

Great Grace for Uncommon Intimacy with God

The Transforming Church

Great Grace for Uncommon Intimacy with God

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Scripture: John 20: 1-18

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Transcript

Ministering: Pastor Nelson Ogohi

Topic: Great Grace For Uncommon Intimacy With God

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The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulcher, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcher. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulcher, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulcher. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher. And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulcher, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulcher, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulcher weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulcher, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

One of the things we have to realise is that we are on an infinite, multifaceted and multidimensional journey with God. It is an ever-increasing journey with God from glory

to glory.

If the Christian journey is boring and lacks excitement for you, then it is highly probable that you have been practising the wrong version of it.

It is impossible to have a boring experience with God because He is an intimate lover who can constantly surprise us. There is no moment with God without a wow effect.

It is important to understand too that when we ever find or discover God in our journey, it is because He sought us initially. If we seek God truly, He will let us find Him. God is the seeker's finder and the finder's seeker.

John 1: 43-45 (KJV) The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Any time you set your heart to seek God, He meets you where you are. The moment the desire for God enters into your heart, He enters into your space. We should never assume that corporate gatherings in God's name and our personal intimate relationship with Him are the same.

Psalms 42: 1-4 (NKJV) As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually say to me, Where is your God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

You should never assume that intimacy with God is about going with others to the house of God. Intimacy with God is not done in the open space; it is done when you are alone, far away from others, in your lonely place.

When you are left alone, that is when God meets you. When you give your life to God, you no longer have to sustain yourself, God becomes the one that sustains your life.

Psalms 119: 147 (NIV) I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word.

When you wake up in the morning and look for God, you are engaging and developing your intimacy with Him. God desires an intimate relationship with us. It would be an unfortunate experience for us as believers to have God that desires to have intimacy with us, to shower us with endless grace, blessings and favours but when He looks for the ones who seek Him, we are nowhere to be found. We must therefore connect to God because He is our divine source for everything.

Your service to God should never be at the expense of your intimacy with Him.

Mark 3: 14 (KJV) And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils

This shows that Jesus called His disciples to be with Him first. It is in the process of being with Jesus (developing intimacy with Him) that gives birth to the opportunity of Jesus sending them out to serve Him through preaching, healing the sick and casting out devils. It is being with Jesus that qualifies the disciples to be sent to perform various kinds of service. We must avoid running away from God in the assumption that it is in servitude to Him when He desires us to stay with Him.

God never anoints a man to take His place and never blesses a business or career to replace Him. The moment your career gets in the way of your constant intimacy with God, from God's perspective, this means that you have placed your career against Him.

God is a jealous lover, so jealous in His love that He never wants anything to come in between our intimacy with Him. God loves like a newly-wedded man who turns to his bedside and wants to always feel his wife there. Establishing intimacy with God is a call to a deeper relationship with Him. There are realms of intimacy with God that brings us peace, joy and other blessings from Him. The reason we might not be enjoying these benefits is because we have not sought Him.

It can be that the people perceived to be the least likely to achieve something in life are the ones that discovered God in strange ways. This is possible because they have hearts that constantly hunger and pant for God. We have to know that great achievements are not gotten by title or mantle, but by seeking God. It is possible to be the leading pastor of your church but a member has a deeper intimacy with God than you do. but Intimacy with God is not a product of your title; it is your level of seeking Him that determines how much of Him you will find. This is shown in John 20 with how Mary Magdalene discovered angels and Jesus Himself after His resurrection when she looked into the sepulchre, but the disciplines only discovered the linen of Christ and went home afterwards. Mary Magdalene did not seek Jesus for help or benefit in any way; she simply sought Jesus after His death and resurrection because of her relationship with Him. She just wanted to be with Him. This is the thrust of genuine relationship.