

Apostolic Foundations (12 of 12)

by Art Katz

The sermon explores the essential nature of a personal relationship with God as the foundation of faith and obedience.

Duration: 57:05

Scripture: Exodus 24:1

Topics: "Apostolic"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the need for distraction and sensual experiences in our lives. He highlights our desire for new ideas and novelty, especially when we are gathered with other believers for an extended period of time. The speaker then shares a personal experience of a fire incident that disoriented him and emphasizes the importance of relying on God in difficult situations. He concludes by urging the audience to prioritize their personal relationship with God and to communicate His glory to the world.

Transcript

So precious God, we come tonight, thanking you for your faithfulness, Lord, in all these weeks, the unfolding of your great apostolic and priestly heart to us, Lord, so merciful in the way that you've looked upon our frames and know that we are as dust, Lord, and to give it to us in installments, and to bring us from where we were, my God, to where you would have us to be, to put before us heroic challenges, my God, monumental things. You are the Alpha and the Omega of these days. You gave this occasion, my God, no man sought it.

You gave the beginning, and now we ask also that you give your conclusion. We look to you, my God, so grateful for the anointing that was alluded to tonight, for we know, my God, without that holy anointing oil poured out from the throne of God, everything is hay, wood, and stubble. Your anointing is your very life, my God, the essence of your being, that vibrant, life-giving, and penetrating quality.

It has nothing to do with deserving, my God, or having put sufficient time in prayer as to warrant it. It's a gracious gift unto the church, to men, and we ask it tonight, Lord, that your word might go forth to kindle something in our hearts, and to melt them, and to work a concluding work in these days. Be with my mouth now, by your Spirit, and be with our hearing, our hearts, and our responses.

I will thank you and give you the praise for all of your great faithfulness to us through these days, and the days that are before us. For Jesus' sake, in his name we pray. Amen.

Well, I think this is the first in 12 weeks where I've come up with only a Bible, and only one Bible, no supplementary reading material, no outline, nothing, just the Bible. I guess I was banking on a very small turnout tonight, and we would just kind of draw our chairs up in a little circle, and I would whisper intimate things, so maybe we'll still do that. I can't quite get away from last week's theme, that in the last analysis, when the smoke clears, for all the great principles of the kingdom, and all of the heady, apostolic themes that God has been sounding, that in the last analysis, what it reduces itself to, and what is at its heart, is the personal relationship between the believer and his God.

And that is the foundation, and that is the apostolic thing. And when we have lost that, and we're just marketing principles of the kingdom, or government, or divine order, or some of the kinds of things that we think to have apostolically majored upon, it will be false. It's not an agenda, or a set of principles in which God would have us to be inducted, but into a whole mode and manner of being, and thinking, and relating.

So, I've been reading through the Gospels. If I didn't share this with you, the Lord has kind of wrapped my knuckles, somewhere in the course of these 12 weeks, to show me that I myself have been overlooking the true foundation. Paradoxically, speaking on apostolic foundations of the faith, and neglecting it myself.

For there's no other foundation that can be laid than Christ Jesus. And it's not the principles, or even the apostolic epistles, as precious as they are. It's the person of Jesus himself.

And that my intense Jewish zeal, had kind of disguised a neglect of my relationship to the person of Jesus. And that as a matter of fact, there was something residual in my Jewishness, and in the monotheistic emphasis that we Jews have had, that did not make sufficient room for him. And therefore, something was neglected for the want of that relationship in my own being.

Namely, the humanity of God. God in the flesh, that would affect one's own humaneness. And the brothers who brought me this very precious insight and word, also commended to me that I needed to major on the Gospels.

And not leap over it as if it's kid stuff. Preliminary. And that the heavy weight stuff are the apostolic writings.

So I have been devotionally reading the Gospels. Every morning and every evening. Through these weeks.

And being reintroduced to Jesus. And finding precious things in the Gospels that I had not seen in previous readings. And I want to begin tonight with just where I presently am in the Gospel of John.

Beginning in chapter 14. And the Gospel of John, I don't have a word. I mean, wow.

It is, well, it was in the Gospel of John that the Lord gave me that initial revelation. 23 years ago. A deck of a trance steamer en route to Greece, which was my spiritual homeland.

Jew by birth, Greek by conviction. The humanist, the philosophical nut going to the land of Plato and Aristotle and Socrates. And rightly on that journey from Italy to Greece.

The Greek book, the New Testament came into my hands for the first time. Never willing to have opened it in times past. So arrogantly contemptuous of any one book that could be purported to be the answer.

