

Humility: The Freedom that Comes when Pride Goes

Part 4: A Personal Invitation

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Full Text (for reading on your own)

How this Came About

When Peter was talking about a month ago, I was sitting in my seat and was so excited because so much of what Peter was talking about was in a book that I wrote on the wilderness - about the Israelites who went through the wilderness to the promised land. So I called Peter to share the things with him and he said “do you want to share it on a Sunday?” He said “just a little bit” but as he said, in the past few weeks, the “little bit” became the whole sermon.

The title is “A Personal Invitation.”

A Personal Invitation

This message is going to be so simple; don't let it deceive you.

This message is also very individual. It's not just “an invitation” but it is a “personal invitation.”

Erin set it up so well in worship singing “who's going to sing my song? No one but me can lift up my praise.” Every one of us needs to be saying that because God spoke to me years ago about our church saying our church is going to be a “birthing center” - that He wants to do something with this church, but it's only going to happen as each of us individually heed His call on our life.

It's going to come first individually. There is going to be an individual revival within each of us, first, then it is going to happen corporately. But it won't happen without the individual.

Here's a practical: when Derrick and Erin stopped the instruments and just had each of us singing, imagine if none of us sang, or just one of us sang, or if just five of us sang - how would it sound? But what does it sound like when we all go for it unashamedly?

The same thing happens Wednesday nights when we pray in the Spirit at women's group. One night Erin was not there and God said to me “I don't want people relying on Erin.” Just like He doesn't want us relying on Peter, Derrick, or Erin. We can't go where God wants to take us if we are relying on them.

A Kairos Time

I believe in the deepest part of my heart that we are in a kairos time. I've known this for a while because of so many different things that are happening - so many that I couldn't possibly get into all of them right now, but so many things that I know that we are.

And I know what "kairos" means. Regarding the simplicity of this message, don't do what I did with kairos. For the last week and a half I was thinking "I know what kairos means; I don't need to look it up" but Holy Spirit kept saying "look it up." So finally, last night, I looked it up, just to see.

I always thought kairos means "an opportune time" ... and it does. But when I looked it up, it said "an opportune time for action." I went "woh!"

And who's action is God asking for? Each person in here individually.

"He just wants you to invite Him in"

Again, this is called a personal invitation, but to what? An invitation to what?

God wants in more.

He wants in more. Do you see how simple this is?

He wants in the smallest parts of your life to the biggest parts of your life. He wants in more to the good and the bad.

This is the one statement that I want you to remember "He just wants you to invite Him in." That statement I know is straight from the heart of the Father because I was preparing this message, that's the statement He gave me. Then I prepared the message over several days and then thought "I haven't heard Peter's message for a month ... so I opened up his message and do you know what the title of that message was?"

"He just wants you to invite Him in." That was another "woh" moment!

As I was reading Peter's message I thought "I must not have said it exactly like that" because you could say it "He wants you to invite Him in" or "He just wants us to invite Him in" or "He's wanting you to invite Him in." There are so many different ways to say that. Nope. They were both phrased exactly the same: "He just wants you to invite Him in."

I could also say the same thing this way "this is a personal invitation to humility."

Do you know why? Because humility is nothing more than this: today total dependence on God.

Humility: Total Dependence on God

Humility is nothing more than this: today total dependence on God.

The problem is we don't realize how independent we are. The part of our soul (mind, will, emotions) that hasn't been totally sanctified yet tends to default to independence. We tend to default to Genesis 3 "you will be like God." We do that because we fall into the same thing that Eve did: that sometimes we don't think God is trustworthy, faithful, or has our backs ... so we have to take care of ourselves.

This past Wednesday I was talking with Brenda who in her humble way started to laugh as I was talking about dependence on God, saying "you are so talking to me." I came back to that and said "what do you mean I'm talking to you?" and she said "as you are talking about dependence I feel like a life line has been taken away." We both laughed and I said "oh my gosh, Brenda, that's the exact opposite of how we should feel but I feel the same way!"

God was revealing in that moment was the thoughts that we do have about Him sometimes to the deepest part of our being - that I have to take care of things because He won't.

So I said to Brenda "do you know what? This is good because when God reveals, He reveals to heal." So we want that coming up.

So when we say "total dependence on God" or when Bill Johnson says "I want more of You God at any cost." I can't say that, so why can't I say that? Obviously I am not totally and completely depending on Him and trusting on Him.

