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Experiencing God Part 6: The Major Problem with Major Adjustments **You must make major adjustments in your life to join God in what He is doing.**

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“7 I have seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. 8 So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land,...9 And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me; furthermore, I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians are oppressing them. 10 Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people...out of Egypt.” Exodus 3:7-10

You need to adjust your life! Duh. Yeah, we need to make major adjustments. Don't you think we would if we could? But what does that look like? Let me tell you: A week ago Friday, on my day off, the calls kept coming, and I couldn't get anything done. I had my list of things. I had Leigh's expectations of what she would've liked to have happen. I had the kids' schedule down. But so many phone calls! Some from people asking to help, and some from old friends we were hoping to see when I perform a wedding in Memphis next week. Leigh and baby Francisco were at U of M Mott Children's Hospital—the best place for a little guy with a heart condition to be. But the calls kept coming. They couldn't get him stabilized. Well, they would...and there was too much to do right now to dwell on it, other than to throw some on-the-move prayers up to God. Besides, we were going to Kankakee for a wedding tomorrow, while the baby was in the ICU recovering. We managed to do the best we could, which was to keep the chaos controlled to a minor level. (There's always the TV cop-out, right?) We were asleep when the phone call came at midnight.

Every plan was out the window. “Didn't the woman from Healing the Children say they'd only lost a couple babies in 1000 surgeries? This can't be happening. Was I simply thinking I was in control? They knew it was his heart and lungs. Isn't that enough for 4 doctors and 10 nurses to succeed at Mott? And the worst one: How do I tell the kids?”

I decided to take time to think through this. I didn't go in and turn on the TV just to medicate myself. I did work on falling back asleep. But as I did, I had these thoughts: “I'm stupid. I'm not in control. I never was in control. I'm totally a sinner. I fall short constantly. But what would happen if I stop fighting it? Rather than trying harder to keep control, what if I concentrate on trusting Jesus, especially now?” I guess that's faith. (You're supposed to be an expert!) And you know what? The more I focused on Jesus, the more I focused on God, the more I was able to move through baby Francisco's death. I'm not done, either). But the more I was able to be in touch with my emotions—including sadness and grief. The more I was able to hold my kids and walk with them through this. I couldn't believe a little 13 month old orphan we'd taken in for only 8 days could affect me so much! It's not supposed to be like this; and yet it's like God did something in me when I kept turning back to him.

It's like that—you see God's truth out there, or God's will, or the right way of doing things, like the Law God gave to Moses. But it's “out there.” And as much as we try, scrap, fight, or climb, we can't get ourselves from here to there. But when we give up, something happens. When we focus on Jesus, and trust him alone. It's like baseball: your goal is to get to first base—that's like the goal of God's will. But it's a long way from home to first. And if you focus on first base, you'll strike out every time. But instead if you keep your eye on

the ball—turning your eyes to Jesus, you’ll find yourself at first base every time. There’s no other way to get there.

My underlying assumption is that I’m pretty capable in most things. Yeah, I rely on God for stuff, but pretty much go on doing my thing, and saying “God bless me, Jesus bless me.” But I’m learning my method of living isn’t really as open to God as I thought. And I’m learning God really is in control. I give up! So I’m saying, (like I’ve said a few times before), “Lord, you’re in control, whether I like it or not. Use me. Lord, you’re in control, whether I like it or not. Use me. Use me to help my family and my friends and the rest of the world get to where you are.” I give up. And I find each time I give up, I experience God more. So, you could say it’s a major adjustment. The major ones happen from the inside out.

Jesus showed us that. He being God came from heaven (and all the benefits there) to earth (and all the liabilities and problems here). God has made every adjustment we need for us to experience his love and goodness. This summer we’re in the process of major adjustments in our thinking—as individuals and as a church. We’re not playing “same ole, same ole.” This church is here to tell you that God has not changed. God still speaks to people. And we mean to be a beacon of light and hope for people in our area—that they would come to see the love of God, his faithfulness, and his truth. And that truth is not a concept, but a person—Jesus. Jesus said “I am the truth.”

Jesus also said “I am the way.” He did not say “I will show you the way,” or “I will give you road map,” or “I will tell you which direction to head.” He said “I am the way.” Jesus knows the way; He is your way. Christianity is not a religion. It’s not a “thing” you do on Sundays. It’s a way of relating to God and thus to the world. When you get to the place where you trust Jesus to guide you one step at a time you experience a new freedom.

I’ve found recently in my life that I can release the way to Him. Then I take care of everything He tells me one day at a time; like telling the kids. We shared what happened, and approached it as though God is still in control! We shared what happened, we held each other, and we prayed, with God still in the middle of all of it! And it was amazing. It was one of the closest, best times I’ve ever had with Leigh and the kids. So now I make him the center, whether I do anything church-related or not! If you want to experience God, stay close to Him and make Him the center. Nothing else can compare.

When God is about to do something through you, He has to get you from where you are to where He is. That’s today’s truth. You and I must make major adjustments in our lives to join God in what He is doing.

Usually, we don’t want to change our lives. We’re comfortable. And we worked too darn hard to be this miserable! ☺ We’ve worked hard to create our lives the way we want them to be! After all, God’s given us great creativity, wonderful opportunities, and helpful resources to create a beautiful life right here. Two problems: First, when we move down this road very far, we just want to be entertained and amused and to think good thoughts. Second, we miss out on experiencing God in anything remotely exciting. Listen—when the best part of your day is finding a new way around construction traffic, it’s time for a major adjustment! ☺ Look at our Scripture:

“7 I have seen the affliction of My people who are in Egypt, and have given heed to their cry because of their taskmasters, for I am aware of their sufferings. God says “I have taken a good, long look at the affliction of my people in Egypt. I’ve heard their cries for deliverance from their slave masters; I know all about their pain.”

