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Encounters with god

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# Last year

Last year we spoke about Gods extravagant love and extravagant lovers. Every day we come closer to seeing Him face to face! Paul’s life radically changed, being in the third heaven. When Paul adds up everything beautiful in his life all of it is dung and not something he can put on the altar. He showed us what it is like to be a lover of God.

Moses lived in the Egyptian courts while they ruled the world. 1500 years before Christ was born, leaves the courts to be numbered amongst the slaves in his pursuit of God.

# Earth

Every one of us has more to discover, we’ve only scratched the surface of who He is. Alabaster vile, washing Jesus feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. How do we get in even deeper? A lot of them lived in the old testament, they didn't have the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, all these testimonies to encourage us and 2000 years of church history. How is it that we can do less, give less, accomplish less than they did?

They do have one thing that us modern Christians sometimes lack. That is opportunities where they saw God face to face, heard God audibly, felt Him.

# God encounters

Numbers 12:6-9 (ESV) And he said, “Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the Lord make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. Not so with my servant Moses. He is **faithful** in all my house.

That is a key for us: Faithfulness to Him

With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?” And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them, and he departed.

Exodus 33:11 (ESV) Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

Numbers 12:4-5 (ESV) And suddenly the Lord said to Moses and to Aaron and Miriam, “Come out, you three, to the tent of meeting.” And the three of them came out. And the Lord came down in a pillar of cloud and stood at the entrance of the tent and called Aaron and Miriam, and they both came forward.

Amos 9:1 (ESV) I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said:

“Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people; and those who are left of them I will kill with the sword; not one of them shall flee away; not one of them shall escape.

Not enhanced imaginations, but actually Him. I saw the Lord, fruitcake? Dream? Creative imagination?

Exodus 24:9-11 (ESV) Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, and they saw the God of Israel. There was under his feet as it were a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. And he did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; they beheld God, and ate and drank.

Imagine that happening right now, you can sit down and eat and drink together

Exodus 19:11 (ESV) and be ready for the third day. For on the third day the Lord will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

Yeah God appeared to them in the OT, but not in the NT

500 at the same time saw God, they speculate when Jesus was on the mount of olives when giving the great commission. If you were there, one of 500 disciples and Jesus says all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me, and he is commissioning you: go therefore into all the nations, teaching them to obey all commanded, and I will be with you always. You're commission by Christ Jesus Himself, just wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Run off to Jerusalem and 10 days later they’re filled up with Him. (1 Cor 14)

# Steven, Paul and John seeing God.

Revelation 1:1-2 (ESV) The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

We still need more revelation of Jesus Christ, more encounters with Him.

John 1:18 (ESV) No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

Rather than all the other verses they grab onto that one. But I suspect it is not in all of His full glory, often He cloaks His glory so that we can approach Him.

Matthew 5:8 (ESV) “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

So maybe our problem is not a pure enough heart, I think that is very important. Faithfulness of Him and purity of heart.

Remember Nathanael? Jesus calls him; I saw you under the fig tree. He is a true Israelite, purity of heart, immediately his eyes open and he says wow you are Jesus Christ the Messiah!

When we are faithful in His household and pure of heart we experience God encounters. You will never be the same again. It provokes us and shifts our relationship with Him. It rewrites everything, our values, plans. Are we ready for that? Sometimes we like things how they are.

Some people only want Him to be Savior, some call Him Lord. Why call me Lord if you don’t do what I say? She became a Christian in the army and was thinking about it. She was a young Christian while signing up for the army, she had persuaded herself, next day she had to sign the dotted line, now she was saying how wonderful it was going to be, God said: don’t call me Lord if you're going to join the army. I might as well call myself Lord, if I don’t listen to Him. Are you able to shift when He speaks?

