

Articles and Sermons :: To Delight in Hiddenness by Francis Frangipane**To Delight in Hiddenness by Francis Frangipane - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2020/10/27 6:46**

The desire to be acknowledged and appreciated by others is basic to human nature. After healing ten lepers, Jesus Himself seemed disappointed when only one returned to give thanks (see Luke 17). Yet, while the need to be occasionally appreciated is not sin, it can become sin when our goal shifts from seeking God's glory to seeking the praise of men. We must determine that our service to mankind is guided by a higher, more focused obedience to God.

Jesus lived solely for the glory of God. We, however, too often seek the praise of man. In spite of the fact that Jesus repeatedly affirmed that the Father who sees in secret will reward us openly (see Matt. 6), we remain offended if we do not receive credit for our good deeds. This quest for recognition can become a source of wrong motives and failed expectations; it can give a place to jealousy, pride and selfish ambition if we are not careful.

I wish I could say I have never walked in this type of human weakness, but that would be untrue. In fact, I experienced something years ago that, though quite painful at the time, ultimately unfolded into a wonderful revelation concerning the nature of the Holy Spirit.

Yet, before I proceed, let me state that to share this publicly requires I make my own frailties visible before you. So please grant me your grace.

The scene was the 1996 Promise Keeper's Atlanta convocation for pastors. This event was the largest gathering of pastors in North American history---more than 40,000 ministers united from a great variety of backgrounds and cultures. It featured two themes in which I had been quite active: unity and reconciliation. Although I had been instrumental in bringing pastors together in many cities, and had learned some important insights along the way, I had not been asked to contribute.

I mentioned my dilemma to no one, yet the lack of recognition was producing an ever deepening disturbance in my thought life. At the same time, however, the joy of seeing cross-denominational unity manifest in prayer and repentance compelled me to attend. Entrusting my inner conflict to the Lord, I felt perhaps there would be a way I could serve as the conference unfolded.

But no door opened. Pastors who knew me would ask, "So, why aren't you speaking at this conference?" I'd smile and respond, "This must increase and I must decrease." While my answer was both humble and sincere, I was becoming much more humble than I planned.

The fact was, I was asking myself the same question: Why wasn't I speaking? Ghosts of past rejections began to manipulate my fears. So, while I attended the conference and truly rejoiced in the unity, I also felt detached from it. I watched a spiritual vision that I carried in my soul emerge and take form, only to find myself floating, dreamlike, outside of the fulfillment. I was simultaneously deeply blessed and thoroughly miserable.

Finally, I laid my soul bare to a couple of friends. "What should I do?" I asked. "If I promote myself, God Himself will resist me; if I remain silent, I sacrifice my contribution to this historic event." If nothing else, I knew the Lord was crucifying my pride and fleshly ambition.

The conference came and went, but my inner struggle stayed with me. After several months I successfully buried the conflict beneath my everyday thoughts. I was going on with my life. However, in May the issue resurfaced. I was at a Mission America meeting in Washington, D.C., listening as a friend shared over lunch how the Lord used other leaders to lay foundations in his life. As we talked, I began to see that I was not outside of what God was doing, but underneath it. My labors in Christ (and those of many others) were part of a divine substructure upon which this current work was unfolding.

The efforts of those who serve in high visibility today will likely become foundations for greater works by others tomorrow. I felt I was beginning to understand my role in the context of God's unfolding kingdom. I was even able to look at my own life and see individuals whose teachings and spiritual examples had become foundations in me---people whom I also had never thanked or acknowledged.

The Nature of the Holy Spirit

I was growing in my understanding, yet the Holy Spirit had something else to add. That evening I confessed to the Lord my sin of seeking recognition. Immediately the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart a simple question concerning Himself. He asked, "Do you know My name?"

