



A Challenging Word

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THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED (PART THREE*)

Text: Luke 24:13-32

Key word there is the word diligently. No be kind to God moment. Not 5 seconds in the psalms and a 2 second prayer. But a pursuit. Because it says right there in Acts 17 that you were created by Him who determined the times before appointed and the bounds of our habitation for one purpose, that we might seek Him. You are not here to be a father, husband, businessman, you're not here to be anything but a pursuer of God; everything else is peripheral. If you're putting any of those things as priorities, you're going to be back in the garbage can again. I am a promise keeper only because I keep my promise to pursue Him. Let me say that again, He did not ordain my life so that I would be a good husband, a good father, so that I would be a son and a worshipper of Him. I am not minimizing the other things, but they are not the reason why I am here. I am here to seek Him and the Bible says, 'and find Him.' The next verse says, 'In Him I live, in Him I move, in Him I have my being.' All those things I was lacking I was craving for, all those things I thought I had to do other things to get are found in pursuing Him and activated in running after Him. I found out something about my Lord, I can never exhaust our relationship, I can never come to the limits of His love, I can never exhaust the depths of pleasure of being with Him. All that time, my soul is being built up. All that time I am seeing the reason for the destiny He is giving me. All that time, my soul is coming back into commune with Him and eventually, my purpose and person are back in harmony again.

You know what? The world looks up and says, 'There's a man.' My son won't have to worry about alternative lifestyles because he sees a man. My daughter won't have to marry a bum, because she's got a comparative aspect of a man. That's why He created me.

Listen to me, if your soul is paper thin and the world has pulled you and your family has pulled you and some of the things you have done during your mid-life crisis has begged out of you things that you think you will never get back, simple answer: (1) Pursue Him, hunger for Him, desire Him, run after Him. David says, Deep calls unto deep and you'll find something, He's waiting there, where He's been all along, in your garden, in the cool of the day. He's asking for you and wants to spend time with you. And He'll draw attention to what He is saying by pointing to it in His word. HE'll say, 'What I'm really interested in is, turn to I Cor. 2' and I'll turn there. Now, I want to show you something, that very thing you long for, let me tell you what it looks like. Verse 9 – OK, most people stop there, but verse 10 is what He's really getting at: God hath (Past tense) revealed to us by His spirit. He's trying to say more to you, He's saying, 'I'm not trying to make you mystical or weird, I'm trying to take you to a dimension beyond anything you've ever experienced to give you the abundant life like I promised. What I am trying to say is, **I want to show you what it feels like to know heaven's dream for you.** Eye has not seen it, ear hath not heard it, nor has entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God has revealed them by His spirit and as you pursue Him, as you chase after Him, those moments of communion unlock and unfold what God has been trying to do all along.

You know what, forbidden fruit doesn't look as inviting anymore. What my Father has for me, what's at His table is the only thing I desire, it's what I begin to long for. Guys, that's the repair of my soul. That's where it starts, my passion for Him. If I don't have that, if I don't have someone to address my need for fulfillment, for someone to show me why I am here, and something in God's word is not writing on my heart, not history but eternity, I am tempted to go back, and I don't want to go back (I'd rather kill myself than go back). You know what your past is like. The reason why you're here is because of what your past was like. I'm not going back, what I've got to do is see the worth in what's ahead. If I don't see the worth in what's ahead, I will go back and be picking in the garbage again and my soul will be hungry again and I'll look like the rest of the world. God forbid.

A pastor had this thing where he would once a month get all the kids around him called pastor time. He would sit around in front of them and tell them a story. So this one particular Sunday he has all these kids around him and he says, "All right kids, I'm thinking about a little animal that runs around in your front yard, anybody know what it is?" Nobody raised their hand. He says, "OK, it's a furry little creature, he runs around and has a bushy tail. Anybody know what he is?" Nobody said anything.

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He said, "He's a furry little creature, he runs around your front yard, he has a bushy little tail and he climbs up trees a lot. Anybody know what he is?" Nobody said anything. He said, "OK, ok, he's a cute little thing, he's about this long, has a furry little tail, he runs around, he jumps down trees and likes to eat acorns. Does anybody know what he is?" Finally one kid raised his hand to put the poor fellow out of his misery. He said, "Well, I know the answer is supposed to be Jesus but it sounds like a squirrel to me."

Now let's invert that. The world says, when it looks at us, "Shouldn't the answer be Jesus? Shouldn't the answer be Jesus? Then why are you gambling? Shouldn't the answer be Jesus, but why are you smoking? Shouldn't the answer be Jesus? Why are you cheating on your wife? Shouldn't the answer be Jesus? Why are you drinking? Shouldn't the answer be Jesus? Why do you love money so much? Shouldn't the answer be Jesus? Why do you cuss like that?"

And what we cannot say back to them is, "My soul is thirsty. And I've looked around for something to fill me up and, while the answer is Jesus, I don't know where to find Him. I go to church and yeah, that has its purpose. I go to a great church. And yeah, I sing when everybody sings, and, yeah that does something. And I try to read my Bible and I try to pray, but in my quiet hours, when I'm left alone with my thoughts and I'm trying my best to delve into the well of my heart I always come up empty. So I bite into forbidden fruit. Yes world, you're right. The answer should be Jesus and I want you to know Him, but don't look at me, look at that other fellah."

That's not why I was created. I am the conduit for God's glory; you are the conduit for God's glory. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God, and not of us."

Are you willing? Are you willing? Forget the group, whatever your name is. Are you willing to start today and say, "I'm callin' Father. I want to come closer Father, I'm scared. I don't know what it's going to mean for me as an individual. But, I'm coming Father, meet me."

"All I can take is a step at a time. I have been hurt so many times. I have been fooled so many times. Help me, I'm scared to death. Father, it's me and this is not a 16th century prayer, it's me. I am languishing and my soul is thirsty. Would you draw nigh to me? I'm drawing nigh to you. I need to get back to where I should be. If you have forgiven my past, help me forget my past. And let's start from there."

I have news for you, I have a guarantee, He's been waiting for that all along. That peace that comes from walking with Him, no high could touch it. No thrill can approach it. Let's go back to the garden. Let's walk with Him. Let's commune with Him. Let's hear what He has to say and let Him hear what we have to say and see what the pursuit of God really means.

I daresay, if you keep that in your mind, if you realize that He is to be the sole aspect of your fulfillment and you approach His throne with that regard, in the way that He's prescribed, **boldly**, you'll begin to see something: Your shoulders will throw back a lot better, your head will lift higher, you'll have more direction in your heart, and you'll be the witness you always wanted to be.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I long to be like you, but my heart is afraid to give up its toys. There can be no real growth unless you cut away the things that are not like you. I realize that there can be no growth without inward bleeding. I realize that many of the things I've been sucking the life out of are just the opposite, they are sucking the life out of me. They are parasitical things that I have been justifying. God I'm picking through the garbage, my soul needs you. Deep is calling unto deep, help me. Help me do what I cannot do by myself. Let me be the conduit of glory so that your name will be glorified. I want to get back to the "You-and-I" of this walk. Help me do it. I'm asking you to be my Father again. In Jesus' name, Amen.

written by Dwight Knight

Up Coming Challenge Ministries Events

March 6-8, 2009 Renew: Body, Mind & Spirit Women's Retreat Savannah GA

April 17-19, 2009 Journey: Summit on Christian Manhood

Oct. 16-18, 2009 Connection: Marriage Conference

Nov. 27-29, 2009 Believers Conference, Norcross GA

For more information go to www.challenge-ministries.org