But now I was ready. Through the dealings of God and through a life that had come to its own unhappy and pathetic conclusion. As a headstrong, self-willed, self-righteous.

Jewish man. And in the very first reading in the Gospel of John. In the episode of the woman taken in the act of adultery.

In the one statement out of the lips of Jesus. Let him who is without sin cast the first stone. That sentence came up off the page.

Penetrated my eyes, my brain. My whole body began violently to tremble. And instead of stopping and lodging in my mind, which I thought is the seat of life.

The false altar. It went down into my heart like a sharp sword and cleaned me in two. And I was just left a trembling halt on the deck of that ship.

In a moment of time with the absolute certitude. In that moment that there is a living God. I'm reading his book.

And Jesus says who it claims to be. So you can understand why I have a special endearment. For the word of God and for the Gospel of John in particular.

And it's inexhaustible. As is true of all the scripture. To keep drawing the enormous riches.

And even to go beyond the meat. And to suck the marrow out of the bone. You'll never come to the end of it.

Sweetest, most nutritious part is the marrow. And maybe we who have been content with meat. Have moved from milk to meat.

Thought that that was the end of the line. But I want to commend to you the marrow. The real drawing out.

The real borrowing in. For the nuances of the word of God. And the what's the word? The tremulous things that God can hint at.

Through his word. Even between the lines so to speak. Well what I'm going to share with you now.

Is not that these are basic observations. In chapter 14 verse 15. If you love me you will keep my commandments.

And I heard that so long. That I kind of numbed my way through the love part. And didn't realize that the keeping of the commandments.

Is not a kind of act of human diligence. It's the response of love. God has so stacked things in his genius.

And his infinite wisdom. That obedience is impossible. Independent of a loving relationship.

He's not going to allow us to become technicians. Or to move ahead in religious zeal. Which was the kind of thing of which I've been guilty for so long.

And have impressed the saints in that condition. And yet you can obey. But I think that the quality of the obedience.

And the fruitfulness that will issue from it. Will be less. If your obedience is out of conscience.

Out of religious requirement. Rather than out of love. So God in his brilliance.

Has rooted everything. In the issue of the relationship with him in love. Which beats the law.

Beats legalism. It beats orthodoxy. It beats everything.

But to find that relationship. To nurture it. To maintain.

To go on. To deepen it. Is the thing.

In verse 23 of that same chapter. If a man loves me. He will keep my word.

Here again the conjunction. Between love and obedience. Is reiterated.

And my father will love him. He will come to him. And make our home with him.

He who does not love me. Does not keep my words. There's the long and the short of it.

That if there's a failure of obedience. We just simply have to recognize. The failure is the failure of love.

We don't love him adequately. Or our obedience would show it. And I think you can make a case.

That this has always been so. This is not just a New Testament doctrine. This has always been the genius of God with men.

So for example. The Lord did not come to Israel till Sinai. But what preceded Sinai.

It was the great deliverance out of Egyptian bondage. And through the Red Sea. That parted at the demonstration of the mighty power of God.

Who brought them out by the blood of the Lamb. And then assembled them at the base of Sinai. And brought to them the law.

That they should obey it. Out of the love that grows. From gratitude for so great a deliverance.

And so great a salvation. Which is exactly true of us. If we don't love him enough.

Remember what he said to that Pharisee. Into whose home a woman came. A street prostitute.

Where the guy murmured. And he said if this man were a prophet. He would know what kind of woman this is.

But what did this woman do? Despite the humiliation. Of coming into a men's fellowship. In that culture and time.

And without saying a word. Breaking an expensive alabaster box. And pouring the content of this precious ointment.

Upon the feet of Jesus. And weeping over his feet. Wiping them with her hair.

And Jesus said to this guy. Who was murmuring under his breath. And even Jesus' disciples were murmuring.

This money might have gone to buy literature. To help the poor. What a waste.

But it was the extravagance of love. By a woman who had heard the message. Or recognized in Jesus.

Her salvation. And the gratitude. Eventuated and issued in such a love.

That it was expressed. In extravagance. And maybe we need to say tonight that.

The love that does not express itself in arrogance. Is not love. If it could be measured by the symbols.

Symbolful. If we are mean about it. Or chintzy.

And feel that if we put a dollar in a collection plate. Or if our church attendance has been regular. That what more can God ask.

We have not experienced what that prostitute experienced. Namely a gratitude. For so great a salvation.

That lavishes upon Jesus. And upon his body. The body of Christ.

Things that would make us poor. If a man loves me. He will keep my word.