This was a special moment, and I could feel the flood of the Spirit's presence drawing near. His name? I knew the primary revelation of the Father's name was Yahweh and the name of the Son, of course, is Jesus (or Yeshua). I recalled all the compound names of God in the Bible, but again could not identify the specific name of the Holy Spirit. I realized that "Holy Spirit" or "Spirit of Truth" were more descriptive titles than proper names, per se; they were not names like Jesus or Yahweh. The term "Comforter" (or Paracletes in Greek, i.e., "one called alongside to help") also is not a name as much as a function.

What I am about to say here might not gel with everyone's theology. But there was a moment when Moses, standing before the fire of the Almighty, asked to know the name of God, to which the Most High answered, "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex. 3: 13-14). I AM was a proper name. Again, there was a time when the archangel Gabriel told Mary that she should name her child Jesus (Luke 1:31). Both the Father and the Son have many descriptive titles, but on earth they are known by a particular name. Similarly, the Holy Spirit has many titles and functions, but I could not remember a time in the Bible where the specific proper name of the Holy Spirit was revealed.

My point is this: every good work, every miracle of grace, every virtue that has ever manifest on earth, has occurred through the work of the Holy Spirit. Yet He never draws attention to Himself, choosing instead to inspire our praise toward the Father or the Son. As I stood in this amazing moment, I quickly searched my memory of the Scriptures. Again, to my knowledge, I could not recall any setting or verse where the proper name of the Holy Spirit was revealed---from brooding over the pre-creation universe, to strengthening the Son of God at the cross, to raising Jesus from the dead, to being poured out at Pentecost, to working miracles of redemption in spreading the Gospel throughout the world in millions of lives---all of it was stimulated and inspired by Him, but He never revealed His name!

Conversely, in this world we are all about getting our name out and making a name for ourselves, especially in the western world. The nature of the Holy Spirit is in stark contrast to our human desires to be seen, praised and recognized by other men.

Truly, the Holy Spirit passionately delights in hiddenness. Then I saw that the two greatest passions of the Holy Spirit's heart are to see Jesus glorified and to fulfill the Father's will on Earth. This was perfect humility---the God-pattern that would lead me to spiritual rest and maturity.

Beloved, if we would be filled with the Spirit, we must delight ourselves in seeing Jesus glorified and getting the work done that God calls us to fulfill. God sees and knows our motives. If we will lead others, we must do so as servants of Heaven. Let us, therefore, seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit and work purely to see Jesus glorified and the Father's will fulfilled.

Re: To Delight in Hiddenness by Francis Frangipane - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2020/10/27 13:12

This is so good and important to learn with one's heart even moreso than to the understand with the mind. And I was immediately reminded of Pastor Chuck Smith having a message to the effect that if we are ever to be a minister (and I believe every saint has a ministry and calling) we need to have a servant's heart. Servants look to serve and minister to the needs of others. Jesus humbled himself and made himself of no reputation so that he might bless and restore to wholeness. When I heard Chuck Smith speak about "Beware of Ambition", I knew it was a foundational teaching that we all will be tested on and it is critical to have this mind in ourselves, the mind of a servant. And I saw first-hand how the Charismatic movement in this country was hijacked by the name-it-and-claim-it teaching of chasing after blessings for yourself and the disaster that it was and is. However, I do believe in the authority of the believer to appropriate what is ours in Christ for real and legitimate needs, not greeds. I digress. Here is Chuck Smith speaking on this important topic:

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid=10923>

-Daniel

Re: To Delight in Hiddenness by Francis Frangipane - posted by narrowpath, on: 2020/10/27 14:21

I feel caught out and exposed. My flesh wants recognition and if I would give in I would grieve the Spirit. When I yield to the spirit my flesh starves and screams. I must starve my flesh in order that it can no longer scream but only whisper. I long for the day when the battle is over.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2020/11/3 7:34

Quote:
-----I feel caught out and exposed. My flesh wants recognition and if I would give in I would grieve the Spirit. When I yield to the spirit my flesh starves and screams. I must starve my flesh in order that it can no longer scream but only whisper. I long for the day when the battle is over.

Thank you for your humble confession brother, may the Lord work in all our hearts to grow us closer to Him and abiding with Him for His sake alone.