

Maranatha Mirror Messages



DISPOSABLE INSIGHT OR COMPELLING VISION?



This is the message we have heard from him, and proclaimed to you; that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him, while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

1 John 1:5

Usually when we read this passage, we think about the need to be transparent, hiding nothing, so that we can have fellowship with each other, and so that the blood of Jesus can cleanse us from all sin. For it's true that if I pretend to be your friend, when in fact I'm holding an attitude of resentment against you, we can't honestly have fellowship. Even worse, I hinder the power of the blood to cleanse my own life. We do need to come out into the light and be transparent with each other.

But there is another application of this passage which needs our attention.

When God causes light to shine, he not only causes us to see things about ourselves, thus exposing us, but more importantly, he causes us to see something about himself...

He reveals himself.

For instance, when Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, he saw light coming to him as revelation. He beheld God as never before; his eyes were opened to God's glory!

When Jacob saw the stairway rising to heaven with the glory of God blazing above it, Jacob was receiving revelation. When Mary met the angel, when Paul heard the Lord speaking to him outside Damascus, it was God bursting into our darkness with light, opening a path for us, showing us his love, giving us something that we did not have before.

Similar things have happened in each of our lives. We have had moments when God has given us light, revealed something about himself. Perhaps it occurred through an answer to prayer, or through a word that somebody spoke to us, a stunning converging of circumstances. Suddenly our spiritual eyes were open and we beheld God.



And yet, many times this invasion of light from God doesn't seem to bring about the expected change in our living. Instead of allowing the revelation to become a compelling vision, we restrain it, we somehow diminish it into nothing more than a disposable insight. We cling to our insight for a few days or weeks and then allow it to fade.

Who of us hasn't complained, "God never speaks to me! God never reveals himself to me. Why does he speak to others and not to me?"



And the Spirit replies, "I have been speaking to you. I have been revealing myself. But it's up to you to take the light I give you and turn it into something more than a disposable insight. Nobody can transform the light I give you into a compelling vision but you."

But how do we do that?

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say, John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Messiah, the son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you Simon, son of John, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, the rock, and on this rock (of your confession) I will build my church, and the gates of death shall not prevail against it."
Matthew 16:13-18

Here was an awesome revelation given to Peter, something that flesh and blood could never have shown him; a revelation that in time, changed his life and the lives of countless other people. Eventually Peter was able by the grace of God, by a miracle from the Father, to have his eyes opened to see that indeed this man that he had been following, was in fact the Messiah.

But that day Peter was not ready to let this revelation become a compelling vision in his life.

He restrained the revelation to the level of a disposable insight.

"You are the Christ, the son of the living God" - mighty words, true words, powerful words, but they were like a flash of lightning illuminating the forest. You see the trees and the

river, and over there a cliff, going down 400 feet, that you almost fell from. Then suddenly, darkness again. That's how it was for Peter. The revelation didn't seem to last.

From that time Jesus began to show the disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and raised on the third day.

And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying,

"God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you."

But Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me Satan.

You're a hindrance to me, for you are not on the side of God, but of men."

Matthew 16:21

The same mouth which shortly before said, *"You are the Christ, the son of the living God"*, now says, *"You are not going to a cross! We're not going to let that happen! What are you talking about!!"*

Of course, the time came when Peter was no longer bumbling along with disposable insights; a flash, and then more stumbling, another flash, followed by more stumbling.

Peter arrived at a place where he was consistently driven by a compelling vision.

Listen to Peter in II Peter, chapter One.

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths

when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory,

"This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased",

we heard this voice, born from heaven, for we were with him in the holy mountain.

And we have the prophetic word made more sure.

You will do well to pay attention to this, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the morning star rises in your hearts.

Now Peter is no longer up and down, in and out, hot and cold. He is consistent. He burns with a steady flame. He has seen light, is walking in the light, and he's teaching others to do the same.

This is the message we have received from him and

declared to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him, while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth.

But, if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another,

*and the blood of Jesus his son, cleanses us from all sin.
I John 1:5-7*

"Arise, shine, for your light has come."

The light is Jesus revealing himself to us as the Messiah, the First-born of the new creation, King of kings, and Lord of lords, the One to whom every soul will give account.

He visits us as light, but what we do with the light depends on us.

It's up to us whether this light in us becomes another disposable insight, which we have for a while and lose, or whether it becomes the compelling vision of our lives.

For our Lord's revelation of himself to become our compelling vision we need to do three things:

We need to walk in the vision.
We need to share the vision in the body,
We need to speak the vision to the world.

Walking in the Vision

First we need to walk in the vision.

"If we say we have fellowship with him, while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth. But if we walk in the light..."

If the Lord is showing me that he is the Messiah, that he is the Firstborn of the new creation, that all authority has been given to him, in heaven and on earth, and that I am his disciple, then it's time for me to walk in that reality, to live in it.



If I see Jesus as the Messiah---my Messiah---and continue to live unto myself, as if he didn't exist, then I'm walking in darkness. I'm not living according to the truth.

But if I conform my daily life to this revelation, if I begin to live as one who knows that Jesus as the Messiah, then I'm walking in the light, and this vision becomes the driving force in my life.

When the light came to Mary, she walked in it. She said, "*Be it unto me according to your word. Behold, I am your hand-maiden.*" "*Whatever you want to do with me, Lord, here I am. I offer my body to you as a living sacrifice.*"

Mary walked in the light.

When Isaiah saw the light, he walked in it. "*Here I am. Send me.*" And the Lord said, "Go."

And he went.

A blinding light stopped Saul of Tarsus in his tracks, and he said, "*What do you want me to do, Lord?*" "*Go into the city and you'll be told what to do.*"

And he went.