I think the first time that I really broke before God. As a young believer. Was when I had a certain full gospel breakfast in Kansas City.

Where I was a young missionary to the Jews. The speaker said. When I was a younger believer.

He said. I rushed to do the commandments of God. I was obedient to every commandment that the Lord showed me.

But he said. As I have gone on in the faith. I no longer wait for the commandments.

That's kids stuff. You have no alternative when God commands what to do. He said.

Now I intimate his will. I intimate the very disposition of his spirit. And I rush to do it.

Even before he commands it. You know where I was before the last word came out of his mouth. I was on the floor and under the table.

Coming apart at the seams. Because I had probably complimented myself. For my diligence in obeying.

But to intimate the will of God. Not to have to wait to be commanded. Is such an expression of a love.

That just fastens on him. And delights to do his will. Even before he speaks it.

Can you imagine a church like that? The whole house will be filled with the fragrance. And on the occasions when I preach this. This broken alabaster box.

Which my wife thinks is my greatest message. And probably is. I say.

We have been correct. We have been charismatic. We have learned all the principles.

We know how. But our house is not filled with the fragrance. And in 2 Corinthians.

I think the 4th chapter says. And by him the triumph. His triumph is made manifest by us in every place.

The knowledge of him. The fragrance of him. Is made manifest by us in every place.

You imagine wafting the fragrance of Christ in the office. Or in the seminary. In the classrooms.

In the shopping mall. Or with our neighbors in our own families. Because of something that exudes out of our very life.

That is broken. And that wants to heap upon the Lord. The expensiveness of the inward thing that has been mined in us.

For man loves me. He will keep my word. He who does not love me does not keep my words.

And the word which you hear is not mine. But the Father's who sent me. At the very end of that chapter.

Verse 31. But he says. Verse 30.

The ruler of this world is coming. But he has no power over me. But I do.

As the Father has commanded me. So that the world may know. That I love the Father.

Rise. Let us go hence. I know I'm taking great liberty.

And my professors would cut me down in a moment. To say that rise and let us go hence. Is anything other than a directive for physical walking.

But I want to be very suggestive to that. And say. Rise.

Let us go hence. Let us do as Jesus did. Who did as the Father commanded him.

So that the world might know. That I love the Father. Even his obedience to the Father.

Was not some grisly compliance to a taskmaster. It was born out of love for the Father. And it's an obedience that took him all the way to the cross.

As only loving obedience can. Because I think that principled obedience. Or guilt ridden obedience.

Or religious obedience. Will break down somewhere before that place. Only the obedience of love.

Will bring us all the way through. As it brought him. Let us go hence.

So. And again. Even to abide in his love.

And to increase in his love. Is to keep his commandments. As we're told in verse 10 of chapter 15.

And then in verse 12. This is my commandment. That you love one another.

As I have loved you. And not only is it the issue of obedience. It's even the issue of faith.

As chapter 16 indicates in verse 27. For the Father himself loves you. Because you have loved me.

And have believed that I have come from the Father. I don't think that that believing. Was some kind of logical deduction.

With the data. That was presented by Jesus. Some kind of bookkeeping.

Acknowledgement. Yes. That you must be the Christ.

Because look. This is fulfilled. I think it's a love.

That made believing possible. It's a love that opened the flood gate. Of credulity.

And dissolved away. The stubborn human. Resistant.

Unbelief. So even here. Love is the key to believing.

As it's the key to obeying. And so if you have trouble with faith. And you don't know why you can't believe.

And why you're nervous or anxious in your faith. And you don't have the quality of faith. Maybe again.

It's not that you have not been rubbing the genie lamp. And invoking the promises. Meticulously in order to obtain.

Something by a formula. But that the issue is much deeper. That the failure of faith is the failure of love.

Everything points us back. To the intimate. Personal.

Relationship with him. And with that as a preliminary. I want to take you to my real text for tonight.

In the Old Testament. A very precious and favorite text. Exodus the 24th chapter.

And this is the chapter that describes. How the law was obtained and given to Moses. I never cease to start to be awed.

At the terseness of the scripture. How compressed. How so much can be said in so few words.

How God doesn't wallow in redundant and unnecessary things. Very sparse. Very lean.

They crucified him. Jesus wept. And here in a few verses.

Such an episode. Of this great man Moses. Being summoned by God to the top of the mountain.

There to receive the tablets of the law. Which is to be the basis for the whole obedience. Of the people of Israel to their God.

And the key to their witness to the nations. Verse 24 reading. He said to Moses.

