

Articles and Sermons :: PORTALS: A THEOLOGY FULL OF HOLES by David Ravenhill

PORTALS: A THEOLOGY FULL OF HOLES by David Ravenhill - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2011/4/26 22:29

For the past forty- five years of ministry IÂ've been privileged to work with a number of world renowned men and ministri es. IÂ've traveled throughout the United States and around the world. For most of my ministry I have been involved in P entecostal or Charismatic churches and ministries. As a teacher, I have always attempted to present a balanced Biblical perspective, avoiding the extremes that invariably seem to be associated with the Charismatic movement.

Having spent years around the prophetic movement, IÂ've tried to be accepting of things that didnÂ't seem to fit my und erstanding of how things should be. IÂ've always had a deep longing to see a true expression of GodÂ's power released through His people in the area of the miraculous. I met Kathryn Kuhlman and spoke several times with John Wimber as well as numerous other men and women who moved in the supernatural.

IÂ'm totally convinced that the Church will eventually be brought to a Mount Carmel showdown between the Living God and the enemy. I am also convinced that the last days will usher in an avalanche of spiritual deception as Jesus warned us about in His Olivet discourse. (Matthew 24)

Hopefully the foregoing intro will offset any charges that IÂ'm some Johnny-come-lately, fresh out of seminary, who think s he knows everything because he has some letters after his name.

Okay, letÂ's begin! My publisher sent out an e-mail this week to notify me that one of their authors was going to be appe aring on a major Christian television show. The author had recently written a book on the ancient portals to heaven. The host of the show describes the author as having an understanding Â"that there are portals on the earth today where we can tap into the heavenly realm.Â"

Intrigued, I called my publisher to find the day and time for this interview. Had I overlooked something in my study of Go dÂ's word? My father who prayed hours every day never told me anything about any portals he had discovered. Perhap s I was absent from the lecture hall the day my college professor taught on portals, but surely my fellow classmates woul d have let me know. Was this so deep that it was hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed only to babes? I do ha ve a rather impressive collection of books numbering in the thousands, yet none of these mention portals. Because I hav e no real knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, perhaps there was something new to learn that my English translation failed to reveal. Then again I may just be spiritually blind or totally ignorant. After all IÂ've never claimed to know everything ab out the Bible. ThatÂ's especially true when it come to eschatology. IÂ'm still trying to figure it all out.

After discovering I had missed the live broadcasts, I was told I could watch it over the Internet. Not long afterward I watc hed and listened with interest to a young man who claimed to have seen some unusual miracles in his meetings. Severa l convincing video clips were shown of his meetings where people were testifying to having steel rods disappear from th eir bodies. Others told of instant weight loss and showed their baggy britches to prove it. The list went on and on. The ho st of the program then began to ask about these Â'portalsÂ'. The guest explained that there are two types of portals; geo graphic portals and seasonal portals. These portals are places where there is an open heaven to GodÂ's glorious prese nce. The author went on to say that when you combine a geographic portal with a seasonal portal then youÂ've have hit the Â'jackpotÂ'. This double blessing takes place during one of the Jewish feasts in places like Jerusalem, Bethel, or so me other significant biblical site. Wow! Tell me moreÂ.... This is exciting stuff even for someone like me. Where have I b een all these years? How could I have not known this before? IÂ'm sixty eight, but imagine if I had heard about this as a young man? Think how much more effective my ministry could have been.

Forgive me. IÂ'm pulling your leg a little here. To tell you the truth something began to worry me the moment I heard all t his stuff. It just didnÂ't gel with my understanding of scripture. I thought I was listening to a realtor with an emphasis on l ocation, location, location. Here is my concern.

First of all there is no emphasis on anything like this in the New Testament. Paul never mentions it anywhere in his writin gs. Neither do Peter, James, John or any other writers for that matter. How could these apostolic giants miss something so vitally important?

Well that leaves Jesus. Let me see...ah, yes! There was some mention somewhere about a famous well and an even greater city. That's it. I remember now. It was when He talked to the woman at the well. The well was said to be dug by none other than the patriarch, Jacob. Now Jacob was a significant individual. I mean, he was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus however never 'glorified' the well. The woman said, "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain but you say that Jerusalem is the place to worship". Jesus responded by saying to her, "Woman believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall you worship the Father."

Now according to the author, Jesus must have had it all wrong. He should have told the woman forget your mountain and well. Instead, go to Jerusalem. There is a portal there that will get you straight through to God.

When Jesus told His disciples that He was going away, Thomas responded by asking, "Lord we do not know where you are going. How do we know the way?" Jesus said I AM THE WAY! This is the only 'portal' God endorses. The veil has been rent and we have boldness to enter through a new and living way. When Jesus was asked by His disciples how to pray, He told them to enter into their closet and shut the door, and pray to your Father in secret. Why didn't He tell them about some divine portal they could go to?

There is grave danger in placing an emphasis on times, seasons and places. This may work for the New Age crowd but has no place in the Body of Christ.

The second reason for concern is that this type of teaching discriminates between those that have resources, and those that don't. If you have the time and money to make your pilgrimage to one of these portals, you'll have instant access to the Throne Room. If you can't afford to travel, then "tough luck". You will have to seek God the way the rest of us do.

I've been around the prophetic ministry a great deal of my life. I'm constantly amazed at how they reinvent themselves. This appears to be their latest gig. It has a certain 'wow factor' to it. Let's face it, it's easier to travel than to travel.

Now please believe me when I say I want all God has available for me. I consistently pray. "Eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man all that the Lord has prepared for those who love Him". However, the teacher in me raises a red flag and screams "Look out." Someone recently said "for every mile you walk there are two miles of ditches on either side". This is certainly true as it relates to the supernatural. I sense a growing longing in many for more of God's manifest presence; however, one of the dangers associated with this is that we can be so thirsty for more that we satisfy that thirst by drinking from polluted waters.

I've said my piece now and shared my heart.

Well, I'm off to India to take a plunge in the Ganges. Then I plan to fly to France and spend some time at Lourdes. Following that I hope to make my way to Rome and from there fly to Mecca. If I can't find the answer there, I'm guaranteed an open heaven in Jerusalem...especially if I can get there by the Feast of Pentecost. Speaking of Jerusalem, isn't it called Sodom in the Book of Revelation? Oh, I'm so confused. Where's my rosary and prayer shawl...I need to pray. Ha!

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