So we have Genesis 3 vs. Proverbs 3.

We all know it, right? "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*"

Leaning on our own understanding is the flesh. It's pride; it's independence from God.

In one commentary I read, you can translate "ways" into "days." Also, "acknowledge" is "knowing." It's a direct, intimate, contact. So we can take that scripture and say "in all of your days, maintain direct, intimate contact with God.

Dependency: Not for Difficulty Only

Recently I was talking with someone because they were in a crisis and God led me to dependence scriptures - because that's where He's had me for several months. So, I wrote out these dependence scriptures for this person. I shared them with them verbally but I wanted to write them down so I

took a piece of paper and wrote down the references but I had never gotten the whole verses written down for this person.

So one night, I was sitting there and I opened up my bible and I saw the paper and said “oh, that’s right; there’s those dependence scriptures. I never typed them up. Oh, but they don’t need them any more because they are out of the crisis.”

All of Heaven went “woh.”

I thought “oh my gosh, God, I am SO sorry that I would think that just because the person is out of the crisis that they don’t need these dependence scriptures any more.” It was revealing to me “oh, we only need Him when we are in the hard times” but He immediately said “stay forever dependent.”

Then He gave me immediately 3 scriptures out of Deuteronomy. This is Moses’ farewell address. He’s the one who led the people out of Egypt into the promised land so as he is giving his farewell address, we should listen to what he has to say.

In one of the places Moses says “beware (when you get into the promised land, into the good times) beware lest you forget.” I know we all sit here and think “I would never forget God.” Then why would Moses say “beware?”

In another place, he also says “and you shall remember the Lord your God.”

And then in another place he says “take heed to yourselves lest your heart be deceived.”

So, “take heed, beware, don’t forget God.” Why would he be so emphatic? Because he knows it’s our tendency to forget.

Examples of Dependence: Jesus

So I want to look at a couple of people and examples of dependence because that’s what God’s calling us to: greater dependence on Him. Remember, He just wants you to invite Him in. It’s a kairos time.

Of course, who is our perfect example of dependence on the Father? Jesus says in John 5:19 *“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.”* Likewise in v. 30 Jesus says *“I can of Myself do nothing.”* A book I was reading said this “this statement reveals the dependence Jesus had on an intimate relationship with the Father.”

Remember, in all of our days, maintain a direct, intimate contact with the Father. “If Jesus, the divine Son could do nothing apart from intimate relationship with the Father, how much less will we do without Him?”

When I read that it hit me between the eyes. I obviously think I can do some things without the Father because if I didn't think that, why am I not with Him as much as Jesus was with Him. If Jesus Christ had to be with the Father as much as He was (sometimes spending all night in prayer) what makes me think I don't need to?

Examples of Dependence: Moses

Moses is one of my favorite people in the Bible. To see his relationship with God ... I've read about Moses over and over and over in the writing of my book, but just last night again I was reading about him and again I just saw his relationship with our Father. God's partnership with Moses shows the love and care and patience of our Father with us.

So let's look at Moses because he's a fabulous example of someone who was totally prideful and became totally dependent.

We probably all know the story of Moses. He was raised by pharaoh's daughter so he was raised with all the things you can get in the king's palace. It says in Acts that Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was very eloquent." He was, in a way, full of himself.

So at 40 years old he goes out and sees an Egyptian beating up one of his people (a Hebrew) and what does he do? He kills the Egyptian and this is what it says "for he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand but they did not understand." Moses wasn't saying "God's hand."

Now, was God going to use Moses to deliver them? Yes.

But Moses went before the Presence.

What happened? Moses ended up in the desert for 40 years. Why? Pride.

Moses was acting independently of God. Did God disqualify him at that moment? Nope. So God just sent him to the desert for 40 years.

Then God calls him at the burning bush. Now God is saying "OK, now it is time."

Moses responds "who am I that I should go?" God was saying "now it is time. Now you are going to do what you tried to do 40 years ago on your own ... but now it's time because, yes, you are called to be the deliverer - and now you're going to do it."

Moses' response was "who am I that I should go?" Notice that God did not respond to him saying anything about who Moses was - nothing!

This is what God said "I will *certainly* be with you."

Moses still said “I don’t think I can do this. Who should I say is sending me?”

God said “I AM.”

I AM the Lord Yahweh. The Intimate One. This is the first time the Israelites would ever get to know that Name of God. The Intimate One - the One Who wants to be Whoever you need Him to be whenever you need it!

