

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Letter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 NKJV)*

Volume 10, Issue 7

July 2012

## Moving On

Art Nelson

### Introduction

In our last issue we talked about being “Unprepared” for the plans and purposes of God and the circumstances of change through which God takes us. This issue will look at moving on in the things of the Lord.

Our tendency is to settle in place and get comfortable; however, this is a mistake unless we have reached the end of the journey. Our best example of this is the children of Israel leaving Egypt to go to Canaan, the promised land. The Lord moved in mighty power to deliver them from Egypt in order that He could take them to the land that He had promised. However, as we saw in the last issue of our Present Truth Teaching Letter, their expectations were their downfall and had to be dealt with severely in the wilderness. As they moved from camp to camp toward the promised land, they left behind the garbage of the previous camp to go to the freshness of the new camp.

### Changing with the Move of God

Our God is an active, present tense God. He is not just a God of the past or a God of the future, but He is “I AM”, the God of the present. He has purpose and direction in all that He does. Because of His nature, He is doing something among His people that is in accordance with the mystery of His will and He doesn't ask our permission concerning His actions. Even if we don't like or even understand what God is doing, it is always wonderful when God moves. When He takes action, it means that things begin to change. When something new occurs that also means that we have to change in order to keep up with what the Lord is doing. One of the best examples of this is Abraham.

*Acts 7:2-5 NASB*

- (2) And he said, "Hear me, brethren and fathers! The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran,
- (3) and said to him, 'LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY AND YOUR RELATIVES, AND COME INTO THE LAND THAT I WILL SHOW YOU.'

- (4) "Then he left the land of the Chaldeans and settled in Haran. From there, after his father died, *God* had him move to this country in which you are now living.
- (5) "But He gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot of ground, and *yet*, even when he had no child, He promised that HE WOULD GIVE IT TO HIM AS A POSSESSION, AND TO HIS DESCENDANTS AFTER HIM.

God sovereignly intervened in Abraham's life, which required major change in Abraham and his circumstances. First, God's instructions are clear: Abraham must leave his country and he must leave his relatives in order to go into the land that God wanted to show him. Abraham was only partially obedient. He left his land but he didn't leave his relatives.

Abraham's entire family left Mesopotamia and settled in Haran. And there they stayed until Abraham's father died. Then, Abraham continued on with the Lord but he still took Lot with him, which caused him a lot of trouble later. The interesting thing is Haran is about half way from Mesopotamia, the land of the Chaldeans, to the land that God wanted to give Abraham and his descendants.

To leave all that we know as Abraham did is one of the most difficult things that we can do. He had to leave his familiar, comfortable place and go into the unknown with only the promise of God. Maybe, that was why he kept some of his family with him, so that he wouldn't be completely alone.

All progress that we make in God requires change and change is difficult. Each time that this occurs, it presents us with a new set of challenges, We face a new set of problems, a new set of issues, a new set of adjustments. The moment that we get comfortable with the new circumstances, the Lord moves on requiring us to continue to change and adjust to his purpose.

The only way that we can reach the future is to let go of the past. As long as we cling to the past we can never reach the future. We end up in Haran—half way there. Many times God will use someone to push us. We need someone to do that to us even though God is speaking to us and revealing His plans to us, we have to overcome that initial resistance to change. Nobody changes because they want to; people change because they have to.

## **Five Areas of Adjustment**

Whether we like it or not, moving on with God requires change. If we want to move on in God, there are five areas where we will need to make adjustments and change.

1. To fulfill His purposes we must be willing to adjust our life, our beliefs, our plans, and even to adjust where we live, if necessary.
2. We must be willing to adjust any or all of our circumstances, including our work, our finances, our recreation, all of the things that surround us on a daily basis.
3. We must be willing to adjust our relationships, including our business relationships, our social relationships (our friends), and any prejudices that we hold. God is no respecter of persons—He holds no prejudices, neither can we. Our methodology of creating relationships may also need to change. The Lord doesn't establish relationships through networking but through His Spirit.
4. We must be willing to adjust our predispositions, traditions, and doctrines, including how

the family is structured, how the father is supposed to act, what it means to be a husband or a wife.

5. We must be willing to adjust our beliefs and our actions. As we move on in God our actions change according to our understanding of the ways of God and if we hold incorrect beliefs, we have to adjust to the truth of His Word.

These areas of adjustment encompass all aspects of our life. As the Lord of all Heaven and Earth becomes our personal Lord, He will touch any or all of these different areas to instigate change in us. This is absolutely necessary for the renewing of our minds, changing our thinking processes and conforming us to His image.

## Follow Me

Jesus repeatedly told His disciples to “follow me”. He expects all of us who believe Him to also follow Him. As a matter of fact, He made following Him a requirement for service to Him.

### John 12:26 NASB

- (26) "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

I have heard it said by some preachers that we follow the Lord blindly not knowing where He is going. That is simply not true. The Scriptures tell us exactly where the Lord is going and how we are to follow Him. We don't blindly follow but we do have to completely trust the Lord.

When Jesus walked the earth as the Son of God, He had a purpose to fulfill. A purpose that was given to Him by the Father. He had a body that was prepared for Himself to be offered as a sacrifice [*Hebrews 10:5*]. Jesus' physical journey was to the cross, a place of death. This was necessary for Him to fulfill the spiritual aspect of the journey—to be the everlasting sacrifice, to atone for sin. This is the same journey we take when we follow Him.

### Luke 9:23-24 NASB

- (23) And He was saying to *them* all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.
- (24) "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

### Matthew 10:38 NASB

- (38) "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

It is when we deny ourselves and embrace the cross that we die to our old nature and then we are capable of following Him. We are then able to present our bodies as a living sacrifice which is acceptable to the Lord [*Romans 12:1*]. This requires dramatic change and adjustment in our lives. If you think that you can follow the Lord without this then you are living a fantasy life.

Once we begin to follow the Lord in this manner, we learn that there is another objective that has been hidden to us. There was another aspect of the Lord's journey that we have neglected. After His death, the Lord, as our High Priest, carried His atoning blood into the heavenly Temple and then took His seat with the Father.

### Hebrews 9:24-26 NASB

- (24) For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;
- (25) nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own.
- (26) Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Now, we are also to follow Him in a similar manner. Not as a High Priest but as priests of God we are to enter the Holiest of Holiest through His flesh.

### Hebrews 10:19-22 NASB

- (19) Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus,
- (20) by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh,
- (21) and since *we have* a great priest over the house of God,
- (22) let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

We are to follow Him into the very presence of God to a place of intimacy with God. This is the end goal of following Jesus. We will be different people by the end of the journey than we were at the beginning. By the end we will look like Jesus because we will be like Him, conformed to His image.

Any one of us can look at himself now and see how much change is required. We must forget those things that are behind and press on, move on to the glory that will be revealed. We must let go of the past, hurts, disappointment, tragedies, even successes in order to lose our life so that we can find it in Him.

© 2003-2012 by Art Nelson and [Lifestream Teaching Ministries](http://www.LifestreamTeaching.com)

Previous issues of Present Truth are on the website: [www.Lifestreamteaching.com](http://www.Lifestreamteaching.com)

For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:

[artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com](mailto:artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com)

You have permission to copy and distribute these materials provided:

- 1) no changes are made to the content, and, 2) they are not sold.

#### **Removal instructions:**

This is a free teaching letter, without cost or obligation.

If you have received this teaching letter in error or if you desire not to receive "Present Truth" teaching letter please reply with "remove" in the subject area.