

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 6, Issue 5

May 2008

Proceeding Word

Art Nelson

Introduction

We all know and understand that there is a maturing process in the Lord. In the Scriptures John describes three stages to this process: children, young men, and fathers. In each of these stages there are specific things that we have to learn in order to grow up and fulfill our calling in God.

The first two verses of Hebrews chapter six gives us six elementary principles of Christ; six foundation stones which we lay in our lives and then continue on to maturity. But the key to doing this is in the third verse.

[Hebrews 6:3 NASB](#)

(3) And this we will do, if God permits.

We forget that our maturing process is directed and controlled by God. We supply the motivation but He supplies the revelation. If there are big holes in our foundation, He does not permit us to move on. Our Heavenly Father does not allow anyone into His Business that He doesn't think is ready; that is, anyone that doesn't have a father's heart and a renewed mind.

We are being prepared to participate in the purposes of God—the fulfilling of His plans and promises. When we have been prepared in some areas, the Lord will give us a *proceeding word* that will bring us into a place of practicing that which we have been prepared to do.

A proceeding word is only received when God permits us to go on. A proceeding word takes us into our destiny, our calling. It also takes us into tribulation, trials, opposition, enemy resistance and frustration. We must have been prepared beforehand to handle these things or we will have a tendency to become discouraged and let our calling fall away. This is dangerous territory, which is why the next few verses of Hebrews six warn us about the seriousness of it.

[Hebrews 6:4-6 NASB](#)

(4) For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

- (5) and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,
(6) and *then* have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

If a person who has matured in the areas listed falls away (this is a willful turning away from the Lord) it is impossible to renew them again to repentance.¹ This is why God doesn't necessarily permit people to go on into the deeper things of God. It is dangerous to the immature and the unprepared.

Proceeding Word Defined

A proceeding word is a particular type of “rhema” word, that is, a “quickened”, fresh spoken word from the Holy Spirit. We receive “rhema” words as the Lord brings revelation of the meaning and application of the written, recorded word to us and our circumstances. As we grow up in the Lord, we receive many “rhema” words from the Holy Spirit applying the Lord's teaching to our lives—making the word flesh in us as it was in Jesus.

However, there comes a day when we begin to come into the responsibilities of sonship. We have grown up in the family of believers but it is now time to “get a job”, to be “employed” in the Kingdom of God, to begin to fulfill our calling by doing the works prepared for us from the foundation of the world. This is when the Holy Spirit brings to us a *proceeding word* that takes us into our work in the Kingdom.

There are three primary characteristics of a proceeding word:

1. it is *always* deposited in us before it is confirmed by others;
2. it is *always* directional in its scope and nature;
3. it is *always* dependent upon the power of the Lord for it to be done.

The result is that it *always* moves you toward the fulfillment of your destiny in the Lord.

A proceeding word comes as our preparation process reaches a point where we can be trusted by God to be obedient to His word and walk in the power of the Spirit. Our character has made progress toward becoming more like Jesus and we are able to be used by the Lord without becoming lifted up in pride.

The Example of Moses

The Scriptures make it clear that Moses had within him a sense of His purpose and calling—that he was to be a deliverer of the people of God from the oppression of Egypt. Remember, Moses was not a heathen. He was one of the people of God even though he had been raised in Pharaoh's court.

[Acts 7:22-25 NASB](#)

(22) "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a

¹ II Timothy 2:25 speaks of God granting repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth. We have a false idea that we can repent at any time; however, that is not the case. God is sovereign and grants repentance according to His foreknowledge. Hebrews 12:17 tells of Esau seeking repentance with tears but God did not grant it. We should fear lest our easy grace mentality cause us to lose the inheritance.

man of power in words and deeds.

(23) "But when he was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel.

(24) "And when he saw one *of them* being treated unjustly, he defended him and took vengeance for the oppressed by striking down the Egyptian.

(25) "And he supposed that his brethren understood that God was granting them deliverance through him, but they did not understand.

Moses' real problems started when he tried to enter into his destiny by his natural understanding and the arm of the flesh. He acted on what had been deposited in his heart by God; but his actions arose from his natural strength and not by the direction and power of God. He also supposed that others of the people of God would understand his calling and destiny. Of course, they didn't understand. You cannot fulfill your God given destiny through the flesh.

When Moses attempted to fulfill his calling without a proceeding word from God, it created a set of circumstances that forced Moses to flee. He then entered into a forty year preparation time herding sheep on the backside of the desert. (Notice that his Egyptian education, the finest that the world had to offer, did not prepare him to enter into his calling.)

Moses, in the timing of God, received his proceeding word at the burning bush. (Note: the NASB puts quotes from the Old Testament in all caps in the New Testament.)

Acts 7:30-35 NASB

(30) "After forty years had passed, AN ANGEL APPEARED TO HIM IN THE WILDERNESS OF MOUNT Sinai, IN THE FLAME OF A BURNING THORN BUSH.

(31) "When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he approached to look *more* closely, there came the voice of the Lord:

(32) 'I AM THE GOD OF YOUR FATHERS, THE GOD OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC AND JACOB.' Moses shook with fear and would not venture to look.

(33) "BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.

