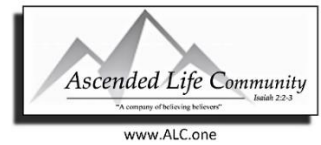


Greater intimacy required as we enter the Heavenly mode



The premise: While living here on earth as mere earthlings, our 'dos and don'ts' are spelled out fairly well for us. We have thousands of years of predecessors who've studied Scripture to authenticate God's ways. We also have 1000s of years of man's history to prove what worked and what didn't work.

But now we're moving into the Heavenly realm. This is the realm that Jesus spoke of in Jn 3:13 and Jn 16:12-13

"If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?" – Jn 3:12

"I still have much to tell you, but you cannot yet bear to hear it. However, when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. For He will not speak on His own, but He will speak what He hears, and He will declare to you what is to come...." – Jn 16:12-13

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no heart has imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed it to us by the Spirit." – I Cor 2:9-10

These passages are some of the clearest indicators that there are Heavenly things... Heavenly realities... beyond any earthly parallels. In fact, Jesus thought that we would 'choke' if he told us about them... But He really wanted to!!! (Wow, just think of that for a moment. He really wanted to, but couldn't. SAD!)

It is our belief that now, more than ever in history, we are being invited up into those Heavenly realms to experience them first hand. And not only that, but we're being invited to be significant 'players' in the Heavenly culture of Kingdom activity.

So, if we have no earthly parallel to get a grid from, how will we know what to do as we engage with our Heavenly inheritance. We don't have thousands of years of history to draw on now in these areas... because they're new. Well, Jesus said that Holy Spirit would guide us into all truth. But that begs that we have vetted our ability to hear and understand Holy Spirit's voice.

I maintain that most people haven't cultivated the skills necessary to confidently recognize His voice on a predictable and discernable basis. They feel it occasionally, but most people don't know how to slow down and look deep inside to their spirit man to hear, sense or be aware on that level. I think most people equate God's voice with a warm fuzzy, a dream, a cool Bible verse or a good friend's affirmation. These 'surfacy' ways might 'get you by' for low-consequence small-potatoes decisions, but when we begin to co-govern from Heaven over cities and nations, we can't afford to be wrong.

The priority then is to do as Jesus modeled... *"abide in the Vine"* and *"only do what the Father does"*. Jesus said it even more strongly, *"I can do nothing apart from My Father."* A lifestyle of purposeful engaging with God in all phases of life creates familiarity with the nuances of God... how His heart feels... His touch and his whisper, etc. In fact, this is one of the first steps in learning to live in and live from, our spirit man.

I believe it will be hugely important for us to preach, teach and model tender intimacy with His Presence. A cursory observation of human nature says that most people who follow us, will do something less or something lower than the standard that we present. We'll need to highlight it (intimacy) over and over again. When it occurs in our gatherings, we must give it full recognition, entering into it and magnifying its importance so that it 'writes' indelibly on all of our hearts. **It's this intimacy that creates the life flow to live and move and have our being in the Heavenly realms!**

Where we're going, we MUST be able to engage His Presence in this most acute way. The truth is, **we're already going to places and doing things that aren't specifically addressed in Scripture**. That means we MUST have hearing, sensing, seeing and awareness, functioning at a higher level of maturity so that we can make solid Heaven-approved decisions 'on the fly'. Hearing is everything! Man **can only live by hearing "every word that comes from the mouth of God"** (Matt 4:4). If we say this passage in the converse, it carries a sobering punch: **If you can't hear, you'll likely 'die'**. Wow!

If we spent the next 5 years cultivating intimacy with Jesus/Father and cultivating our ability to hear/sense maturely... if we do that... we will have a prepared people who can go anywhere, do anything... even walk on water. (Peter had been through this school and had learned to recognize, trust and respond to the Voice.)

As our maturity increases, we will be empowered to use the, as yet, unused power that comes when the true seed of sonship is awakened and comes into maturity. Until now, this dormant 'power' has been largely unidentified and unapplied. We were just too immature to be given the keys to drive the 'car' by ourselves. So Holy Spirit sits in the seat next to us to make sure that we don't hurt ourselves... or others (albeit, that still happened on occasion).

Consider our relocation into the Heavens: We're about to be given the keys for a test run with the 'car'. Will we run off with our shiny new car and forget the primary thing that got us here: Intimacy? Or will we be even more committed to hallow our relationship with Jesus and Father? Undoubtedly, there will be some who will shipwreck because they've found a shiny new Heavenly object... and they'll run off with puppy-love enamored and end up out on a dead-end side track. I believe that you and I and many others are being taught to be lovers of the VOICE and led by the VOICE. And this, my friend, is what indicates that we are becoming mature sons.

"These are the sons of God, they which are led by the Spirit of God." – Rms 8:14

I believe that our latent true sonship qualities and realities are going to be awakened like history has never known or seen heretofore. And that will likely increase until we're doing things that we previously thought were reserved only for God. (Think: judge angels... just for starters...)

Discussing topics like this helps to bring us back to the essentials... the mandatory basics, namely: INTIMACY. I love it that God has given us many great comrades who value these essentials. In fact, one of the distinctives of ALC is our love for intimate encounters with Him. I love this BIG TIME!

Let's keep up the dialog... the research... the discoveries... the experimenting... the tweaking... and possessing our inheritances.

Are we having fun yet!?

-- MLH