

Foolish Power

Isaiah 55:8-13, I Corinthians 1:18-25

January 18, 2015

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day ... little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today." -- ML King, August 28, 1963

- When Martin Luther King preached that sermon, it seemed impossible!
- Billy Graham. March 1961. Miami Beach Convention Center
(Always preaches on John 3:16)
- Anyone else here come to faith through the ministry of Billy Graham?

1. God's word creates reality.

Isaiah 55:11 ***so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.***

Genesis 1:3 ***And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.***

Psalms 33:6 ***By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.***

Matthew 8:8, 16 ***The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. ... 16 When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick.***

- Take up your bed and walk
- Lazarus, Come forth.
- Peace, be still.
- Your sins are forgiven / I do not condemn you ...
- Even Jesus' Spirit-filled disciples spoke God's creative word.

Acts 3:7 ***Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."***

2. God speaks His Word through Scripture.

II Peter 1:20-21 ***Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.***

(Genesis 26:12, *Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him.*) **1,000 Touches.**

3. God speaks His Word through sermons.

I Corinthians 1:21 ***For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know Him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.***

Romans 10:10, 14 ***For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ... 14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?***

- Was last week's sermon any good? Only if it deepened the reality that:
 - We are aliens and strangers.
 - Our citizenship is in heaven.
 - Our allegiance is to Jesus Christ.
 - We are called to advance Christ's kingdom.
- If you receive a call to speak God's Word as your career, young people, it is an excellent calling.

4. God speaks His Word through Spirit-Empowered individuals.

I Corinthians 12:8-10 (KJV) ***For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; (CoM meeting) to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; ("You've had 5 husbands." "You've been peeking through my windows.") 9 To another faith by the same Spirit ; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 10 To another the working of miracles ; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits ; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: (Not "prayer language" but a speaking forth a message from God.***

Ruby's prophecy: *The Lord says that the "harvest" is plentiful around the entire neighborhood, but the laborers are few. Woodbury ECO church needs us to reach out to those who are scared about their guilt. They are not sure that Christ can forgive them, Others are saying why worry to get up and go to church when I am not sure that Jesus was raised from the dead? Is He really alive? Some are not sure if Jesus Christ will give them the joy and peace that they are really longing to have and to experience among their friends and all those who they come into contact with. The Lord wants them to know that His grace is sufficient for all those who accept Him as their Lord and Savior. Not enough witnesses for Him.)*

Romans 10:8 ***But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming.***

Acts 2:17-18 *In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.*

- “Pops” Nichols “God has work for you, Rod, and I think you know it.”
- “In Jesus Christ you are forgiven.”

5. God’s Word comes from God.

Jeremiah 23:16, 21-22 *16 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD. ... 21 I did not send these prophets, yet they have run with their message; I did not speak to them, yet they have prophesied 22 But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds.*

- We don’t get to make stuff up and call it the Word of God.
- “Word of Faith” movement. Name it and claim it.
- But stand in the council of God. Listen. (Abiding in Christ)
- *Then* speak God’s word into your health, your finances, your relationships, your church, the state of our nation, world issues like Boko Haram and Isis.

6. God has spoken His creative Word to us.

Revelation 3:22 (etc.) *He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.*

- Epicenter of revival.
- 1,000 Growing Disciples (Too big for me! This Week article)
- Light pouring down on church and splashing around community.
- = Shiny golden people/drab gray people.
- Cf. “Take up your bed and walk.” We need to respond to that word in faith.

Nicolae Ceaușescu, Dictator of Romania 1965-1989. Bucharest (Lazslo Tokes)

Joan Alexandru. Orthodox Deacon. December 21, 1989 (before 47th birthday)

Preached in University Square on the fall of Jericho.

Went to Palace. Showed icon to soldiers.

Fired in the air.

Ceaușescu fled.

The oppressive walls of Communist tyranny came tumblin’ down!

God’s Word creates reality.

7. This is a good sermon if it creates expectation that God's Word creates reality!

Deuteronomy 18:22 *If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.*

- Expect to hear God's creative word as you read Scripture.
- Expect to hear God's creative word as you hear sermons.
(I promise to strive to listen to and preach God's creative word.)
- Expect to hear and speak God's creative Word in your life.
(Don't make things up, but listen and speak.)

God's word will not return to Him empty, but will accomplish the purpose ...