

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Vital Connectivity

Vital Connectivity, on: 2005/1/22 10:22

The great A.W. Tozer wrote the following:

{ "To be articulate at times, we are compelled to fall back upon 'Oh' or 'O' - a primitive exclamatory sound that is hardly a word at all, and that scarcely admits of a definition....

In theology, there is no "Oh!", and this is a significant, if not ominous thing. Theology seeks to reduce what may be known of God to intellectual terms, and as long as the intellect can comprehend, it can find words to express itself. When God Himself appears before the mind, awesome, vast, and incomprehensible, then the mind sinks into silence and the heart cries out "Oh Lord God". There is the difference between theological knowledge and spiritual experience, the difference between knowing God by hearsay and knowing God by acquaintance. And the difference is not verbal merely; it is real, and serious, and vital.

We Christians should watch lest we lose the "Oh" from our hearts. When we become too glib in prayer, we are most surely talking to ourselves. When the calm listing of requests and the courteous giving of the proper thanks take the place of the burdened prayer that finds utterance difficult, we should beware the next step, for our direction is surely down, whether we know it or not. }

OH God! OH God! That I might know You more, so that I may be at a loss for words that describe my experience.

Last year, I was reading in Matthew. When I got to the 6th chapter and the 33rd verse, I could not proceed any farther.

"Seek ye first, the kingdom of God and His righteousness, then all these things shall be added unto you".

I had spent the vast majority of my life seeking "things" to make me content that I might then find vocabulary to thank God. What a perversion of existence that is.

All that we have in Christianity and all that we do should be an outflow of our acquaintance and experience with our God. Spending time with Him and His Word will produce all we want to know and be in Christ Jesus. If God is our supplier, would it not be a better thing to pursue the supplier rather than the supply?

When we "witness" to someone, how often do we find ourselves at a loss attempting to describe our God Who is of Himself, limitless? Or do we rather, describe the supply, and bits and pieces that we know and can somehow attempt to understand? Worse yet, often our focus is on our achievement rather than wonder. Is it any wonder, that people only see us, rather than His image? I think not.

I remember when I first "encountered" God. It had never entered the sphere of my understanding what happened on that day. Some describe it as His "shekinah glory". And so that it likely was. But description beyond that leaves me at a loss. I can tell you the effects. But I cannot describe the cause, God Himself.

As our dear departed brother Tozer so wonderfully shared above, as we proceed in our theology and learn of God, we tend to reduce Him to the level of our understanding. Worse yet, we contend with others that "we know", when in fact we are "unknowing" compared to His greatness.

When I encountered God for the first time, His real presence in me, it was incredible. It was very obvious to those who saw me thereafter. They knew something had happened to me without me saying a word, yet neither they nor I could define what it was that brought about this "change" or "look" that had come over me. I was floating as I went my way. My head and my heart was in the clouds. I was in love with God. More, I believed that God was in love with me. But I could not tell you just what happened to bring me into His presence or how it came to be. His sovereign goodness just chose to do it. But I have to believe from the reactions of those who saw me, that somehow they saw more than me...they saw a glimpse of Him upon me. Is that what the unsaved are looking for?

Such an occurrence cannot be described, nor can it be taught or learned. I am quite certain that there are Doctors of Theology that have not experienced God. They have plenty of head knowledge, but lack experience and acquaintance and understanding.

Sadly, the image of God that somehow shown on my face faded. I had no idea how to maintain the experience or acquaintance. I was born into religion. What did I know about personal experience with God? Nothing. I knew it was fading, but

was at a loss as to what to do about it.

Some 30 years later, I came to the rhema of Matthew 6:33, and I stopped right there. I remembered that before that weekend, I had told God that if He did not reveal Himself to me, I was never going to darken the door of a church again. You see beloved, I put all the religiosity away from me and sought God. Nothing more, nothing less. "I want YOU, God!" It was then that He showed up in all of His magnificent glory. I was forever changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, God flooded my soul. The rhema of Matthew 6:33 revealed to me that the object of all my pursuits have been a perversion of the relationship that God has desired to have me with me.... up close and personal.

