

Revivals And Church History :: Another voice from the early church

Another voice from the early church, on: 2011/10/11 20:56

Hi saints,

Since there has been a flurry of articles from the early church, let me give an example of what I consider to be Spirit filled words, perhaps you may agree?

Isaiah 6:3-4 (ASV)

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts.

Sometime in the mid third century , about 250 ad, Novation wrote this on the Trinity.

“In all our meditations upon the qualities of the attributes and content of God, we pass beyond our powers of fit conception, nor can human eloquence put forth a power commensurate with His greatness. At the contemplation and utterance of His majesty, all eloquence is rightly dumb, all mental effort is feeble. For God is greater than mind itself. His greatness cannot be conceived. Nay, if we could conceive of His greatness, He would be less than the human mind which could form the conception. He is greater than all language, and no statement can express Him. Indeed, if any statement could express Him, He would be less than human speech, which could by such statement comprehend and gather up all that He is. Up to a certain point, of course, we can have experience of Him, without language, but no man can express in words all that He is in Himself. Suppose, for instance, one speaks of Him as light; this is an account of part of His creation, not of Himself. It does not express what He is. Or suppose one speaks of Him as power. This too sets forth in words His attribute of might, rather than His being. Or suppose one speaks of Him as majesty. Once again, we have a declaration of the honor which is His own, rather than of Him in Himself.... To sum up the matter in a single sentence, every possible statement that can be made about God expresses some possession or virtue of God, rather than God Himself. What words or thoughts are worthy Him, who is above all language and all thought? The conception of God as He is can only be grasped in one way, and even that is impossible for us, beyond our grasp and understanding; by thinking of Him as a Being whose attributes and greatness are beyond our powers of understanding, or even of thought.” (Novation)

At the glow and the glory of God, as the heavenly host cried “Holy, Holy, Holy, Isaiah, that mighty prophet of God, most quoted by Jesus, cried out in despair. His eyes had seen the King and he was undone. He was only aware of his own unworthiness and the unworthiness of those he dwelt amongst.

We are alive because of the light and heat from the sun. It is the essence of our existence as humans. The earth stands in the blackness of space, the exact distance from the sun which allows life. A few feet closer and we would burn up, a few feet away and we would be a frozen planet. We can glance at the sun for a few seconds, but to stand and gaze into it would destroy our eyes. As Christians we have been called to close our eyes and stare into the Son. We are called to come closer, to draw near , to come right into the very throne room of God Himself. To come in the flesh means destruction, to close our eyes and to come in the spirit means life. Yet, in the brilliance of His presence, every part of us will be illuminated.

In the agony of illumination , we cry out to God and from the very altar of the living God, with tongues kindled, the angel touches you with fire, refining fire. THIS IS REVIVAL. One man or woman will agonize at his or her state, he or she will cry out to God, and God will send fire from the altar itself . As that one stands in the midst of us, the impenitent will harden and will flee, and those who linger in the light from the coal from the altar will be revived and refined and the fire will spread and it will consume. And a people will cry out and worship God and they too will cry “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God almighty.”

The presence of God amongst this refined people will be intense. They will linger in it, be drawn to it and will call others to it and the seekers will come. They too will be set on fire by the fire from the altar. They will take it with them and it will linger for at least a generation. Men and woman will go out and be bold witnesses for God and they will go to the nations.

The question then is this. Do we allow space and time for the man or the woman who will begin this fire? Will we allow space and time in our religious services for God to move amongst men? Do we have the faith to stand in silence and wait on God, expectantly? Silence, for some reason, scares us. We feel that we "have to be doing." Talking or singing or praying. If we pray and teach and believe that God is going to send His fire, then why not stand and wait for it? Perhaps there is less faith involved in noise?

Psa 65:1 To You silence is praise, O God, in Zion; and to You is a vow paid. To You who hears prayer, all flesh comes. Things of iniquity are mightier than I; as for our transgressions, You shall purge them away. Blessed is the one whom You choose, and cause to come near You. He shall dwell in Your courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, of Your holy temple.

Job 37:20 Shall it be told Him that I would speak? If a man speaks, surely he shall be swallowed up.

And now men cannot look upon the light; it is in the clouds; but the wind passes and clears them. Golden splendor comes out of the north; God is awesome in His majesty. The Almighty, whom we cannot find out, is exalted in power; and to judgment and overflowing righteousness He does no violence. Therefore, men fear Him; He does not respect any who are wise in heart.

Re: Another voice from the early church, on: 2011/10/11 21:01

Excellent. Like it.

Bkaibe

Re: Another voice from the early church - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/11 22:27

Dear brother Frank -

Eloquently expressed; beautifully written. Novation likewise...

The words almost transport us to THAT PERFECT PLACE, the place near to God Himself, do they not my friend?