Come up to the Lord you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the elders of Israel. And worship afar off. Moses alone shall come near to the Lord.

But the others shall not come near. And the people shall not come up with him. Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord.

And all the ordinances. And all the people answered with one voice and said. All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do.

And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain. And 12 pillars according to the 12 tribes of Israel.

And he sent young men of the people of Israel who offered burnt offerings. And sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins.

And half of the blood he threw against the altar. And he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said.

All that the Lord has spoken we will do. And we will be obedient. Tragically, we know that wasn't so.

There was a failure of love. They went hooting after other gods. They were unfaithful.

They looked for some voluptuous alternative to the God who met them at the mount. And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people and said. Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.

And Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu were the sons of Aaron. And 70 of the elders of Israel went up. And they saw the God of Israel.

And 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. I think it was the first communion between God and a people. And then here's our text.

The Lord said to Moses. Come up to me on the mountain and wait there. And I will give you the tables of stone with the law and the commandments which I have written for their instruction.

So Moses rose with his servant Joshua. And Moses went up into the mountain of God. And he said to the elders.

Moses, tarry there. Tarry here for us until we come to you again. And behold, Aaron and her are with you.

Whoever has a cause, let him go to them. Then Moses went up on the mountain. And the cloud covered the mountain.

The glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai. And the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain. In the sight of the people of Israel. And Moses entered the cloud.

And went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. Amen.

The Lord said to Moses. Come up to me and be there. And I will.

And I want to say that I believe with all my heart that that is the quintessential definitive apostolic requirement. You say what are you talking about? The word apostle was not even yet invented in the time of Moses. But I see Moses as a foundational servant.

A master builder. And all of the configuration of the things that make up that which is apostolic pertain to him. And so this call is critical.

It is the key. It's the difference between the false and the true apostle. The false apostle is one who can market the principles.

One who is good and facile in interpolating segments of the apostolic scriptures. And applying them to a present church need. Or having even some facility to help churches in their need or in their crises.

And be an older responsible brother. Or even establish churches in the franchise McDonald's way. What's the difference between the true apostle and the false? It's not goodness.

It's not facility with apostolic phraseology. Or an ability to do something for fellowships or to seem authoritative. The difference is the man who has gone up and the man who has not.

The man who has remained below. And thinks to serve God and his people without having made this ascent. I want to bring you into remembrance that 12 or 13 weeks ago when all this began, without any collaboration on my part, because at that time I didn't even yet myself know how the Lord was going to fill these weeks.

And I have not known except week by week of the day of the actual ministry to receive that word. But do you remember what happened that Sunday? There was a mountain made in the sanctuary. And the pastor and his wife wore mountain hiking boots and short pants, lederhosen.

And the whole motif was going up the mount. And that was the kickoff for these weeks. And how does the God who is the Alpha begin? How does he end as the Omega? By giving me the text today.

And come up into the mount. And come up unto me in the mount. And be there.

You say, what's so apostolic about that? It may say in your text, as it does in mine, come up and wait there. But the King James and other versions read, come up and be there. And I want to say tonight for your discerning hearing that the world is dying for the want of proper being.

You shall be witnesses unto me. And we have misread that to think it means And you shall do witnessing for me. Everything issues out of being.

True ministry, true witness is out of being. Not out of doing. Doing is the very thing from which God wants to deliver us.

It's too Judaistic, too legalistic, too outward. It's being. Come up unto me and be there.

And I will give you the tablets of the law, which I have written. And I think King James says that Thou mayest teach them. It doesn't mean that God's up there as some kind of expedient provider.

That, well, we have to make one last dissent, however arduous, to get the thing that will enable us to perform our ministry. And I'm taking pains to elaborate that because I know you. I know me.

I know us. We are American. We are modern.

We are impatient. We are expedient. We are utilitarian.

We'll do just that minimal thing that is required to obtain that which serves our ends, even religiously and even spiritually speaking. But the woman with the alabaster box went far beyond expedience. And as we have been willing to be only merely expedient with God, how then have we been related with each other? No wonder that we don't often hear confessions of men publicly that their marriages are askew and appealing for the prayer of the saints.

I said to Arlene Hatchen before I left the house tonight, if the handful of souls who will come out tonight will come under the burden of this need in my own marriage and we were to greet together in that holy place, I'll get a phone call by the time I get home with a wife saying, Come. Every depressing spirit, every discouraging spirit, everything that has robbed her of hope and faith for the future or for the continuance of this relationship will be dismissed when something is broken in the heavenlies by a people who are together, who can go beyond merely the expedient and the necessary thing. Fragrance is going to have to fill the house again.

