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## Having More of God Means Less of You

I was on my first trip to Nicaragua and had taken a group of about fifteen with me. I had the opportunity to minister at a little church that was located on the opposite side of Managua (the capital city). The people who had arranged the meeting handed me a map and showed me a little Datsun pickup truck that I was to use to get there. They took my team to one church, and sent me off to preach the gospel, but not by myself. A little lady (who I will never forget) walked up to me; she was around four feet and maybe three inches tall. She was from the Blue Fields area of Nicaragua. Years ago when the French left the nation they left all of their slaves on the east coast. Ruby was a descendant of those slaves. She spoke French, Spanish and English. She was to come with me and interpret my message. A young boy of about thirteen years old also came; he was to guide us using the map. Ruby, who was about seventy years old, interpreted for him into English for me, and I was to drive during the rush hour across town to this little church.

I don't know if you have ever driven in a big city during rush hour, but it took a lot of intercession just to survive the drive! There were three lanes of traffic going in each direction, but usually five or six vehicles crammed side by side, fighting for a space. My Canadian, polite driving skills went quickly out the window as I discovered that if I wanted to change lanes I had to drive like my mom. Her philosophy is just do it, and they will move. So to change lanes, you didn't wait for the right of way, you simply honked and moved. As the young Nicaraguan boy would shout out at the last minute to turn right, Ruby would instruct me turn NOW. I honked and cut in front of a bus as my missionary instincts came alive. I was starting to enjoy this new style of driving. I had no idea how this meeting was going to change my life. Sometimes you learn more from failure than from victory.

After about forty-five minutes of driving we approached the church. It was clear that it was unfinished, there were only two walls being held together by a two by four that ran across diagonal; some how it kept standing. A single light bulb hung down from its own cord in the middle and it lit up the late afternoon meeting. I began to preach, and Ruby interpreted as the crowd hung on every word. I love to go to these countries; the people are so hungry and beautiful. The crowd was inside and outside of the church. Having only two walls made it as an open-air meeting. Right when I was getting wound up my light bulb went out. The people around me instantly pulled out a couple of candles and lit them as if this was a normal problem. I finished my message by candlelight and gave an invitation for the sick. A young mother stepped out from the shadows and was holding in her arms a little baby. As she placed the sick child in my arms I could feel the fever right through my clothes.

We already had seen some miracles that night so when I prayed I believed something was going to happen. I prayed with every ounce of faith I had while looking into those little brown eyes. I wanted more than anything else in the world to see that child healed. Not only I, but so did God. Nothing happened, and I must tell you, I felt helpless; not just because of the language barrier but here I was representing God, preaching about healing and deliverance and I had to give a sick child back into it's mother's arms.

I knew God's heart was to heal that baby. At the cross of Calvary Jesus paid the price for every sickness and disease. It wasn't His will for me to leave that child sick. I could say that the baby was healed later on that night but that would be a cop-out. I could blame it on the mother's faith but she came to me for help. I knew there was no accountability on the baby so I had only myself to look at. So I questioned God and asked, "Why

did the child not get healed?" I said to Him, "I have done everything I know to do; I've prayed and confessed your Word, why did this child not get healed?" He told me, "There is too much of Alan in the way." I knew right then what the problem was, I had too much of Alan and not enough of God. I had too much flesh involved with my life. I wasn't in deep sin or living a worldly lifestyle, I just had areas in my life that were permissible but not profitable.

Many of us are going through the same problem. We know the will of God is to do something, yet for some reason nothing is working. Maybe you have believed for something to change in your life, family or finances. You might be in the same place that I was. It has never been that God is holding back His blessing from you. He wants to see you blessed and healed in every area of your life, even more than you do. God wants this world changed, but He has to work through us on this earth, and the purer the vessel we are, the stronger He can work. It was these areas of the flesh that were hindering the work of God in my life. I had been exposed by real life. I faced a situation where what I believed did not work. I made up my mind that I would never be in that position again. I began to put off the things and attitudes in my life that were not of God.

It reads in Colossians 3:8-10, "*But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have **put off the old man with his deeds**, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him.*" Even though I am born again and have given my heart to God; even though I am going to heaven and have been baptized in the Holy Ghost; even though God's love for me is unending and unconditional, there is one more law that I must submit to. This is about me loving God and not about God loving me. The law is simple; I cannot have more of God operating in my life with out having less of me.

It is my responsibility to put off the old desires. They don't just leave when you are born again they stick around and want to rule over you. It is your choice to put off the old man and to put on the new man of Holiness and consecration. Wouldn't it be great to be known as a person who is consecrated to God instead of just a Christian like everyone else? Someone once told me, that they had a revelation on God's love and were so excited that they never had to change to have His love. I said "That's true God loves you just as you are, but you don't love Him." "Yes I do" they said, "I love Him soooooooooo very much." I quickly replied, "*No you don't, the Bible says if you love me you will keep my commandments.*" You see it is never a question of His love for me, but of my love for Him. I should want to lay down my life for Him.

I had areas of compromise in my life that were stealing rewards from me. Colossians 2:18 warns us not to let anyone cheat us of our reward. There were subtle areas of my life that I had left alone. Whatever I allow to stay in my life is going to steal from me now and when I get to heaven.

It is here where I lose most people, not because they love the world too much to let it go, but because they can't believe that God has a work for them that is worth dying for. Can I tell you, «SALUTATION», that you fulfilling the plan of God is just as important to the body of Christ as me fulfilling my walk with Him. You have a place in the Body of Christ! Your walk has been planned out from before you were born, however, you must choose to walk into it. My mistake was I got busy doing ministry but it was in my own ability, not in God's ability through me. Your calling may be different than mine, however, He wants to work through you as well.

Obviously, there was more required from me than just doing things for God. As I began to pursue my calling God redirected me. The answer was not in trying to do ministry for Him. He told me, "Let go of your life and Pursue God and embrace the cross I have set before you."

*Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works." Matthew 16:24-27*

Can you see who the reward comes to? The one who takes up his cross and lays down his life is the one who will find it. If we want more of Him, we must first deny ourselves and take up our cross. Great, so how do I take up my cross? How do I lay down my life? These are the same questions that I had. It wasn't until after I found myself stagnant and unable to go beyond my natural ability that I learned of how to deny myself and have more of Him.

As a preacher I quit teaching pretty messages. I decided that I would only minister messages that would help people to change. I call it the foundational message. The embracing of the Cross requires denial of self. Every person regardless of their place in the Body of Christ must take the same journey if they want God to work through them supernaturally. Pour your time into these foundational tools and your life will never be the same. Remember you can't have more of God without less of yourself. Praying in the Holy Ghost, Worship (privately spending time with Him), Meditating the Word of God, Fasting and Personal Obedience are foundational tools of taking up your cross.

The more you choose in your daily walk to give time to these tools the faster God is able to bring His power into your situations. We are not trying to convince God of anything; you are simply losing yourself and gaining more of Him. He is waiting for us to remove the barriers of flesh and fleshly thinking out of the way, so that He can intervene for us.

I have prayed for many people since then. We won many battles and have lost a few as well. Every time someone doesn't get healed, especially a child, I press more into Him. I know that He is not the problem, there is just too much of Alan in the way. So be encouraged, you have a great path before you, a way to get past your faults and to walk in His power for everyday situations.

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