

PRESSING IN TO JESUS

Because of the crowd Jesus told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were **pressing upon him**. - Mark 3:9-10

There are various renderings of pressing.....pressing around, pushing forward. What we see are people eager to pursue the presence of Jesus. People who were broken or hurting knew that Jesus could set them free if only they could get to him. First, let's review the mission of Jesus and why people clamored after him.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. - Luke 4:18-19

We don't know for sure if Jesus quoted the rest of the Isaiah 61 prophecy or not, but he did fulfill the following things mentioned such as.....

**To comfort all those who mourn....to give them beauty for ashes....the oil of joy for mourning....the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness....that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified. - Isaiah 61:2b-3 NKJV
(.....a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor) - NIV**

Personal stories that are shared in these messages are meant to inspire us, not to make us feel bad about ourselves because we are not 'measuring up' to the place that others seem to have reached in their walk with God. We all have something special that God has designed us to be and do. We are not to compare ourselves to others but simply seek to follow the path that God has for us and rejoice how God is using others for his glory!

Jesus spoke to Heidi in an audible voice and through a vision when she was 16 years old. He called her to be a missionary in Asia, Africa and England. She later met Rolland Bakker and got married in 1980 after they realized that they both had the same radical desire to see revival among the poor and forgotten of the world. After two weeks they bought one way tickets, flew to Asia with 30 dollars, then went on to serve God as missionaries for 15 years in the slums of Indonesia, Hong Kong and London (where they both received PhD's at Kings University). Then they spent 18 months among broken children in Mozambique, which was the poorest nation in the world at that time. After nearly 17 years of mission work, the Bakers had planted 4 churches and ministered to multitudes of children, but it had taken its toll on them. They were nearly burned out. In October of 1995, Rolland went to Toronto and was greatly touched by God in the revival there. When he returned to Africa, he knew that he needed to take Heidi back to Toronto.

In July of 1996 they went back to Toronto for a healing conference. Heidi was very sick at that time and her doctor advised her not to travel, but she was desperate. On the plane Heidi cried out to God in prayer:

'If you don't touch me, I am so tired that I'd like to take a job at Kmart.
I don't think I can continue in ministry without you touching me afresh.'

While Heidi was at the conference, a woman prayed for her and she was completely healed. Later that year the Bakers returned to Toronto and God again touched Heidi. Then in January 1997 she made her third trip to Toronto. This was a time of great impartation into her life. Randy Clark was there and preached a message called 'Pressing In', one he had seen God use all over the world to build faith in people for a fresh anointing by the Holy Spirit. It is a message that God is looking for people who are **desperate** to be used by Him - people who are not content to be average, but who want to be mightily used by God. God is looking for the weak, the hungry, the broken, the needy, the poor in spirit, the thirsty - so that he can display his power and glory.

**God chose the lowly things of the world and the despised things
.....so that no one may boast before him. - 1 Corinth. 1:28-29**

**For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen
those whose hearts are fully committed to him. - 2 Chronicles 16:9a**

**....the Kingdom of God has been forcefully advancing, and forceful
men lay hold of it. - Matthew 11:12**

Jesus responds to those who are not passive but persistent in asking...seeking...knocking. About 3/4 of the way through Randy's sermon about pressing in....Heidi did something unusual. She left her seat and went forward to the altar and began to ask God to touch her. She looked up at Randy with tears streaming down her face. Randy stopped his message and then felt impressed to speak these words to her, even though he did not fully understand its meaning.

'Heidi, God wants to know, do you want the nation of Mozambique?'

When she firmly answered "Yes", Randy then spoke to her that God was going to give her the nation of Mozambique and she was going to see the dumb speak, the lame walk, the blind see and the dead be raised.

Immediately after those words were spoken over her, God's power came upon her with great force as she experienced heat, electricity, shaking, weeping, and laughing. This went on for 7 days and 7 nights and she felt at times as if she would die. (Charles Finney, D.L. Moody and others also felt like they would die when God's power came upon them). God spoke to her audibly and in a vision and said there would be hundreds of churches and thousands coming to the Lord through their ministry. (In just two years after this, they saw 250 churches planted from one church with the help of 12 African leaders in Mozambique.)

When God empowers people in such a dramatic way, he is preparing them for a great harvest, but it will require radical obedience, faith, love and perseverance amidst opposition, battles and

suffering. The Bakers had been brought to a place of humility where they were willing to be poured out for God no matter the cost. Randy Clark says, “Revival is not as much about power but about love and service. Are we willing to allow the Holy Spirit to do whatever it takes to break us of our pride, our need to control, our self-seeking motives in ministry? Are we desperate enough for God to let him completely have his way in us?”

Rolland and Heidi have been stoned, shot at and paid the price financially too. After the Toronto experience, one denomination said they would withdraw one million dollars of support from the Baker ministry called Iris Global if they did not disassociate themselves from the Toronto revival ministry. They refused and lost one million dollars of support, but God has been faithful to meet their needs. Their work reminds one of the stories from the Book of Acts. Through Iris global God has birthed a church planting movement that now includes 10,000 churches in 10 nations with over a million people coming to the Lord.

Heidi often pleads: ‘ Lower still, lower still, lower still, the river flows to the lowest place, lower still, lower still.’

In his book, *There is More...* Randy Clark writes:

What are the twin engines that have driven this move of God, this new missionary movement around the world? They are intimacy with God and humility before God. These two engines have been fueled by love and power, impartations and gifts.

Jesus still touches those today who are desperate to reach out and press in to Him with childlike faith. Not only will their lives be transformed, but they will become plantings of the Lord for the display of his splendor. They will produce good fruit..... fruit that lasts.

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