It's not just come up and be there and then you'll get. It's come up unto me. Come up unto me.

I'm the end in myself. I'm not just a means to an end. I didn't just save you that you should be delivered out of this and that thing and that you should be equipped to do this or that.

The whole purpose is to come unto me for my own sake without any thought of the consequence or what will be the result or the reward or the benefit. So long as that tinctures our thought about relationship with God, we have not ascended this mount. This mount is the mount of the negation of all expediency.

It's come up unto me and be there alone for my own sake. Be there. And you know, if we really search our hearts, when is the last time we have really been anywhere in that kind of totality? Even when we're talking with one another, I know what I'm guilty of.

My mind is already racing and I'm thinking of something for tomorrow or I can't even wait for the person to finish. I'm ready to answer them before they've gotten their question out of their statement as if the issue is giving them an answer. You know what I've learned in community? And the many crises and problems that we've had to experience? It began to dawn on me over the years the frequency of these crises and insuperably difficult problems that the reason that God was giving them to us was not that we should seek a solution, but that we should seek him because he knows our sloth.

He knows that we've been calibrated and inducted into the mentality of the world that we only go so far as is necessary to obtain our end. And as soon as that thing comes in sight, that's the end of our seeking him. And what is an apostle in the last analysis? Why is he foundational to the church? Why is the church built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets? Because they're clever, because they're glib, because they have a command of the principles of the scripture? And I'm not negating those things, but something more.

Because they communicate very God. Because you tell me, what is a church that is built on correct principles and has correct procedure and correct church order and divine government and every other requisite thing and has not the sense of God? It's a husk. It's a caricature.

My God, give me some sloppy, flat-dash, out-of-joint, broken, awkward, groping bundle of saints who don't even know what divine order is who yet have something palpating. There's yet a fragrance. There's a sense of God.

Because the world is dying for the sense of God, who He is that cannot be communicated by principle. It's the fragrance of Him that is to be made manifest in every place, not the principles about Him. But where is that to be obtained? Only in one place.

Come up to me and be there. What an ascent. And you think it's just a cutesy little hike and you'll get there without hardly being winded, you're mistaken.

I can tell you by the time you get there that my experience in community and in fact my whole 22-year walk and my own present struggles are any indication of what it is through which God is leading us tortuously through such paths except your eye is fixed on Him. You can't even find your way to the top. It's wreathed in smoke.

At the time you get there, you're bloody. You're dripping. Your flesh has had burrs and briars embedded.

You've twisted your ankle. You've stubbed your feet. You've sweated.

You're just a mess of sweat and blood and dirt and groping with your fingers and clamoring and every single thing that is strident and logical is ruling you to come down. Don't be a fool. It's a vain exertion to defy gravity like that and to go up.

Three times in the year the men of Israel were required to go up to Jerusalem. Of all places to locate the house of God and the holiest place of all where the obedience to God was to be given it had to go up to Jerusalem. There's always a going up.

And we've lost sight of that. We've lost sense of that with automatic drive and turbo power and all that kinds of things that with a little touch of the toe, zoom. Hey, this is going to cost something to go up this mountain.

It's going to cost something psychologically, spiritually, physically, morally and you're alone. And everything else is below with all of the clamoring details and the weight of them and the things that need to be attended that you never are able to get free from it. Did I tell you about the time when I was preaching and I said that the church was born in waiting in the upper room? And that it needs to continue in the spirit of waiting and waiting is the priestly disposition that has been lost to our modern sensibility? And some young kid just newly saved came to me after the service and said, Mr. Koetz, he said, in all of your travels around the world, he said, have you ever found a fellowship that has waited ten days on the Lord like the early church? I went, dope.

And my mind raced through these brilliant fellowships. Where have I not been the biggest, the best, finest, the most touted and lauded? And I had to think, no, I don't know of one where an entire fellowship as it was in the days preceding Pentecost waited on the Lord together. Waiting is going up.

Waiting is sacrifice. Waiting is dying. What do you do? Do you twiddle your thumbs? What about the boredom? We need distraction.

We're sensual. We need something voluptuous for our seeing, for our hearing. We're full of mind-blust.

We need new ideas, something novel, something, well, what do we do for ten days with the same saints locked into one place? And after the young man asked me if I'd known a fellowship, then the Lord took over and He said, okay, hotshot, how about your fellowship? How about your community that has opted to go up into the woods and into the rugged and the remote parts to find its way back into the apostolic lifestyle? When are you going to wait ten days in the woods? I was doubled over, hit in the solar plexus. The wind went out of me. I came back to whisper to the fellowship, you know what the Lord said to me? Hey, that's great, Ark.