Then Moses says “what if they don’t believe that You’ve really sent me?” So God did the whole thing with the rod: “take this rod, turn it in to a snake, pick it back up and it won’t be. Take your hand, put it in your bosom, it will become leporous, put it back in again and it won’t be leporous. Take the water from the river, put it on the ground and it will become blood.”

Moses still says *“O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”* (Ex. 4:10)

I would encourage you to go read this whole interplay between Moses and God.

So God says “don’t worry about it! I’ve got you!”

This time God gets more specific. He doesn’t just say “I will be with you.” He says “I will be with your mouth and I will teach you what to say.”

Moses again said “God can’t you send someone else?”

Now, some people would think this is humility, but it’s not!

Back when Moses said “who am I that I should go.” When God said “I will certainly be with you” - right there was the choice between pride and humility! Humility says “I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Moses didn’t get it and it says God was angry with him, but God still didn’t give up on him! God says “OK, you’re still going, but Aaron, your brother is on his way. He will be your mouthpiece.” So God still worked with him, even in that.

But Moses got to a point when they got to the Red Sea and the Israelites were all saying “we can’t cross” and Moses was saying “yes we can because God will deliver us!” Moses had finally learned to depend on God!

Moses got to a point in the wilderness where he said “I’m not going into the promised land unless Your Presence goes with us.” We can read that and think “oh that’s really cool” but how about when we are in our wildernesses? None of us like the wilderness. The wilderness is a really hard place to be, but have we gotten to that place with God where we say “I will stay right here even if it means the

rest of my life if You don't go with me out of this wilderness." That's the kind of intimacy Moses ended up with with God.

He just wants you to invite Him in.

He just wants more humility. He just wants more dependence.

For what He wants to do here in our body - this is what the kairos time is right now. He just wants you to invite Him in.

Let's Get Practical

I had forgotten that months ago God was talking to me about this. I love how he will talk with you about something and you'll forget it and then He's so patient and will come back and talk with you about it some more.

Months ago He was saying to me how He wants to be glorified more through His people. We can look at a beautiful sunset and glorify God through it. We can look at a beautiful waterfall and God gets the glory but He says "My human creation, I want to get more glory out of them as they step into the fullness of who they are, but the only way that's going to happen is if I can get in more." I was asking Him several months ago "how do we do that God? I hear what You are saying. It makes sense to me, but how do we do that?"

Then a few weeks later I was totally forgetting about that whole thing and I was listening to a Bill Johnson teaching and he said that about 20 years ago a voice woke him up and said "I will watch your watch if you'll watch Me." Bill Johnson said "it's the kind of worship where we will just give ourselves to God." As he (Bill) is speaking, this voice came out of nowhere and spoke to me "that's how you invite Me in more." I went "oh my gosh!"

So that's one way - to worship Him with abandon. I'm not just talking about on Sunday mornings. I am talking about with our lives. Just worship Him with abandon! That's how you will have more of Him in you.

The second way is to just do it, just go after it. For example, when I was driving to church about a month ago (I've already shared this that Sunday at the end of worship) I was pondering homeschooling my grandsons and struggling with some unrest about it. I don't know if I can do this justice, but I will try ... As I was driving along sort of belaboring this "what do I do?" and it's almost as if God was sitting in the passenger seat and He said "will you invite me in?"

It was a "woh" moment and it brought me to tears because it was so invasive ... but it was invasive in a way that was SO liberating! He was saying in such a fatherly, gentle-but-strong way: "you're going over all this but trust in the Lord with all your heart; lean not on your own understanding."

What was I doing? “Lean not on your own understanding. In all your days maintain intimate contact with Me and I will direct your paths. You don’t think I know what’s going on with the homeschooling thing? Invite Me in.”

So as you are thinking about things, stop yourself and just say “hey, wait a minute, am I including God in this?”

Because the 2 examples with Moses are around this exact issue. When he said “hey I can do this” and then killed the Egyptian, he didn’t have God in the equation. But when Moses said “I can’t do this, he didn’t have God in the equation.” So we just want to make sure in our lives “do we have God in the equation?” In the littlest things too.

Then at work the other day, someone was having a difficulty. I overheard the conversation they were having and I went “oh yeah! He just wants you to invite Him in!”

