



LIVING FROM HEAVEN'S ECONOMY

I watched two young boys at the movie theater the other day. They were probably six to eight years old and were thrilled their dad had given them money for the concession stand. The movie would not be starting for another 20 minutes, yet they leaped through their aisle, twirling and giggling, and when they turned the corner into the main aisle, they ran and jumped their way to the doors, laughing loudly.

My husband looked at me and smiled. I shook my head at their abundance of energy. But then the Holy Spirit gave me another thought. Those boys did not concern themselves with economy of movement, trying to preserve energy and figuring out the shortest, fastest way to get there. They celebrated, enjoying their father's gift, delighting in every step in getting from their chairs to the concession stand.

How often do we, in doing God's business, try to operate on a worldly economy, whether it be money, or energy, or time?

Trying to operate from a worldly economy only leads to stress and burnout as we try to force God's beautiful, unfolding plans into the restrictive constraints we learn in school and in business. Heavenly plans do not operate on worldly schedules. It is wrong to expect them to line up. It is not even really a matter of balance, like we may have thought in the past.

The way we delight in our journey, not counting the cost, is to make God first in everything. We cannot put God into a tight little compartment in our day and say, "I will focus on you here, God, from 7 – 8 AM when I am doing my devotional and then I am going to focus on my work."

Graham Cooke says,

Seeking the Lord is about making God first in all things. That is what we are learning as we are learning how to walk in our new man, walk in newness of life. We are learning to give God the preeminence. God first in everything. So, no matter what the situation is that is occurring, our first thought is, 'I know You are with me. What is it that You want to be for me now that You could not be at any other time?'

Colossians 1:18-19 He is also head of the body, the church, and He is the beginning, the first born from the dead so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything for it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him. That God would have first place in everything.

Delight in your journey. Delight in His Presence. Delight in how He is teaching you to be more like Him.

In a series on Process, Graham Cooke explains being in the world, but not of it like this:

When we came into the Kingdom, we were inhabitants of this world, and as such, were subject to all the pressures from the world around us. Our viewpoint and perceptions were drawn from the world around us.

However, though we may now be in this world, we are not of it. We were translated into His Kingdom and are citizens of Heaven and we now take our cues from an invisible domain. We allow the inner reality that we are in Christ and He is in us to become more real than the world around us. Because of that internal reality, we are not subject to the world around us. We live from the place of "Christ in us the hope of glory."

We are vulnerable to God, not the world around us.

We are a new creation, old things are passed away. 2 Corinthians 5:17

What are "old things"? They are mindsets that tell us we are subject to the world around us, that we are victims, that we have problems to solve, and that we are subject to the economies around us. The "old things" are perceptions or beliefs that we are on our own and have to make it through somehow.

But the truth is that we are in a new place, living in the affections of God: we in Christ and He in us. Therefore, we are not subject to the rules of this world.

We are a new creature living in an old creation. We get our cues from the new life God has given us.

We are learning to live from the inside to the outside.

The "natural" mindsets no longer make sense because now we think in faith, walk in trust, and see in peace. We are no longer vulnerable to anxiety and worry and fear, we are learning to live by encounter and experience.

Partner with a friend and share your thoughts on the following thoughts. Journal your thoughts if a friend is not available.

DISCUSSION THOUGHTS

- What does it mean to you to be 'in the world but not of it'?
- How are you practicing being 'in the world but not of it'?
- What 'old things' do you need to replace with new mindsets?