One day we'll do that. When it's convenient. When the kids don't have to go to school.

When there's no great demand on ministry. When the phone is not ringing. We're not this needed.

Yeah, as soon as there's a... You know what we found? That time never comes. The world is never accommodating. And even the religious world fills you with so much consternation and go and do.

You know what we had to do? The kingdom of God suffers violence and the violent take it by force. We declared, the elders, beginning Monday, we're commencing a ten day period of waiting on the Lord. We're stopping everything.

Everything. No cooking. Fasting, ten days.

No program. No business. No detail.

We're going to wait on the Lord. We didn't know how to do it. And we elders are going to begin first.

And so we started in, by the third or fourth hour, we were dozing off. But the Lord is, you know, full of love, full of patience. He knows our brains.

And He showed us how to do it. Three hour shifts around the clock, 24 hours a day. Unceasing prayer.

And so you rotated. And you find yourself in a prayer shift from four to seven in the morning with saints with whom you've never prayed before, that you've been in fellowship with them ten years. And on the seventh day of the fast, when your breath smells like a camel, and you've long since ceased being able to pray spiritually, or even significantly, or even intelligently, and your prayer now is just a, a groan.

I remember myself in that condition, on the floor, founder of the community. On the floor, with two or three of the other saints, in the same kind of whacked out condition, too feeble even to raise our voices. And it was holy.

It was precious. It was revelational. You say, Arthur, the ten days were over.

Did the fire of God fall? Don't think we didn't need it. But it didn't. Do you know why? Because if we had even surreptitiously in our own minds calculated, hey, listen, we're investing ten days of fasting and prayer around the clock.

We'll get our reward. We'll get the fire of God to fall. We would have invalidated the whole meaning of the word waiting.

The moment that you establish a condition, or look for a reward, or a response for your investment, it's no longer priestly. It's no longer waiting. It's no longer going up.

It's an expediency. It's a means to an end. Even if it's a spiritual end, it stinks.

Because there's a God who is still waiting for the fundamental apostolic requirement. Come up unto me and be there just for my own. Don't wonder what the benefit will be to you, or how it will enhance your ministry, or what greater anointing you're now going to have, or insight, or revelation, or to be able to boast, I have been in the very presence of the Most High.

I'll tell you, when the forty days are getting up there, just like the ten days of fasting and prayer around the clock, you don't have any motives anymore. You know what I realized when I stretched out as just a piece of hulk? One thing I realized was, in all the years we've been together in community, we've had three-day fasts, five-day fasts, for critical decisions about overseas trips and urgent matters. We had never really adequately sought the reward.

We put in what we thought was the modicum required to obtain the end, namely, the revelation of His will, should we, shouldn't we. But we had never really sought Him. And when I was in that condition, in those wee hours, you know what I realized? He is the Creator and I am the creature.

And in this prostration before Him, with my tongue cleaving to the roof of my mouth dry, and unable even to beat anything that was faintly spiritual, I am in my proper place before Him. Now I have a sense of who He is, as I sense who I am. And this sense of God is everything.

To restore this sense is the apostolic requirement. For what shall we communicate if we don't have it? But if we make it a means to having it, we'll never have it. It's just simply a love of God that beckons us, come up unto me and be there.

Your mind, your soul, your thoughts, your emotions, all that you are, the totality of all that you are, come before me as the total God that I am and let totality meet totality because that's what the faith is all about. That's deliverance, that's healing, that's salvation. And once we find it with Him, I think we're going to be another people with each other.

We're not going to be doing it by the numbers, like those paint sets, you know, 17 is purple and 12 is red and when it's all finished, it's Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper. It's not going to be like that. There's going to be a transformation in proportion to the fact that we have come up unto Him and been there.

I think we're going to be to each other something new, something else, something far more attentive, something far more patient. I had the privilege of being counseled by John Sanford and Inger came at the end of it. I spent two weeks with this precious man in his basement and when Inger came, we finally sat down together and he gave me my report card.

I only got a C. And I thought I was doing real well. I didn't blow my cool and I was rather calm and gallant and he said, Artie said, you were responding to Inger outwardly and literally as if what she was saying is really what she means. I said, huh? He said, you did not at all relate to what she was really saying, to what she really is.

