ground of our hearts.” What does that word “fallow ground” mean?” It means a ground which has, at one time, been plowed up and prepared for seeding but never used.

God is speaking to the believers again in Revelation 4:14-22 which depicts Him standing at the door of a believer’s heart, knocking, asking to be allowed to come in and be the “Lord” of the house, not just the Savior.

He says, in verses 20-22, “behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and dine with him, and He with me.” He who overcomes, I will grant him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He, who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches.”

When the woman at the well realized what she had been given she immediately went and told everyone who would listen to her. When David realized, in I Chronicles 13, that bringing the ark up on a cart was not the way God desired it to be carried, he no longer asked for the counsel of men, he immediately put things in proper order and set aside the priests and had them sanctify themselves and prepare for the work of the Lord.

When we realize what God is saying to us, in any given situation, we are then responsible before God to immediately go and carry out what He has said, just as the angels went forth to carry the good news to those whose ears and hearts were prepared to hear His message.

God spoke prophetically of our times through the Word in Isaiah 60:1-3.

“Arise; shine for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

Notice, Isaiah says, “The glory of the Lord has risen upon you.” We have also heard of this glory being described as the “latter rain.”

God’s restored glory will arise upon those who have prepared their hearts for Him and it will fall upon the nations of the world. No city, no state, no community will be unaffected by the latter rain of His Spirit. That means your communities will be affected by this “latter rain” of God’s glory, no matter where in this world you live. I don’t know about you but I certainly want to be part of that.

God says His glory will be restored to His people and even unbelievers will be drawn to His light. In Amos 9:11 He says this, “On that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages. I will raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old.”

God’s glory will be restored to the Church and will exceed the glory as it was in the days of David. James quotes this scripture to the leaders of the early church in Acts 15:14-18, and applied it to these last days by saying,

“Simon has declared how God at the first visited the gentiles to take out of them a people after His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree. Just as it is written: “After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins and I will set it up; so that all the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the gentiles who are called by My name.” says the lord who does all these things. Known to God from eternity are all His works.”

By the Spirit of God, James saw this great harvest of people coming into the kingdom, when the glory of God was restored to His people.

In Amos 9:13 the Lord Himself says this, “behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes, him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine and all the hills shall be dissolved.”

Hills represent obstacles or strongholds in the lives of the believers.

Sweet wine represents the joy of the Lord, the blessings that accompany God’s wisdom and the gospel or good news of Jesus Christ.

God is saying this end time harvest is going to be so abundant, the reaper so loaded with work that he will not be able to complete the work before the plowman comes to prepare the fields for a new season.

The living translation puts it this way. “The time will come, says the Lord, when the grain and grapes will grow faster than they can be harvested.” Simply put, God is describing a harvest of souls so abundant that it will be overwhelming to the workers in the fields.

This call of God is a cry from the very heart of the Spirit of the Lord. It is the same message spoken by John the Baptist just before the first revealing of Christ.

“Prepare ye, prepare ye the way of the Lord”.....

The coming of Christ is equally imminent at this time and our cry must also be this.....

“Prepare me, oh Lord. Let me always be looking up with great expectation of Your soon coming return. Let me not be caught up in just the celebration of this hour, but let me look anxiously and with great excitement for my part in Your soon coming return in glory.....let me sing joyfully with Your angels this knowing full well the hour is fast upon us that we will see You face to face and rejoice with all of heaven.

Prepare me oh lord, to bring forth the messiah upon this earth. Help me to understand your ways and give me boldness and courage to proclaim His coming once again!

**Love and Blessings,
Rev. Gerie Martin**