Truly, the doctrinal must not supersede the mystical. For doctrine merely keeps us on the strait and narrow. But it is the mystical, supernatural, essence of Holy God Himself, that brings us into ABUNDANT LIFE.

Thank you for taking the time to write this out for us.

Doug

Re: Another voice from the early church - posted by MaryJane, on: 2011/10/12 9:32

Frank thank you for sharing this with us. It was so beautiful. I have found myself often at a loss of words to describe the love and awe that overcomes me for JESUS. HE truly is worthy beyond words! I will not be on for a time as some of the threads recently posted have caused me some struggle. Having been raised in the RCC I find myself struggling with some of the importance placed on "doing things" instead of trusting and abiding in the LORD. I realize this is my sin and I am seeking GOD to help me overcome. Anyway what you posted here was shared with me and I just felt strongly to come and say thank you brother it many ways it is an answer to some prayers that have been on my heart. A very good reminder of sorts that I can never do anything to be "good enough" in my own strength but that is what is so amazing about our LORD...HE gives me all that I need to overcome and live unto HIM daily!!

God bless you
maryjane

Re: , on: 2011/10/12 10:10

Hi Maryjane, God bless you sister. I love the Novation quote and the fact that I wrote the rest only proves the Holy Spirit is alive and well in His people :)

"HE truly is worthy beyond words! I will not be on for a time as some of the threads recently posted have caused me so much struggle."

It breaks my heart to hear that. This is why I have been so diligent to continually speak to these issues. I believe that maturity has a lot to do with these issues. Those of us who have been around the block a few times, not novices or young men, often know the dangers that a focus on these outward issues can have. I am thankful for brother Alan's last post where he focused on love and kindness and meekness which are such a beautiful external expression of inward beauty. Some younger men I know, in their zeal and lack of consideration for the effects of words and traditions, just keep grinding away. Sister, you and I both come out of a church that mastered on the externals and it produced absolute death. The tentacles of it started 1800 years ago and it evolved into a satanic masterpiece which would enslave and bring into bondage almost the entire "Christian" world. Small groups of brave souls continually resisted and were ruthlessly treated. They denied the absolute obedience to leadership that the Catholic church required. They denied the infallibility of its leader and by proxy his bishops and priest. They denied the adherence to outward rituals that had no inward reality.

"I have found myself often at a loss of words to describe the love and awe that overcomes me for JESUS. HE truly is worthy beyond words!"

You stick to this sister, you keep your focus on Jesus, may He always be pre-eminent in your life. I rejoice that you were delivered from dead religion to life in Christ Jesus. He called you out of the grave and he breathed life into you. He will always build you up, He will always be pushing you in the direction of victory. Listen to His leading sister and allow the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you through His word. Let men fight over what you should and should not wear, you just follow His leading, He will never lead you astray. There is such freedom in this and joy.....brother Frank

Re: MaryJane - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/12 11:51

Dear Sister -

I grew up being involved in Roman Catholicism too. It was a mixed home growing up, but all of my siblings have now been fully converted. I was the only one to escape the death-clutches of that antichrist system...

The advice of our brother Frank is sound. Focus on the Master; on Jesus, as Frank has said, and you will be in the Right Way. Look to His words, for our Master said, "They are Spirit, and they are Life." His words will never lead us astray; His instructions will never fail us.

"It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life." John 6:63

When I read the words He inspired, I am sometimes startled; I am sometimes troubled. Any feelings of conviction though, while seemingly unpleasant in their season, are yet a blessing though. For it is our Father in Heaven graciously entreating us, just as a wise and gracious father would his very own children.

Sweet consolation... Even in the midst of sorrows, our Father in Heaven ever deals faithfully with us.

Dear Sister, we can never give enough, nor can we ever be good enough. Our hearts will never even be perfect enough. Our good God knows all of this too, of course, but His Great Spirit still is pleased to draw us close to Himself. The Great God, the Holy One, draws us close and holds us tight and loves us anyway. (Amazing Love!)

Be Encouraged in this, dear Sister.

Be Encouraged in Him,
Doug

Re: - posted by ThyKingCome (), on: 2011/10/12 16:27

"Perhaps there is less faith involved in noise?"....

Re: - posted by Lysa (), on: 2011/10/12 16:55

Quote:

-----dietolive wrote:

Truly, the doctrinal must not supersede the mystical.

I am asking from an uninformed position... I've heard Christians from 'today' speak of some from the early church as being "mystical" and I would like to ask a couple of questions from my 'uninformed' position if I may!!

Anyone can answer, I'm not picking on you, dietolive, your quote prodded my inquisitiveness about the subject!

Did the early church writers consider THEMSELVES to be mystical?

And/or could this generation be judging an earlier generation by our current standards?

I'm not trying to start trouble, I really don't know.