That's what a dumb dumb I am because I don't know how to be there. If I've not found it with God, how shall I find it with my wife or with men? To enjoy the saints, to appreciate each other even when we're not amusing, even when we're not clever, even when we don't have some great insider revelation, just to enjoy the presence, just to be together. We don't have to say anything weighty.

Being there is everything and for the want of that ability, an entire modern civilization is going awry. They're flipping out, they're freaking out, they're driven to find some novelty, some new alternative, some clever thing, some orgy, some drug that they've never tried before, some new fetish, any kind of thing to break their silence. They're driven because they've never known how to be there and there's never been a church to show them because we're marked by our own restlessness and by our own drivenness.

We've not been there and been called up into his presence on the seventh day and I want to say it's more than just going up, however great that is, and turning a deaf ear to everything that says stay down here and some of you have already experienced that. You're becoming fanatical. What's the matter with your religion as we've known it? You'll hear worse things than that.

There's something that infuriates even the religious world by those who begin the ascent. Maybe some of us have begun it and were discouraged and turned back and came down below where the others are and have gone on in a lackadaisical and nondescript Christianity because we didn't persevere to the top. If I would say anything about these 12 weeks of speaking, about some total of them has been a call to come up unto me.

Moses did not eat nor drink and it says the cloud covered the mountain, verse 15, the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai and the cloud covered it six days and on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. No accident that six is the number of men, seven is the number of divine rest where we cease from our own doing. But for six days he had to stay in this mountain weaved with smoke.

And I want you to know that that was not marshmallows or cotton candy or something that you fly through that is white and fluffy. This was a frightening thick smoke of the fire of God's presence. Six days in it will extinguish anything in you that is humanly religious.

Say, how do you know, Art? Well, because I had six minutes in thick smoke that has revolutionized my believing life. Up at the community the building caught fire where we were staying one night about three or four in the morning. We heard the crackling and smelled the smoke and we got out in time with the best building we had.

And my wife was beside herself. She said, go in and get my pocketbook. It's right on top of the kitchen counter.

Man, I knew that kitchen like the palm of my hand. We had our meetings in the living room. I've been in and out of that place countless times.

Sure, there's no problem. I bent my head low. I went in through the front door and that kitchen counter could not have been more than the distance between me and the first row here.

The moment I entered into that smoke not only could I not find the counter I could not find the door through which I just entered. I was completely and totally humanly what's the word? Disoriented. I lost every bearing.

I couldn't tell you where I was how to come in or to go out. It was an absolutely stupefying experience for a man that has lived for over 50 years by his wit, by his intelligence, by his ability, by his command, by his knowledge to be totally disoriented that there's nothing to which one could turn in himself or outwardly for guidance, for direction when you're in a precarious and even a dangerous situation. I never did get her first.

I never found the kitchen counter and only by the grace of God did I find the door to get out again. Thick smoke. Moses was in it for six days.

Of course, this was a prince in Egypt. This was a man who was tutored and skilled in all of Egyptian law and metaphysics and mathematics and whatever the civilization offered. And he wasn't altogether uninstructed in the things pertaining to the God of Israel.

And to be in that smoke for six days means a total emptying. You don't come before this God in that presence with your charismatic know-how, with your brittle cleverness and your formulas and how to do it. We know, but we don't know as we ought to know.

And we'll never send that mountain if we're content merely to be correct. There's something beyond being correct. There's something beyond truth.

There's truth in truth, if I can put it that way. There's truth that has come to us by listening to tapes, by reading books. And there's truth that has come to us that comes to us out of the presence of God that is ultimate truth.

That is real knowing. And that's why my prayer has been every week, Lord, let me not stand before this people except that I can speak to them as one having come out of your presence. So I want to ask you, not only are you willing for the rigors and the ardor of going up and turning the deaf ear to everything that will keep you below, but are you willing also to enter into something that contains the number six by which you'll be emptied of your humanity and everything that has been humanly obtained.

Are you willing to come before God as a boob, as not knowing, as without your own cleverness, without your own artfulness, without your ability to put fellowships together and teach this or that or witness all the things in which we think that we have know-how and comprehension and to receive from him out of his presence the tablet that he has written. That's what I think this suggests. And I've tasted this smoke a little bit.

I know the humiliation of what it means to be a missionary to the Jews and not have a single message on prophecy in Israel. The only one in the whole mission board. How come I don't have a concordance? Sure I've got a concordance, but I'm not going to cleverly make up a message, however correct it is about Israel and prophecy.

I'll only preach it in the day that the Lord gives it by revelation out of his presence. Then you have a word. Then you have an understanding.