(34) 'I HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN THE OPPRESSION OF MY PEOPLE IN EGYPT AND HAVE HEARD THEIR GROANS, AND I HAVE COME DOWN TO RESCUE THEM; COME NOW, AND I WILL SEND YOU TO EGYPT.'

(35) "This Moses whom they disowned, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE?' is the one whom God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the help of the angel who appeared to him in the thorn bush.

Moses was going about his normal daily routine when he saw a bush burning that did not burn up, so he turned aside to see what was happening, which set the stage for God to speak to him and give him a proceeding word. God works with us the same way. When we are prepared properly, He will interrupt our routine with something that draws our attention and then He will speak our proceeding word and we will enter into our destiny.

After receiving the proceeding word, Moses got his affairs in order with Jethro, his father-in-law and began the journey to Egypt in obedience to God. On the way, the Lord stopped him.

Exodus 4:24 NASB

(24) Now it came about at the lodging place on the way that the LORD met him and sought to put him to death.

This Scripture says that the Lord sought to kill Moses. (Of course, He didn't try very hard or Moses would have been dead!) Now, this is a serious thing since Moses was only moving forward in obedience according to the proceeding word that God had given him. What had happened?

Even though Moses had been personally prepared for his calling, he had not fully prepared his family. He had not been fully obedient to the commands of God as they relate to his son.

Exodus 4:25-26 NASB

(25) Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses' feet, and she said, "You are indeed a bridegroom of blood to me."

(26) So He let him alone. At that time she said, "*You are* a bridegroom of blood"--because of the circumcision.

A proceeding word does not excuse us from the requirements of the covenant of God: circumcision of the flesh for Moses' son and circumcision of the heart for us. The Lord will not allow us to complete our destiny even after He gives us a proceeding word if we are neglecting the prerequisites of the covenant.

Once a proceeding word is in place, it is in place until it is accomplished. We can see this also in Moses' mission. After leading the children of Israel out of Egypt, Moses begins to take them toward the promised land by the standard caravan route. However God stops him and tells him to turn back and take them in a different direction in order to set up Pharaoh and his army for destruction.

Exodus 14:1-4 NASB

(1) Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

(2) "Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and camp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; you shall camp in front of Baal-zephon, opposite it, by the sea.

(3) "For Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, 'They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.'

(4) "Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD." And they did so.

So, the children of Israel are positioned by the Lord with the Red Sea in front, the wilderness behind and Pharaoh and his army coming at them. The people were afraid and cried out to Moses and blamed him for their predicament. However, it is the Lord's response to Moses that is of particular interest to us.

Exodus 14:15-16 NASB

(15) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward.

(16) "As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land.

The proceeding word that Moses had received involved the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt but it also involved them entering the land that God had promised them. Just because they were now in what appeared to be dire circumstances did not mean that God had changed His word. There was no "plan B". It did not matter that there was a sea between them and the fulfillment of the proceeding word.

God chided Moses for crying out to Him. It appears that Moses should have realized that the sea did not matter only that they proceed with what God had said. It is the same with us. Once we have taken action according to the proceeding word, nothing will prevent the complete accomplishment of all that is contained in that word. In all circumstances, God will orchestrate events to accomplish His purpose and to bring glory to His name. We have to exercise faith and the authority that is inherent in the proceeding word and not be distracted when we hear the thundering hoof beats of the world's army.

Prophetic Application

I have said all of the above as background for what I am about to say, which is what I believe the Lord is about to do.

There are a number of people that have been hidden by God on the backside of a desert just like Moses. These are people with a destiny in God, a powerful call of the Lord, who are being prepared to receive a proceeding word. The time is upon us. I believe that the Lord is about to bring to us clear proceeding words that relate to His purposes for the end times. Get ready to move into your destiny.

I don't mean that this is something you will hear from some pompous prophet who blows into town for a few days and prophesies a bunch of feel good words over everybody. The call of God, your destiny, is already in you. The Holy Spirit is about to anoint it and release it for fulfillment. Others will only confirm what you already know in your heart to be your purpose.

Look for the unusual thing as you go about your routine and don't pass by your burning bush without noticing it. You will only receive your proceeding word when you turn aside from your normal day to day affairs in order to hear the Lord. And for your own sake, don't frustrate the call of God by neglecting any covenant prerequisites for you and your family.

In the fullness of time that is approaching, God is bringing forth a manifestation of the sons of God who will proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom. I believe that our proceeding words will fit into the context of that. Some will move forth speaking words of repentance, others words of judgment, others will demonstrate the power of God, others will present the Holiness and Righteousness of the Lord, and still others will speak revelation and understanding of end time scriptures and events. All of these words collectively will reveal the King and His righteous rule, established on the Throne by the Father so that He might head up all things and sum them up in Himself.

Amen and amen.

[There is an expanded version of this proceeding word topic available in the Lifestream teaching area titled "[Released for Ministry](#)". I didn't want to make this Teaching Letter too long. The Teaching Lesson format contains the examples of Nehemiah and Paul and includes pitfalls that we need to aware of as we receive our own proceeding words.—Art]

© 2003-2008 by Art Nelson and [Lifestream Teaching Ministries](#)

Previous issues of Present Truth are on the website: www.Lifestreamteaching.com

For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:

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 newsletter, without cost or obligation.

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