

Lenten Devotional 2020

Friday, March 13, 2020
Day 15, Exodus 15

Celebration as Formation

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord. (Exodus 15:1)

I have encountered people, who after spending years of study and money, are not interested in going to their graduation. This always puzzles me. Often they will say they don't want the attention or don't need the ceremony. Perhaps that's where the disconnect is for me. Because for me, graduation is a celebration. These achievements are just that achievements and they should, in my opinion, be celebrated!

A parallel thing occurs in the life of a lot of spiritual people. We get to the crisis situation (stuck between the Sea and an army), we cry out for help, help comes, the situation is resolved, life becomes stable again, and we, maybe, say "thanks" to God. We take the whole event for granted. I think we need to look at it all in a whole new light. What if every crisis is a gift from God? Not that God is responsible for everything that befalls us. But, what if God uses every opportunity to grow us?

Well then, we would change the way we look at things. We would ask what God was doing in this crisis. We would come fully expecting God to bring us through it. We would reflect on what God has taught us through the event as a whole. So, we would see how we have grown and been strengthened. Then, it would be natural for us to celebrate the whole situation the way that Moses and Israel does. They aren't celebrating the death of Egypt or their escape, they are celebrating God's faithfulness and that he is on their side! This is the appropriate thing to do after all the work that has led to this moment.

Of course, celebration is not simply a party. It is forming a new expectation in Israel. It is because they have taken the time to rehearse and celebrate God's act of deliverance over Egypt, that they now know God will successfully bring them into the promised land, displacing the other peoples along the way. Israel as a nation is now strong enough for the next leg.

The same is true of us. If we take the time to understand all situations as an opportunity from God to grow deeper and stronger in him, then when we celebrate the result we will know we are ready for what comes next. Because, there is always another challenge around the corner. For Israel it was getting into the desert and finding water they can't drink. For us it will be something else, but no less challenging. If we become a celebrative people then we will be a prepared people for the next step.

Prayer

Our deliverer, we celebrate the way you have rescued and redeemed us through the cross of Christ. Teach us to celebrate the large and small moments when you meet us in difficult times. Prepare us for the next leg of our journey, we pray. Amen.