Then you have a knowledge. And maybe what we can say about our charismatic generation that that's exactly what we've not done. We've established systems.

Discipleship. And we've had orders and hierarchical pyramidal structures of who's related to who. And we've taken precious and divine ways of God and transmuted it into some kind of human trap system that victimizes rather than ennobles and uplifts.

Because you can't take the holy things and transpose them. We need to receive them out of the presence of God when we have come up to him and been there. Then we can come down the mountain.

Then we have something to offer that's not plastic but written with the finger of God upon his own tablets. Then we can find Israel going amok and dancing nakedly around a golden calf too impatient to wait as for that man, Moses, and finding its own substitute charismatic alternatives that seem like the real thing and sound like the real thing but are false. And to come down and to dash the tablets in divine anger? What? Isn't Moses the meekest of all men? I'll tell you what, there's a conjunction between divine anger and divine meekness.

Only the divinely meek can express the wrath of God. It's not a matter of temperament or personal irritation. And where did he obtain that meekness? He was fused to the God who is very humility itself in the fire on top of the mountain.

He saw the glory of God. He was in the presence of God. And if that will not establish meekness in the soul of a man, I don't know what else will.

You'll never learn it as a principle. Only out of union with him who is meek and says, learn of me whom lowly and meek of heart. And here where he was expressing the hot indignation of a man who's meek.

And he ground that golden calf to powder and tossed it in the drink and made them lap it up. And you don't hear so much as a whimper. The same Israel, who is this Moses? And that was continually bucking against him and railing against him and revolting.

You don't hear a whimper of opposition. Who are you to require this? Because he who is meek and who is indignant was also authoritative. And it wasn't an authority that was tied to his office.

It was tied to his person. It was infused in his being because he brought the very sense and presence and authority of the God in whose presence he had stood in that seventh and final day. That's the basis for authority.

Not human expertise or cleverness or our credentials or what school we've graduated or our experience, but the sense of God that has been obtained in communion with him. Any other authority that is braggadocio, bravado, is false. The false apostles and the false prophets are those who've never ascended up.

Willing to go? And Moses entered the cloud and went up. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. So I'm getting my signals that my time is out.

And I gave you an invitation last week to enter within the veil. I'm giving you an invitation this week to ascend up to the mount. And really, it's saying essentially the same thing.

Come up unto me and be there. And I will give you the tables of stone with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction that thou mayest teach them. It'll be another kind of teaching.

It's not going to be some glib, unctuous performance. It's not going to be a clever guy doing the right thing. It's going to be communicating not just the law but the lawgiver because you bear the very sense of him having come from his presence.

That's apostolic. That's the ingredient and the quality for which the church is perishing and what shall we say of the world? Freaking out for novelty, diversion, distraction, entertainment because this glory has not been communicated by men who have come up. So let's say yes to the Lord.

If the coming up means a trial in marriage, physical difficulty, whatever kind of emptying, whatever breaking from earthly things that God is about. You've heard his voice in these weeks and these nights. Come.

It's something that no man can presume to do without being invited. But once you ascend, go all the way. Precious God, Jesus, may we hear your voice tonight, my God.

May we hear threaded throughout all of the speaking what you're saying to us. It's not a Bible teaching. It's an invitation.

Come up unto me and be there. We ask your forgiveness, Lord, for our distraction, for our partial coming, for our inadequate union and relationship, Lord, for our expedient mentality. We're only willing to give, my God, what is needful to obtain what we think is required.

Teach us what totality means. Teach us what it means to come up and to be there before the God who is total, pure actuality, to be there in our minds, our hearts, and all that we are, to be there for your sake and not for something that we will obtain by coming. For you are, precious God, the end all and the be all.

You're the thing in itself. You're the precious source. You're all in all, Lord.

Bid us come. Help us to make this ascent. Bring us into that precious union, willing to be emptied, my God, of our own notions, however correct, that we might receive from you, out of your presence, the thing that is burningly true.

That we might receive, my God, authority, meekness, all that's required into coming into the land. We bless you and we thank you. And we say yes to you, Lord.

And we come. For Jesus' sake. In his name.

Bless the Lord. I appreciate the elders and whoever else wants to come up and pray. The first message was Acts 13, so they laid hands upon them, and so they're being sent forth by the Holy Ghost.

And I pray that this is going to be a Holy Ghost sending, and it will not be human cleverness that will be coming to men, but something out of the heart of God to men who are living in a very critical place. Thank you, Jesus. Hallelujah.

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