1. God sees. God knows. God “gives heed” he cares. You may be saying “Yea, right. You have no idea what I’m going through. There’s no way God understands. I’m so overwhelmed I’m numb. If that’s your prayer, you’re not alone. It’s not like you’re experiencing something no one else has. Listen to some verses from our Holy Scriptures:

- a. *Psalm 40:12 “For troubles without number surround me; my sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails within me.”*

- b. *Psalm 69:1 “Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. 2 I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. (I know how this feels. Last night, I was putting the wheelbarrow away in the garage. I stepped on a skateboard and lost my footing. The wheelbarrow went flying, the skateboard shot out in front of me, and I flew up in the air and landed on my backside. I was so angry! And then I laughed because it was just like a cartoon. But you may be here this morning just as angry). I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me. 3 I am worn out calling for help; my throat is parched. My eyes fail, looking for my God. 4 Those who hate me without reason outnumber the hairs of my head; many are my enemies without cause, those who seek to destroy me. I am forced to restore what I did not steal.”*
- c. It’s simply not fair. Jesus knows that. God does know where you are. God sees you. God loves to watch you, because he loves you!
- d. Jesus said in Matthew 10:29 *“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”* Do you hear? God cares. God sees.

“8 So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and spacious land,” God says, *“And now I have come down to help them, pry them loose from the grip of Egypt, get them out of that country and bring them to a good land with wide-open spaces, a land lush with milk and honey...”*

2. **God has come to deliver us from evil.** If you feel powerless to change, if you feel powerless to adjust your life to God’s ideals, you’re right where He wants you. Stop fighting it. Stop thinking you have to be your own savior. Did you catch it? God says *“I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians.”*
- a. We’re SO in bondage to our past...even the part we hate.
 - b. (For some, dropping our anger is a major adjustment. For some, leaving work on time is a major adjustment. For some, turning off the TV...)
 - c. We prefer the hell of a predictable situation rather than risk the joy of an unpredictable one.
 - d. Whether you’re stuck because of the circumstances that surround you or whether your stuck because of the evil within you that you don’t even struggle against, God says *“I have come for you.”* And that’s something you and I can respond to!

10 Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh”, God tells Moses, *“It’s time for you to go back: I’m sending you to Pharaoh”. Yikes.*

3. God sends us to help.

- a. God may be sending you back to your past to heal you. Don’t be afraid, because this time you go with God. And God may also use your weakness to deliver others in His name. He’s simply inviting us to help.
- b. What if you and I “lived to help?” What would happen if you looked at every situation from a God-in-control worldview? If you’ve entered into that love relationship with Jesus and accepted the free gift of salvation He’s given, you have God’s Holy Spirit living in you. Everywhere you go, there He is! What if you saw every situation you face as God’s Holy Spirit coming on the scene
- c. In other words, you’re not entering a situation empty-handed. By adjusting your life, you and I can enter with God’s presence.
- d. *Romans 8:28 “ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God who works together with those who love him to bring about what is good-- with those who have been called according to his purpose.”*

10 Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people...out of Egypt.”

4. God gives us God-sized assignments.

- e. If you want to experience God, you have to do something beyond yourself. Otherwise if it's something you can do in your own strength, God can leave you alone. Only when you attempt something only God can do will you see God come through.
- f. Moses' assignment was God-sized. Leading a whole people-group out of a hostile country was a God-sized assignment. And you may feel like you're facing a God-sized assignment. Maybe you and your spouse need to talk without getting defensive. That's God-sized. Maybe you need to reconcile with a child who's walked away from your family. That's God-sized. Maybe you need to orient your life around something besides your addiction; or your work. That's God-sized. Maybe you need to put God back in the middle. That's God-sized. If we choose,

5. We adjust.

- a. We can't stay where we are and go with God at the same time.
- b. Our world is not seeing God because we're not attempting anything that only God can do.

The major adjustment will come at the point of acting on your faith. Do you think God might be calling you to a costly adventure of faith? How will you respond? Will you say "Yes, Lord," or will you say "No, that costs too much."

Is God calling you to take another step on your spiritual journey? It may be that adjustment nobody will ever see because it's an adjustment that's internal versus external. Maybe it's a new opportunity, maybe it's a common duty, maybe it's something done differently, maybe it's forgiveness. You *know* you are standing at a crossroad. This church is at a crossroads. Blessing is marked one way, bitterness is marked the other. Don't do what Moses did when he first heard God's voice. He only heard "*Come, I will send you to Pharaoh.*" He missed the first half of the sentence when God says "*I see you and hear you, and I have come down to deliver them,* so I am sending you." Our world is not seeing God because we're not attempting anything that only God can do.

We are going to take a few minutes for prayer and response now. We've built it in to the service. One of the best ways to make adjustments is to put yourself in a position of leadership for the sake of Christ. We have 40 great opportunities at the beginning of the fall for you to be a small group leader for 40 Days of Community. You'll receive training and tools. You provide the talent and the willingness. Basically you'll be in a group of friends, all committed to experiencing God, growing in their faith, and encouraging one another to do the same. It's a major adjustment for many of us. But let us remember God is the one who wills according to his good purpose that all may know they've been delivered.