

Getting Out of the Nest

There's a certain QUALITY of life and QUEST in life that this world, in all its glory and grander, cannot give or teach.

Let me explain what I mean.

Nature, in all its grandeur, is LIMITED. It's LIMITED because it cannot explain WHO God is or the gospel of His redeeming grace... it can only declare that its Creator is greater, grander and more glorious than itself. Its limits are by design.

It takes people•telling people•about the Creator•His Christ and His Cross•and the beautiful things He's unveiled in His word•for them to ever have a chance•to know Him.

People can't know Him without people, like you and me, bringing them the truth about Him and His Son.

The beauty of the firmament above has never been so selfish to try to steal the glory that belongs to its Maker. Man, on the other hand, has tried from the beginning, and continues to make every effort, to give nature the glory. But, as Psalm 19 teaches us, the heavens continue to remind us that our Creator is bigger and brighter and more purposeful and faithful than mankind could ever imagine. I love the message of Psalm 19. The servants of God recognize that they, along with the scriptures and skies, all speak. And when they speak they declare a unique word about the Lord. Therefore, they, like the skies and the scriptures long to speak with purpose and passion pleasing Him who gave them the revelation they declare. One (the skies) is a general revelation — they speak of His greatness and glory. One (the scriptures) is specific revelation — they speak of His goodness and guidance. One (the servants) is relational revelation — we speak of His graciousness and gentleness to rescue, redeem, restore, reprove, renew, refresh and replenish and reproduce His character in us again and again.

So the servant wants his words and ways to reflect Him who they get to reveal to the world. Glory be... There's a certain QUALITY of life that this world, in all its glory and grander, cannot give or teach... (2 Peter 1:3-15)

I love being in the wild, as much as anyone, but nature is LIMITED on what and how it reveals God. God has not chosen this natural world to personally reveal Himself to us... He chose to speak to us,

and personally reveal Himself, and things about Himself, through the Word. As I said earlier, nature, in all its grandeur, is LIMITED. It's LIMITED because it cannot explain who God is or the gospel of His redeeming grace... it can only declare His glory. For it's the servants of God that stand in the gap with a divine calling to DESCRIBE His glory, DELIVER His gospel and DISPLAY His grace... before a world captivated with the splendor of creation, but a world that knows little to nothing of its Creator and Redeemer.

Wow... what a beautiful mission, we, the disciples of Jesus, have been graciously given.

Funerals

We're all on a crash course with death. I have something I attempted do when preaching a funeral. When I can, I use the Bible of the person we're gathered to remember and honor. I spend some time going through and looking at the notes, highlights, underlinings and seek to let them, through their own Bible, tell what meant the most to them. Of course I share with those gathered that I'm using their Bible and these are some of the things I've gleaned that really spoke to them that they highlighted as they walked through the word when they were living. We all preach our own funerals by the life we live... and using their Bible really adds a personal touch.

One of my guys hand me his Bible one day and said... I won't be there when you tell my story — so tell now what you would say then.

The pacifiers... I use the pacifiers to share with those that the Lord's gives me discernment that they are lost and in need of being interrupted by Jesus. The principles are found throughout the Scriptures but I focus on a section of Scripture found in Ecclesiastes 5:15-17. The passage speaks of us entering this world naked and leaving this world naked. We won't take anything with us when we die. But in verse 16 the passage speaks of how it is a "sore evil or a very terrible thing" if a man leaves this world "in all points as he came." How did he enter this world? Everyone, besides Jesus, entered this world as a self-centered sinner in need of a Redeemer. As precious as babies are, and I love babies, who don't?, they ALL want ALL of our attention. Babies WANT a clean bottom, a full belly, lots of rest and our undivided attention. And when they don't get it they will let us know, QUICKLY. We also quickly learn how to use PACIFIERS to quiet them as needed. As they grow their pacifiers grow in size and cost. Why? Because we are all self-centered people. We are born that way. As we age our pacifiers just cost us more. For some it's cars or trucks, for others it's women or men or money. For some it's boats and four-wheelers and hunting leases. For others it's shopping sprees and shoes or power. Whatever it is, it's still used to pacify us are we're not happy or content unless we get what we want. And when the Lord is not center of our lives, because we're still living for ourselves and not Him, we are lost. But when He interrupts a person and makes them a new

creature in Christ they have a Redeemer to live for from that point on. Of course the old selfish nature will surface at time but that will no longer be what dominates their lives. If a person dies in a self-centered lifestyles, always making everything about them, even when they are sacrificial and doing what they do and it not being to the glory of God, they will "die in all points" as they entered this world, as sinner separated from the Lord. So, when I discern that God wants me to give them a pacifier, it's not because they are a whiner but that they are a sinner in need of a Savior. And the pacifier is a reminder for them to evaluate their life in view of these principles found in the word of God. If Jesus doesn't interrupt them and invade them with His amazing grace they will perish in their sins without Him... This is how and why I use the pacifier!

Another way to reach, teach, equip and mobilize people for the kingdom of God.

The Puzzle

Let me tell you why puzzles are so important in our house. You see, years ago when our girls were young, we shared with them our heart on the subject of dating. We really didn't want our girls to date...to "try out" guys and give pieces of their hearts and emotions away to different boys here and there. We were leaning more towards "courtship" for our girls.

We've come to realize that the term courtship means different things to different people.

We believe, according to God's Word, He has created each of our daughters to be a help mate for a specific young man and that in His timing, He would reveal who that was to her and us. So for us courtship meant no "casual dating"...before any time was invested in a young man, we wanted our girls to discern if they could spend the rest of their lives with this person. Now don't misunderstand, we weren't trying to get our daughters married off or having them on the look out for a husband... we just didn't want them to feel depended on the need to be in a relationship and doing activities just for the sake of having something to do that is the "normal" thing for teenagers in our culture.