God bless,
Lisa

Re: Lysa - posted by dietolive, on: 2011/10/12 17:38

Hi Sister - (and a pleasure to "meet" you.)

You wrote:

"Anyone can answer, I'm not picking on you, dietolive, your quote prodded my inquisitiveness about the subject!"

I don't think you are "picking" on me, so please don't worry about that! :O) Since you ask though, I'll try to answer your questions as best as I can...

You ask:

"Did the early church writers consider THEMSELVES to be mystical?"

I would think so, at least in the way that I meant it.

Simply put, "mystical" refers to the invisible, supernatural world. A "mystical" writing relates this invisible world to the reader. Our dear brother Frank's writing above is an inspired example. A much inferior example would be my recent retelling of Isaiah's vision of the Son of God in Isaiah 6. Finally, if you've ever read Tozer, for instance, you will come across some pretty mystical writing! He was not ashamed of the term, and neither should we be.

For those of us who have palpably experienced some manifestation of the invisible Spirit of God in our lives, such a "mystical" experience is life-changing and for the good! So, dear Sister, when I call something truly "mystical", I mean it as a profound compliment.

You continue:

"And/or could this generation be judging an earlier generation by our current standards?"

I would think most people do judge things they consider to be strange or new, according to what is considered "normal" by the standards of his day and culture. It takes a great deal of resolve to fight against this natural inclination and to rather judge all things according to "righteous judgment" as Jesus says; that is, according to the Scriptures.

You finish:

"I'm not trying to start trouble, I really don't know."

Peace! My Sister... I don't think you are trying to start trouble either. Please don't worry so. and I don't know much of what God knows either, so I guess we're in company together.

Thank you for the blessing, I need all the grace I can get.

God bless you too, dear Sister,
Doug

Re: , on: 2011/10/12 18:23

Great answer brother Doug.....brother Frank

Re: , on: 2011/10/12 21:03

Brother Frank - Good answer to our dear Sister MaryJane.

I say this with all the self-dread that a human can have, but I've been IN His presence and the Glory is something that will remain within my mind and soul for all of my life and has kept me going through trials that most people say that they couldn't have endured - but it was all of Him and not my own strength - but only from 'seeing' HIM - the reality of Him - that He is in fact GOD and sits on the ONE Throne - yes - it did "awe me to Life" as my profile explains.

When you have that type of experience - 'mystical indeed' - then all that is outside of Him, is seen for what it is.

Thank you for your words.

I too had to start in the RCC until at 10 I left saying "This is not GOD."

I suppose if I had to be classified under any sort of 'branch', I'd be the Old time AoG. Very mystical but equally balancing with the Word. Equally.

Blessings to all on here.

Re: , on: 2011/10/13 0:16

Jesus-is God writes.....

"I've been IN His presence and the Glory is something that will remain within my mind and soul for all of my life and has kept me going through trials that most people say that they couldn't have endured - but it was all of Him and not my own strength - but only from 'seeing' HIM - the reality of Him - that He is in fact GOD and sits on the ONE Throne - yes - it did "awe me to Life" as my profile explains."

Praise the Lord sister. I wonder if there is anyone else out there who could testify to the kind of encounter that my sister just articulated? Or maybe you have heard tale of such an encounter but it is a mystery to you?brother Frank

Re: Another voice from the early church - posted by twayneb (), on: 2011/10/13 9:54

Bro. Frank:

I am blessed by the reminder. The longer I walk with the Lord the more I find that as I walk and pray in my back yard I find myself simply saying over and over again, "Lord, you are so beautiful and I love you so much." The interesting thing about that statement is that as a fallen man I know that I have no real concept of beauty or of love that comes close to comparing to that of the Lord.

As to mysticism, I was above 30 years old before I ever heard the term "mystic" as applied to believers. I recall nights at a small youth camp near Baxter Springs, KS spent seeking God in my teens when I would be lost in His presence for up to five hours at a time. I would not realize how long I had prayed but it would be 2 am when I rose from praying. I was so aware of the power and presence of God on and around me. My whole body would buzz and tingle. The joy and the peace of God were indescribable. It has been perhaps once or twice in my adult years that I have had anything resembling

ing that experience. Obviously we cannot live in a continual experience such as that and I do not attempt in any way to "get back to that place", but I am so thankful that God visited me in that way. I have seen many supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit in my life. Truly God does work supernaturally in, among, and through His people. I believe from reading and observation that when a man lived in the passionate pursuit of God and was full of the Holy Spirit, and when God moved through that man in supernatural manifestation, that people looked at that man and labeled him a Mystic. Perhaps the term itself is a bit too "mystical" and we take it to mean something more than simply, "a man being used by the Holy Spirit and who walks closely with God."

Re: , on: 2011/10/13 9:58

Great post brother Travis. amen and amen!..... brother Frank