

**General Topics :: An interesting testimony by Chip Brodgen****An interesting testimony by Chip Brodgen - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/5/5 9:57**

Since from time to time I post one of Chip Brodgen's meditations, I decided to post his testimony today. It relates to many of the discussions we've been having here, as you shall see. Enjoy!

A catastrophe happened to me back in 1996. At least, it seemed like a catastrophe at the time. Today I see it as a blessing, and now I refer to that catastrophe as "the beginning of the end of my career as a preacher for Organized Religion."

In the spring of 1996 I was twenty-five years old, married with two children, and struggling with the loss of my first pastorate. Actually, I was feeling quite sorry myself. Our church had closed due to a lack of funds. At least, that is how it appeared on the surface. Inwardly, spiritually, I was burned out and exhausted.

As I struggled to find my spiritual footings I systematically went through my library and threw away most of my books, all of my tapes, and all of my "church growth" study manuals. I distinctly remember taking several boxes to the landfill and personally throwing them into the pit, just to make sure they were really gone. I hated them because they did not provide me with the answers I was looking for.

With little else to read, I spent more time with my plain old Bible, trying to find out where I had missed it, wondering if I really ever had "it" to begin with.

One morning I was sitting in my backyard with the Scriptures open to Ephesians 1:17-23:

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory,
may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;
that ye may know what is the hope of His calling,
and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,
which He wrought in Christ,
when He raised Him from the dead,
and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places,
far above all principality, and power,
and might, and dominion,
and every name that is named, not only in this world,
but also in that which is to come:
and hath put all things under His feet,
and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church,
which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

While I was thankful for this passage of Scripture, I did not see how it applied to me or my problems. Of course Jesus is exalted over all things! But I could not make any connection between the victory of Christ and myself. Worse, I did not see any evidence of this victory in my life. In fact, what I saw was defeat and failure.

My response was to become slightly frustrated (if not angry), that Jesus was exalted above all things and had this glorious victory, but I was still down here on the earth, struggling and fighting and coming up short! That is when I said, "Lord, I believe everything the Scriptures say about You, but I don't see how this helps me at all. I don't understand why I am always defeated if You are so victorious."

At that moment I was tempted to close the Bible and move on to other things, but I continued reading on through

Ephesians 2. I soon came to verses 4, 5, and 6:

"But God, Who is rich in mercy,
for His great love wherewith He loved us,
even when we were dead in sins,
hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
and hath raised us up together,
and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

All of a sudden, one little word caught my attention there in verse 6. That one little word seemed to leap off the page and slap me across the face:

Together! Together! Together! Together!

I blinked my eyes and read it again. "He has raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Of course, I had read the Book of Ephesians a hundred times. I had preached from it a dozen times. But I never really saw it until now. I am seated together with Christ in the heavenlies!

In one second I received instant illumination and revelation into many, many Scriptures. Better than that, for the first time, I actually saw the Lord Jesus. Not with my physical eyes. It was much deeper than that. I saw Him with the eyes of my heart. I saw Him in a living way. And I saw me abiding in Him, and Him abiding in me. In one second the Lord was able to do something in me that years and years of religion and "ministry" and church work had failed to achieve.

But the ability to put this experience into words developed over a period of years. I struggled to find vocabulary to describe what had happened to me. Something had broken inside of me. Something was ruptured. I was different. I no longer fit the mold. I shared these things with my wife, and eventually she also came to the knowledge of the Truth. By the time we were kicked out of our second pastorate we realized that if we really lived according to the Truth that had been revealed to us then we would never be able to pastor a church — at least, not in the conventional sense. After being fired from our third pastorate we finally got the message.

I have described that moment in my backyard as walking out of one room and into another, closing the door behind me. I have also described this experience as "being born-again again." Words cannot express the significance of that moment, and the ripple effects of that encounter continue with us to this day.

Many articles by CB here:
(<http://www.theschoolofchrist.org/read.html>) The School of Christ

Re: An interesting testimony by Chip Brodgen - posted by Josiah777 (), on: 2006/5/5 10:48

Thanks for posting this, Diane! I was really blessed by it. It perked my interest to listen to some of his sermons online.

Quote:
-----Better than that, for the first time, I actually saw the Lord Jesus. Not with my physical eyes. It was much deeper than that. I saw Him with the eyes of my heart. I saw Him in a living way. And I saw me abiding in Him, and Him abiding in me. In one second the Lord was able to do something in me that years and years of religion and "ministry" and church work had failed to achieve.

I was really excited to hear that, as this is very similar to what the Lord has been doing in my life in the last couple months. Again, great post :-)

Re: An interesting testimony by Chip Brodgen - posted by rookie (), on: 2006/5/5 15:29

Quote:
-----s I struggled to find my spiritual footings I systematically went through my library and threw away most of my books, all of my tapes, and all of my "church growth" study manuals. I distinctly remember taking several boxes to the landfill and personally throwing them into the pit, just to make sure they were really gone. I hated them because they did not provide me with the answers I was looking for.

I have done this.

Quote:
-----we realized that if we really lived according to the Truth that had been revealed to us then we would never be able to pastor a church -- at least, not in the conventional sense.

This happens because the love of the Truth and the means by which it comes is far more valuable than the honor that comes from men.

Luke 8:16 "No one, when he has lit a lamp, covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a lampstand, that those who enter may see the light. 17 For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. 18 Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him."

I have found this thought in Scripture to be true, and that I cannot compromise because of what might be lost...

In Christ
Jeff

Re: the world behind me - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/5/8 21:54

Quote:
-----this is very similar to what the Lord has been doing in my life in the last couple months.

Praise God Josiah! Thank you for sharing this.

Quote:
-----I have found this thought in Scripture to be true, and that I cannot compromise because of what might be lost...

When we discover that what we've always assumed to be God's ways are really man's ways, we realize that we must make serious changes in our life choices.

I have decided to follow Jesus
The world behind me,
the cross before me..
Though no one join me
still I will follow
No turning back,
no turning back.
Diane