We have always taught our girls about their gift of purity and saving themselves physically for the man the Lord has created for them until they are married. We've taught them about doing things the way God designed and what a blessing it will be for them to walk in God's best in this area... But we also desired for them to save themselves emotionally for their husband and we believed casual dating would jeopardize that.

So with that understanding in our house, we shared with our girls our vision of the puzzle.

When a young man began to show interest in them and they discerned that he may be worthy of

their time and they desired to get to know him better, it was made known to him that he was required to purchase a puzzle and bring it to our house and then have a talk with their daddy. If their daddy felt like the young man was worthy to spend the time needed getting to know our daughter, then he would have to prove his devotion by making the commitment to put together a 1000 piece puzzle with us before he was allowed to take our daughter anywhere apart from hanging out with us.

The whole intent of this was for us to be able spend time with him ourselves in the weeks ahead as we put the puzzle together as a family.

Well...we've had three young men show up at our door with puzzles in hand.

Getting Out of the Nest

"Like a bird that wanders from the nest is a man that has left his place." Proverbs 27:8

A fledgling out of the nest is

Dying

Dead

Decomposing

STAY IN POSITION

With the idea of being positioned in the right place I'm reminded of a proverb that instructs us to stay in our proper place. When we get out of our place, we compromise our protection and forfeit our provision: "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place" (Proverbs 27:8). Have you ever found a tiny bird that has fallen out of the nest? When we come across a baby bird that has fallen from its nest, we find them in one of three conditions: they're either dying, dead, or decomposing. The moment a helpless bird falls from the protection of its nest, it is dying. Its lifespan has just drastically shortened because it is no longer in the protection of its designed place. The poor little thing can't fly, and with no one to pick it up, it's dying.

We have been and ASKED, GRACED AND GIFTED TO DO:

REACH hostiles for Jesus (Preaching)

TEACH disciples about Jesus (Teaching)

EQUIP the body of brethren to serve Jesus (gathering / fellowshipping)

MOBILIZE the missionaries to go with Jesus (partnering / kingdom minded thinking and living)

I love questions...

I love asking questions...

I love fielding questions with people I get to serve...

I love questions in the word especially open ended questions...

Adam, Where are you? Who told you this? Our conscience... Genesis 3:9

Cain, Where's your brother/family? Where's everyone? What have you done? Genesis 4:9-10 Have you cut them off...

Elijah, What you doing here? 1 Kings 19:9

Hagar/Jonah, Where you going? Genesis 16:8

Elijah's heart had been hijacked and now he's misrepresenting God.

A hijacked heart... is when our FOCUS is consumed with lies or threats or fears or empty and lifeless things that have misdirected, misguided and misused our trust and trustworthiness.

We drift, like leaves upon the water, toward our focus. We're all carried away by our thoughts, even, when we're doing everything to run away from the thing that has hijacked our attention.

The thing we celebrate or fear... are the realities of what we see.

Every word of Satan, and those used by him (like Jezebel), should come with a bright and bold disclaimer like this; "But... I don't have the final say!"

When the enemy told Eve... "You shall not surely die!" He failed to give Eve the disclaimer, "But... I don't have the final word on this thing or anything else in this world or the world to come."

When he attempted to provoke Jesus... by "promising Him all the kingdoms of the world, if He would only bow down and worship him. He gave Jesus no disclaimer...

And when he insisted, through Peter, that Jesus have a pity party and that He didn't have to do anything He didn't want to... because He didn't deserve to go through the pain and heartache, he didn't give Him any disclaimer of, "But... I don't have the final say!"

And, likewise, a world that is overly confident that they know better than Jesus, always fails to give

a disclaimer that they, too, do not have the last word.

Jezebel didn't have the last word... and with no disclaimer in sight, Elijah let her hijack his focus and manipulate his attention and attitude (1Kings19). Why? Partly, because he had gotten a tad bit caught up with himself and God was using this wicked woman to humble him. Remember when Elijah reminded the people, on Mt. Carmel (18:22) and God at Beersheba (19:10,14) that He was the "lone ranger" prophet. God used Jezebel to remind Elijah that the only things that separated him and Jezebel was His presence, His favor and His final word over his life. And He wanted Elijah to know that he wasn't the only one left, that had been touched by His redeeming and refocusing grace (19:18).

There're many lessons we glean and take home from the context and circumstances of Elijah's life. But one of the the most essential is the fact that we can either rest our hope and joy upon Jesus and His kingdom purpose for our lives or allow those, including ourselves, who DO NOT have the final word over us, hijack our joy and create an unsettled spirit in us. He moped around and isolated himself. Then it took him 40 days and 40 nights to for a 4 day journey. Pity, when cultivated, creates a pitiful performance no matter how we hash it out. Elijah was out of the nest and he's drying up by the day.

Think about it? Who do you believe has the final word? Your answer will reveal a lot about you and what you believe. I believe Jesus will have the final word and He doesn't have to give a disclaimer, because He is and will be the final authority over all.

What has the focus of your mind, heart and joy?

Are you in or out the nest?

#nestingwithjesus #mark7 #mark8 #mark8and34thru38 #matthew28and18thru20 genesis3and8
#proverbs27and8 #Adam #Cain #Elijah #Hagar #Jonah #inyourgoing #youarealreadygoing
#fishersofmen #makedisciples #reachingthehostiles #sent #reachingteachingequippingmobilizing
#faith #news #hearingisseeinginthekingdom #hearing #seeingagreeingacting