Something about hearing His voice, seeing Him that can’t get you back to living how you lived. Moon and sun do what they're created to do. I don’t want to be outdone by the sun and the moon by what He wanted me to do. He had good things ordained plans and purposes, I’ve only been thinking about me for 19 years, He has done it before the creation of the earth. If I say will you bless my dream and vision? What if I offer it on the altar, He has a dream too! American dream, personal and ministry dreams.

Every other dream will compete with Gods dream if we don’t sacrifice Him.

John 5:25-29 (ESV) “Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

How would you like a corpse to hear His Voice before you do? The first to recognize the Messiah were the demons, not His Children, but demons!

When He speaks, why does He not speak more than He does?

If He speaks and we don’t change we are in trouble! Sometimes He’d rather wait and let us run without dream, trouble and it didn't turn out the way we thought. More willing to hear, listen and obey. A season when she was in Mozambique where every time it was hard and she felt knocked down. It started with knocking on the door, then a knock on a door that wasn't there. Friend moved into her house, first a knock, then Tracy. God am I going crazy or is this you? Then she was reading Samuel, oh He is calling me. Yes Lord your servant listens! She thought is there sin in my life? Then she was reading my Sheep hear my Voice we follow Him, He is saying I am his sheep and I am following Him.

God said: stop crying, you're big girls now! They all grew a bit taller that day, opposition came and they knocked it down. Dust it off, get up and walk forward! We don’t have to whimper at every turn. They all became soldiers that day in a different battle!

No one teaches us better in this than Paul. In first year: treasures, blessing, trained under the most respected man in all of Israel, the high priest endorsement, Roman citizen, Christ suffering in death: ah this is better.

Now let’s turn to the things he suffered. Paul had scars upon scars, worthy to suffer for Christ, so many times stoned, in danger everywhere. False brothers, betrayal is the hardest, often without sleep, hunger, sleep, hunger and naked. That is when Christ’s power brings me up. He could endure such because he had seen Christ, knew what he was in for!

Paul adds up all the suffering, things not even mentioned: light momentary affliction compared to the glory that is to come.

John 4:35-38 (ESV) Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

# Follow Jesus instead of the messenger!

Sometimes it will be a bit difficult, John the Baptist. Heaven open, Holy Spirit come down, hears with his ears the voice of the Father: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, declares to everybody: Behold the Lamb of God! Only 2 of John’s disciples came after Him. Some have ears to hear, and eyes to see what God was saying. Nazarites were committed guys! In the wilderness, eating insects and not even drinking wine or a raisin. Sometimes we follow the messenger, but not the one to who God is pointing.

Forget to listen to their words and listen to them. Still these guys follow him, then he has doubts because Jesus’ was unfolding differently. John didn't touch a raisin, Jesus made hundreds of liters of wine!

We can follow the messenger rather than Christ Himself.

# Point people to the Father

Mentors meant to draw us to the Father! Jesus was referring to Himself as the Son, even when people would I've him to the people, always called son, always pointing them to the Father! We must not work to draw people to ourselves, but to the Father!

First word in the Hebrew dictionary is: Abba, father. the sound Abba with the breath sound meaning love. Breath of life his own spirit, Adam wakes up the first thing he sees is the Father kissing his face! They ran away from Father, don’t call him Abba anymore, but God. After a while they take the vowels out, because He was to high! Yahweh with the scribes they got a brand new quit and burn the pen, now they leave it blank!

Jesus comes and says: Abba Father! OT over 600 references, but only 5 refer to it! Lost the entire concept, but then in Malachi nothing happened for 400 years, John the Baptist comes: opens with the heart of the Father will return to the Sons and the Sons to the Father. Jesus comes as the Son, the only title He ascribed to.

OT 5 times father referring to God

NT 405 times the word father referring to God

On whose authority are you doing this? Used to be in whose authority are you teaching? Gamileo is my teacher Paul would say. Jesus is doing signs and wonders, who send you? This unskilled illegitimate says Abba Father sent me! Pharisees crucified Jesus because He claimed to be the Son of God! Judaism, Islam cannot accept it. The issue is over His claim as the Son!