I sought things, carnal things, religious things, sinful things, glory, power, prestige, position...you name it, I was looking for it. What actually happened was that it was all vanity, all in vain. The reality of all that I had pursued eluded me because my pursuit was for the supply rather than the supplier. I didn't realize that if I had the supplier, I had the supply as well. But by comparison, the supplier far outpaled the supply.

I, like you, live in this carnal flesh and yet see through a glass darkly. So I cannot any more comprehend the vastness of God than fly to the moon. We are like the tiny uncapped bottle that was tossed into the middle of the ocean and sank to its deepest depths. There was from that moment on, nothing but ocean in the bottle. But the bottle did not contain all the ocean, only a minuscule part. We have 100% God in our hearts, but we do not contain the completeness of God, no not by any stretch of imagination.

We are like the town residents who ponder of the refuse left behind by a violent tornado. We see its effects and wonder about its power. It overwhelms us when God shows up. But too often our attention is on what was left behind, rather than on God Himself. We should be like the "storm chasers". They are after the storm that has such power. They somehow sense its wonder and want to experience it up close and personal. Could it be that God wants us to find Him and experience Him up close and personal? Oh yes, yes, yes. He gave His only Son, that we might do just that! God wants us to be vitally connected to Himself. God wants to be found, not for His supply, but for Who He is. When we begin to pursue Him in such a way as this, our prayer life begins to take on a whole new perspective. Our worship becomes enthralled. Slipping away to be alone with Him becomes a passion rather than chore. We are compelled to drink in His wonder.

The other day, I was pondering all of this. It's spring time once again, and all the new life is springing forth. I was outside and just looking at the growth of new life. Fresh green leaves, beautiful flowers, the endless repetitive perfection of the clover leaf. I realized that man in all his knowledge and pride had yet to create one living cell. Yet our God has created all of this life. His creation sustains itself in balance. All is provided for. Only our own dominion over creation given to us by Him disturbs the balance of life and even the continuity of some species of life. But what about our God? Who can fathom the depths of His aura?

Are you connected to God in religious practice? Or are you seeking Him above all things? God desires to be connected to us by acquaintance and experience.....do we share His desire and live to bring it to pass? Or are we busy trying to be our own god, or worse yet, make God our servant?

Well, as usual, I've rambled on here, just sharing as it pours forth. But God wants us to want Him more than anything else. What will you do to cooperate with His desire, His provision and experience Him for yourself. He is so much more than a historical figure in the book we call the bible. He is waiting for you to come to Him for Who He is, not for what He has.

In awe of Him,

Lahry

Re: Vital Connectivity - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/1/22 12:29

Ah Lahry,

My suspicions of yourself were not wrong. So much here that I could never finish commenting on. But as a fellow rambler (I wonder sometimes, do we have any choice? It has to go *somewhere*...) will key on a couple of choice selections.

Quote:
-----We Christians should watch lest we lose the "Oh" from our hearts. When we become too glib in prayer, we are most surely talking to ourselves. When the calm listing of requests and the courteous giving of the proper thanks take the place of the burdened prayer that finds utterance difficult, we should beware the next step, for our direction is surely down, whether we know it or not."

We have a little tag for this around here; "Tozerphiles", welcome to the club ;-)

Of the many this is one that got firmly logged awhile back. That "Oh", so reminiscent of Romans 8:26, *In the same way, the Spirit also helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we should. But the Spirit himself intercedes with groans too deep for words...*

Quote:

-----OH God! OH God! That I might know You more, so that I may be at a loss for words that describe my experience.

This past week a recurring prayer..."Your people!"

Quote:

-----When we "witness" to someone, how often do we find ourselves at a loss attempting to describe our God Who is of Himself, limitless? Or do we rather, describe the supply, and bits and pieces that we know and can somehow attempt to understand? Worse yet, often our focus is on our achievement rather than wonder. Is it any wonder, that people only see us, rather than His image? I think not.

"at a loss attempting"....

Quote:

-----Worse yet, we contend with others that "we know", when in fact we are "unknowing" compared to His greatness.