Jesus tells us that we are the light of the world, and that we are to let our light shine. He follows this awesome announcement by giving specific instruction as to how we are to let our light shine. Matthew 5, 6 and 7, is our Master's clear instruction for his sons and daughters of light.

All we have to do is start walking in this light, and it becomes our compelling vision.

If the Lord Jesus says, "*Go into your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father in secret,*" instead of tucking this command away for future consideration, I simply obey. I get up earlier in the morning, find a place where I can be alone, and begin to pray to my Father in secret. I offer myself to him as a living sacrifice, this day, each day.

Now, I'm walking in the light. And the light is becoming a compelling vision in my life.

When Jesus says, "***Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be yours as well,***" I conform my life to this word of light. I begin to change the way I use my time, the way I handle my money.

I'm starting to walk in the light.

When the Master says, "***Be merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful,***" I make a fresh effort to be considerate of my wife, my husband, the people I work with. I pray for my enemies. I strive to show genuine kindness to people around me. As I'm doing this, I'm walking in the light, and the revelation becomes a compelling vision, consistently guiding me through good times and bad.

Sharing the Vision

We need to share the vision in the fellowship.

***Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom,
and as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs
with all thankfulness in your hearts to God.***

Colossians 3:16



The minute Jesus brings me to himself, he also brings me into unity with brothers and sisters in the Body. I'm part of his body whether I want to be or not. Just as surely as I was born into a family at my first birth, I was born into a family at my second birth. These men and women in the fellowship where the Lord places me are my brothers and sisters, and I am theirs.

When he gives me vision, I take that vision, and begin to live it in the body.

And as I do, the vision creates fellowship.



Walls come down.

Attitudes change.

We begin to encourage each other.

We share with each other.

We talk with each other,
we work together in the Vineyard;
we have fellowship.

If I take the revelation God gives me, and go off by myself, and write a book about it, the revelation dies. But if I take the revelation God gives me, and begin to live it in the fellowship, the revelation becomes vision for me and for the body; we grow in the Lord together. So for my sake and for the sake of all the others, I need to be in the assembly faithfully---when we worship the Master, when we break bread, when we feed on his living words.

Moreover, we also need a time during each week, where we can be in a more informal fellowship of sharing with each other. Maybe It's a small gathering on Tuesday morning, maybe it's Wednesday night in a larger group, maybe it's a women's support group, or a men's prayer fellowship, maybe it's a lunch hour Bible study, or a Bible study in somebody's home. If you can't find a place that fits your schedule, start something in your own home or somebody else's. Two or three people together sharing life in the Lord.



No complaining, no gossiping. Just sharing the vision. An hour together to share the vision, pray, and we're on our way.

As we share the vision in fellowship with each other, it becomes stronger and more alive.

Speaking the vision

We need to proclaim the vision to the world.

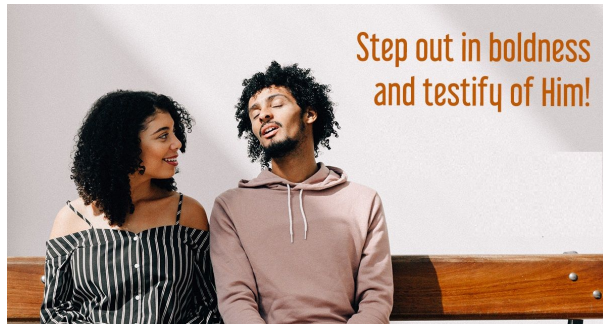
*So they called them and charged them not to speak
or teach at all in the name of Jesus.
But Peter and John answered them,
"Whether it is right, in the sight of God,
to listen to you rather than God, you must judge.
For we cannot but speak what we have seen and heard."
Acts 4: 18-20*

*"We have to speak. If you want to put us in jail, put us in jail,
but we're going to keep talking. We're going to do this."*

Peter now has a compelling vision, driving his life.

He is speaking it boldly to the world. Whatever the cost to him may be, he's going to speak.

In the same way, if God has shown me that Jesus is my Lord, and that he is coming again to judge the earth, how can I be ashamed of the truth?



How can I be timid about sharing it?

What am I afraid of?

If he is risen from the dead, and if he is King of kings and Lord of lords, what more helpful message do we have for this troubled earth?

As we speak with boldness, and with consistency, the revelation becomes vision. And the vision becomes clearer and brighter.

It bursts into flame and spreads from our mouths to the ears and eyes of those around us, like fire.



The day of disposable insights is over.

The idea of getting a flash of insight, going with it for awhile, drying up, getting another one, going with it for awhile, and drying up; that's not the answer.

God has something so much better for us.

The light has come.

The Spirit of the Lord is with us as I write these words....and as you read them.

If we will walk in the light we see in Jesus;
If we will share it with each other; and...
If we will proclaim it to the world...

This light will become a compelling vision that will drive us through the rest of our days,
and into the glory that waits for us beyond this world.

Prayer

Dearest Savior how amazing and wonderful you are. That you, the Lord of all, the King of Kings reveal light of unspeakable beauty into our lives. May this vision become the driving force of our lives. Forgive us for the many times we've beheld you, the Living God, at work within our lives, only to restrain our awe or to forget it within a short period. You, Oh Holy one, deserve all that we have. May our vision of you no longer be a disposable insight. May we turn the light you give us into our compelling vision; A vision that keeps us walking with a determined, steady walk to do your will; A vision to share our love and awe of you with our fellow disciples, creating a sweet fellowship with them as we adore you together; A vision that emboldens our mouths so we may speak of how wonderful you are to this troubled world. May our vision burst into flames, lighting fires that can't be quenched. May this vision continue beholding the glory that awaits us. Amen.