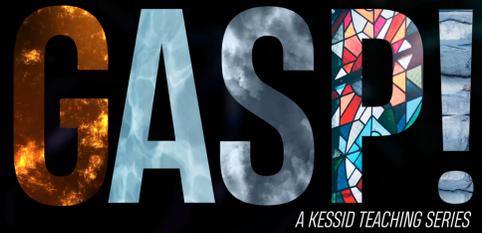


“THE JOURNEY OUTWARD”

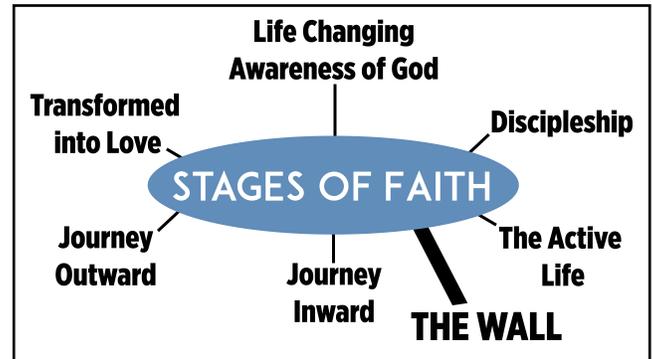
Date: February 16, 2020

Speaker: Danny Clinton



Having passed through The Wall and the intense inner journey necessary to experience your feelings without censoring them...

- You will begin, once again, to move outward “to do” for God...
- You may do some of the same active external things you did before (give, lead, serve, etc.)
- The difference is that now you give out of a new and grounded center of yourself in God.



“A byproduct of experiencing and accepting our own feelings is that we rediscovered God’s profound, deep, accepting love for us.” – Peter Scazzero

A deep, inner stillness now begins to characterize your work for God.

- And this is when you realize that you don’t fit in the world around you as well as you used to.
- This is because most people live in a blizzard.
- In his book, “A Hidden Wholeness,” Parker Palmer relates a story about farmers in the Midwest who would prepare for blizzards by tying a rope from the back door of their house out to the barn as a guide to ensure they could return safely home.
- These blizzards came quickly and fiercely and were highly dangerous.
- When their full force was blowing, a farmer could not see the end of his or her hand.
- If they lost their grip on the rope, it became impossible for them to find their way home. Some froze within feet of their own front door, never realizing how close they were to safety.

Many of us have lost our way, spiritually, in the whiteout that comes with “The Blizzard of Doing.”

Blizzards often begin when we say yes to too many things...

- Many of us are over-scheduled, tense, addicted to hurry, frantic, preoccupied, fatigued, and starved for time.
- Any sense of rhythm in our daily, weekly, and yearly lives has been swallowed up in the blizzard of everything you're doing.
- And so, this becomes how we live our 'Journey Outward' – blindly!

This speaks to the Inadequacy of Our Present Ropes.

- We teach young Christians eager to develop their relationship with God to have devotions or a quiet time.
- These normally consists of ten to thirty minutes a day spent reading the Bible, praying, and perhaps reading something from a devotional book.
- Along with church on Sundays and perhaps involvement in a small group, we hope this will enable them to withstand the blizzard... It Will Not!

Instead... What we need is a rope to lead us home.

- A rope that consistently leads us back to God, to a place that is centered and rooted in Him and so find salvation and rest.
- **Elijah:** When God appeared to Elijah after his suicidal depression and flight from Jezebel, he told him to stand and wait for the presence of the Lord to pass by.

(Vs) 1st Kings 19:9-13 – "What are you doing here?..."

- God did not appear in ways He had in the past.
- God was not in the wind as He was with Job...
- Not as an earthquake as at Mount Sinai with the giving of the Ten Commandments.
- Or fire as in the burning bush with Moses.
- Elijah would have known that God communicates in all these ways.
- **Instead:** God finally reveals Himself to Elijah in... the translation often used for this text says, "a still small voice" or "gentle whisper" – but that doesn't capture the original Hebrew which actually says...*"A sound of sheer silence,"* which is the literal translation of *(Vs) 1st Kings 19:12.*
- ... But what could translators do? How do you hear silence?

"It's often the silence after the chaos, for Elijah and for us, that is full of the presence of God."

God speaks to Elijah out of the silence, as He speaks still to us...

- This is a Biblical example of something called a “Daily Office” with the Lord.
- The Daily Office, also called ‘Divine Office,’ or ‘Liturgy of the Hours...’
- It’s an ancient discipline going back thousands of years.
- The word ‘Office’ comes from the Latin word *opus*, or ‘Work.’

“The Daily Office is a time when you check in on the active WORKS of God happening all around you.”

- It differs from what we call ‘quiet times’ today.
- Often people understand devotional times as the place where God ‘fills them up’ or ‘intercedes for the needs around them.’

“The Root Idea of the Daily Office is not so much a turning to God to get something, but instead to be with Him and what He is already doing.”

Four elements are most often found in one’s Daily Office with The Lord.**1. Stopping**

- We stop our activity and pause to be with the living God.
- What is more important than the number of offices each day is that our time with God be unhurried, so that what we read or pray has time to sink deeply into our spirits.

“Central to the challenge is to trust that God is on the throne. He rules. I don’t. I give up control and trust God to run His world without me.”

2. Centering

- Scripture says... (Vs) *Psalm 37:7* – “Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him”
- And... (Vs) *Psalm 46:10* – “Be still and know that I am God.”

We’re called to move into God’s presence and rest there. “Mindfulness”

- Try to spend even five minutes being mindful, letting go of tensions, distractions, and sensations and so resting in the love of God.
- If nothing else happens during a Daily Office, this call to mindfulness is an invitation to pay attention to what our short earthly lives are all about.

3. Silence and Solitude

Dallas Willard called... “Silence and solitude the two most radical disciplines of the Christian life.”

- Solitude: The practice of being absent from people and things to attend to God.
- Silence: The practice of quieting every inner and outer voice to attend to God.
- These are probably the most challenging and least practiced disciplines among Christians today.
- We live in a world of noise and distractions, so most of us fear silence. Studies say that the average group can only bear fifteen seconds of silence.
- Most of our church services confirm this!

4. Scripture

- Scripture has served as the prayer book of the church through the centuries.
- This is because The Bible is a wonderful way to start learning how to stop and receive...
- Especially books like the Psalms... Jesus Himself quoted Psalms more than any other book except Isaiah. Scripture reminds us that we are all in this together.
- We are all constantly tempted to believe that God will love us more if we pray more, do better at keeping all of God's rules and guidelines.
- This is why Scripture is always reminding us of Grace!

“Grace tells us that there is nothing we can do or not do that would cause God to Love us anymore than He does right now.”

- But, when it comes to Spiritual Practices and Disciplines... Remember: What works for one person may not for another.
- A good rule to follow when dealing with tools and techniques is this:

“If it helps, do it. If it does not help you, do not do it.”

- The key, remember, is regular remembrance of God.
- This very simple Daily practice is effective because it's God's design...
- **Consider:** If you have followed God for any length of time, you may have some familiar ways God speaks to you...
 - Sermons like this one... 'Whirlwinds'
 - Books... 'Earthquakes'
 - Mentors, Podcasts, etc... 'Fires'

Perhaps you aren't hearing from God because you aren't listening right?

- Maybe you're lost in the Blizzard of "Good Things?"
- In order to 'Journey Outward,' we need to stop daily and listen for the silence.
- 'What are you doing here?'

Communion: A Corporate Example of the "Daily Office" many still hold to today!

(Vs) 1st Cor. 11:23-26 – 'Why are you here? What is God Saying?'