So I went to this person and asked them “hey, did you by chance ask the Holy Spirit to help you with this dilemma that you got?” They said “no, I forget to do that.” I said “we all do.” I’m not saying we forget Him all the time or anything; all I’m saying is “He wants more!” In those little things where you are thinking about something just stop and say “wait a second, have I asked You, God, to help me on this?”

Testimony about Trying this Out

It’s been amazing what’s been happening to me in the last month and a half since I’ve been doing this; I’ve been testing it out.

So the other day, I was talking to somebody and I wasn’t feeling too good about them ... just some things that had happened and transpired in our conversation. So I thought “I’m going to try this out. I don’t know how it’s going to work in this situation. So I got off the phone and said “OK God, I’m going to invite You in.”

It doesn’t always happen right away and I can’t remember all the examples (from the past month and a half) because there have been so many, but within about a minute or two I started feeling love for that person and the yuckiness that I was feeling about them just went away!

So as we invite Him in, He will do things. It’s not like He’ll always talk to us; He might just change our hearts toward someone. But I have to invite Him in.

Let’s Get Practical (cont.)

So the first way is worshipping Him - giving ourselves to God in worship.

The second way is to just do it - to invite Him in!

The third way is to study the names of God because the names of God will help us to get that “He’s got us covered.” These are just a few of His Names:

- Jehovah-jireh. He’s our Provider.
- Jehovah Mekoddish. He’s our Sanctifier
- Jehovah-nissi. He’s our Banner of victory.
- Jehovah-Rapha. He’s our Healer
- Jehovah-Shalom. He’s our Peace.
- Jehovah Tsidkenu. He’s our Righteousness.
- Jehovah-Raah. He’s our Shepherd.
- Jehovah Shammah. He’s Ever-present (The One Who’s There!)
- El Roi. He’s the God who sees me.

When we study the names of God, we realize He covers it all!

Another way is to seek Him in the hard places. I remember one time I was feeling rejected and God had been speaking to me about seeking Him and it was so interesting ... God said “seek Me right now.” I said “what do you mean right now?” He said “in this rejection. Seek Me.” So I just stopped and said “I don’t know what this looks like or how to do it but I am going to just sit right here in Your Presence and seek you in this rejection.” The rejection went and He just filled me up with His presence.

He just wants you to invite Him in.

The welcoming prayer can be very powerful when we are feeling something we don’t want to feel. We all have this tendency when we are feeling something we don’t want to feel - whether it’s loneliness, depression, anxiety, or whatever - to want to push it away. Well the welcoming prayer says “don’t push it away. Go ahead and embrace it.”

I remember years ago, this one time, I was feeling some real loneliness and I was doing what we all do - trying to push it away - and God said “embrace it.” I was like “embrace it!?” He said “just embrace it. Stop pushing it away. Stop running away from it. Just embrace it.” Then in the welcoming prayer, you invite Him in. This practice will change your life because it is inviting Him into that place. We are not doing it alone, we are saying “God come in.”

Just this morning God reminded me of another strategy for inviting Him in. It's the quiet time. On Wednesdays (Women of Agathos) we have a time of praying in the Spirit and then we get quiet. If we are always talking, talking, talking, how can God talk?

We were praying in the Spirit, and then we got quiet and in my back yard I could hear the birds chirping. The peace was so there! Off in the distance, however, I could hear the cars rushing back and forth. God showed me the two "realms."

The one realm (which we do have to live in. We do have to go here and go there. He is not saying to sit at home and do nothing forever) - that is one realm we do live in. But there is another realm that we need more of and that's the quiet. Just getting quiet before Him.

We started doing this at our Wednesdays a long time ago and you feel sometimes in the quiet like nothing's happen and God spoke a long time ago "there can be more that happens in nothing and quiet than in all the activity."

Then I heard Heidi Baker speak one day and she said exactly the same thing ... that in the quiet, God can do more than in all the activity.

But this last Wednesday, during the quiet time, God said this "I am calling My people to this. I want to speak." God wants to speak. We've got to carve out some of our days where are just quiet and still - because "He just wants you to invite Him in."

Just give Him room.

Consecration (from Erin)

The Lord has been speaking through several prophets worldwide about consecration. I've really been wrestling with that. Like "what on earth does that mean? That scares me. I'm intimidated." I believe this is what it means. So just us coming together as a family, as a body, but also as individuals.

So let's just take a moment and be in the presence of the Lord in the quiet and I'd like to have the microphone off and let's pray as a family together - and as individuals - to commit to this. Whatever that means to each one of us. "Lord, we invite You in."