To be completely honest brother, feel often like the strangest Christian on the planet. Have tried so hard to...*force*? into some kind of expression that un verbalized something that "I know" is the Lord, the Holy Spirit or otherwise I have gone completely insane. Problem is, can never "say" that without a twinge, "I know". I don't know anything, even after all this time and all this rambling here. Everyday is like starting over. The first day. Often times can come back here and re-read something and wonder, do I know what I am talking about? Is this my opinion? Does it matter? Can only hope and pray that somehow it gets accredited to *Him*.

It does get kind of quirky here. Like to think that what goes on often times it's just a wrestling out loud amongst ourselves in this forum, this marketplace of thought and experience.

And the difficulty to me is to talk about oneself without...talking about one's self! Or really drawing the attention to "me/us" as opposed to "Him". Trying to describe what the Lord is doing in and through us is the attempt, faulty as it is. Would of ten times rather just go sit in the bleachers and watch it all unfold, watch God work... and yet I am compelled to make myself a fool and I don't mind that at all.

Quote:

-----Slipping away to be alone with Him becomes a passion rather than chore.

Yes! Not a 'have to' but a 'get to'!

Quote:

-----Such an occurrence cannot be described, nor can it be taught or learned. I am quite certain that there are Doctors of Theology that have not experienced God. They have plenty of head knowledge, but lack experience and acquaintance understanding.

Like that "*acquaintance understanding*"

Quote:

-----Sadly, the image of God that somehow shown on my face faded. I had no idea how to maintain the experience or acquaintance. I was born into religion. What did I know about personal experience with God? Nothing. I knew it was fading, but was at a loss as to what to do about it. Some 30 years later, I came to the rhema of Matthew 6:33, and I stopped right there. I remembered that before that weekend, I had told God that if He did not reveal Himself to me, I was never going to darken the door of a church again. You see beloved, I put all the religiosity away from me and sought God. Nothing more, nothing less. "I want YOU, God!" It was then that He showed up in all of His magnificent glory. I was forever changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, God flooded my soul. The rhema of Matthew 6:33 revealed to me that the object of all my pursuits have been a perversion of the relationship that God has desired to have me with me.... up close and personal.

Lahry, couldn't begin to presume to know what all could be acquired in 30 years! My, am just a babe here at 7-ish going on day one. But certainly all that is helpful to have gotten to this point, no?

Meaning that surely there is much experience that could be fleshed out. Really appreciate the sharing that goes on here from our brethren that have traveled farther down the road with the Lord. They have taught us youngin's so much.

I will likely never get to the end of this here, so much that I concur with. Thank you sir for sharing your heart. Will leave with this as it relates to that last quote I snipped out of the whole; From OC and letters to his wife.

December 26:

I realize more and more that if we are not to forego the interests of His cross we must forego a great many other interests and how you will go, counting Him worthy of the cost.

Oswald's letters during this week speak of his refusal to view God's call in terms of "usefulness," as others defined it.

December 27:

I am not appealed to on the line that I am of more use in certain places. It is with me where He wills. Bless the Lord He guides. Pay attention to the source and He will look after the outflow.

It appears that his "temporary" work as a missionary with the League had been indefinitely extended, and nothing permanent was in sight. Undoubtedly, as he had anticipated, an avalanche of practical advice was being offered the couple from concerned family and friends.

December 31—Perth:

This is the last day of a momentous year to you and me. The best year of our lives. Yet He is preparing us for what He is preparing for us. The word that grows on me for the new year is His word: 'As the Father sent me, so send I you.' His first obedience was to the will of God not the needs of mankind. The voice of the age that says 'Here you will be most good' is to my mind the voice of the tempter. It is where He places us, and how few see it!

Chambers, O. 1958
Abandoned to God.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/1/22 15:56

Quote:

-----We Christians should watch lest we lose the "Oh" from our hearts.

There is a story told about David Garrick, a famous UK actor-manager during the 18th Century. Someone prevailed on him to go to listen to Whitfield. When he returned they asked him what his reactions were to Whitfield's preaching. David Garrick, the nation's greatest actor, replied "I would give a hundred guineas to be able to say 'Oh' like George Whitfield!"

Whitfield's "Oh", of course, could never be imitated; it was coming straight from the heart of God.