We’ve turned the Gospel of the Kingdom to the gospel of salvation, we are only turning them to ourselves. But he is not the Savior that happens to be the Son, He is the Son that happens to be the Savior. It says whoever believes that Jesus is the Son makes them have eternal life!

Sometimes we exchange the means to the end! From being His Sons we become worthy and strong!

We want to see Him and hear His voice, let’s see what people did that saw Him. 2 words: Follow me, leave everything and follow Him! See Him, hear His Voice, issue invitation, drop all and follow Him.

He appears to those faithful, appears to those pure in heart. To not listen is fatal! Young ruler, not selling everything and following Him, instead he left and was sad. If Paul could come back he would do it again: 10000 x 10000 times over. Jesus: For the joy set before Him He endured! The Bible calls it incomprehensible joy, because our little noodle can’t handle it. Those who want to understand it all: missing out on things like peace that passes understanding. She had to let go of this right here, in our hearts is so much greater than our minds! We need faith and trust, He will take us beyond what we can understand here! He can take us so much farther!

# Surrender

I surrender all, have you really surrendered all? He put His hand on something that I have a hard time with. She had a clump, I can't speak. I am moved and convicted by the Holy Spirit, 45 minutes and it is not true. First time speaking and probably her last, she started confessing some stuff she was sharing. If I tell something that is untrue it is a lie, but if I sing something that is not true is it not a lie? How about you guys, who has surrendered all? Let’s talk about money, because that is so easy to measure, how about tithing? How many tithe 10% I surrender 10 %, I surrender 10% some to Jesus I surrender, I surrender some.

I suspect He’d rather have 5 minutes of authentic worship than an hour of untrue worship. It is about a purity of heart, are we being authentic? He sees right through us?

My Sheep hear my name, if we don’t hear His name are we His Sheep? Goats often will resist the voice of God. I want to be fully surrendered to Him, as far as I am able to. What are you doing? When she tells them, then they ask why? Most of them are college graduates, laid it down to go work in Mozambique, a couple of years ago they knew, 16 years of civil war. Land mines everywhere, then colonial oppression and Arabic slave trade. This country was devastated.

35 venomous, 32 non venomous. There is risk, hot, humid and steamy. Tropical diseased, all claim divine health, we get stuff sometimes God heals and sometimes we don’t. They clean up each other’s puke when they're sick. It is difficult, but in those places you see Him and hear His voice. Only one reference in the OT Babylon, it looks like the Son of God walking around with them, would you go into a furnace if that is what it takes? Usually not the mountaintop experiences, soaking in a hot tub, she’s never seen Him there. We need comfort in difficult situations, in prison he has an encounter!

Spiritually weakest when she is here, life is too easy, she will deliberately put herself in difficult situations. Follow me, doesn't often lead her to pleasant places, His heart is moved by all the rough places. I get to live with like-minded missionaries that left the conveniences of their countries to go into all these places. Just how much do you really want to hear His Voice and to see Him?

# I want more

I am sure everyone else here wants more hey ;) I am not content, even though I am so grateful for the things He has lead me into and out of. Taste and see that the Lord is good. It is half tormenting, when you do taste you lose everything else. He wired us and fashioned us for pleasure and comfort,, the devil knows that so he tries to come and intercept us, in the Presence of the lord are pleasures forevermore. Often we want a shortcut, fleeting pleasures and treasures of this world, while those are the things we can give to Him.

There are rewards we can store up, treasures we can lay at his feet. I love you too, I have a few scars also! I boast more gladly in my weaknesses, that is when he comes into communion with Him! Things we often run from, Europeans have this attitude of having a right to comfort, convenience and pleasure, ground into us. The Church to impact this world, instead of the world impacting the Church. Sometimes we need to place it in light: momentary afflictions, Jesus you are worth it! I will give it all, give me more so I have more to give! boogie