

REVELATORY GRACE

Dr. Jay Zinn • River's Edge Church • 9/20/09

Begin with the "Twister" clip:

http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Twister+scene+tied+to+the+pipe&search_type=&q=f

Read: Matthew 11:25-30; 16:13-18; Luke 10:22-25; Acts 9:1-19

Mark 2:18-28

Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting. Some people came and asked Jesus, "How is it that John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees are fasting, but yours are not?"

Jesus answered, "How can the guests of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? They cannot, so long as they have him with them. But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and on that day they will fast.

"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins."

23 One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?"

25 He answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions."

27 Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

Quote: "A MAN CANNOT WALK IN WHAT HE CANNOT SEE!"

Recently I responded to the Lord's request for me to get with him in the mountains. I had a window of time open up for me at a friend's cabin, so I fasted a couple of days before I went, to prepare my spirit to receive.

My first two days there I saturated myself with the Word, intercession, and non-stop worship music to help me focus on the Lord. It usually takes me a couple of days to unstring my bow, to clear out the distracting voices of responsibilities on my plate back home, and to quiet my spirit man. By the third day I began to find the bandwidth of God's throne where the four living creatures, with eyes all over them, are able to see the many-sided perspective of God's glory for that moment in eternity (Rev. 4 – Four living creatures eyes all around in front & behind).

By Wednesday the Lord began to speak to me and I wrote down what he said. As I wrote, some scales began to fall off my eyes to some concepts I had been wrestling with. They began to sharpen and crystallize into a picture and understanding that I had seen, but not really seen before. It took me into word studies that I began to dig out of my PC Study Bible. Familiar words like "altar, tent, and prayer." Again I saw things in these passages that I'd not seen before.

This is when the Word of God becomes a living word. When the Holy Spirit begins to show you truths in the areas he's growing in you. Truths that before were concealed like treasures in the ground, waiting to be discovered.

There is so much joy in those "A-Ha!" or "Eureka!" moments. I call it "Revelatory Grace." The imparted grace of God comes on you and takes you from an old paradigm, an old wineskin, into a new. And suddenly you jump from the elevation of a twenty foot visual to a thousand foot visual. You see more of the landscapes below you've not seen before. It was always there, you just didn't have the vantage point of height to discover it.

When I was a young boy, there was small-plane landing strip in the humble farm town of New Carlisle, Ohio. I could see the airstrip from my house. When they flew over my house, I often dreamed of what it would be like to see what they could see. My friend and I used to sneak onto the runway and climb under these shield like markers at the end of the runway waiting for the planes to take off and fly over us. We would pretend we were shooting down Nazi barons.

One day, my Uncle Walter invited me to fly with him from New Carlisle to his house in Springfield about 15 miles away. He owned a single-engine Cessna. What an experience! I was fascinated as I saw my stomping grounds shrink below me. In one sweep of my eyes, I could take in the view of the creek I explored, the farm fields I hiked to, the barns I played in, and there was my house! My dream was fulfilled. I was now flying for the first time. I could see my entire home town in one glance. The roads below became thin lines sprawled out in a quilt like pattern, and the cars looked like lines of little sweet ants going to and fro.

Suddenly my paradigm took a shift, a revelatory shift. I wasn't looking for it; I didn't ask for it; I didn't even deserve it. It just happened when my Uncle Walter called and asked if I wanted to fly in his plane with him. So, the familiar world of my stomping grounds turned into a new revelation of how everything connected together. I had a brand new perspective of my world that I'd never experienced before. I now understood that my world was merely a piece of a much bigger world. Boy was that a day that changed the way I saw things. I grew a little that day by Revelatory Grace.

Years later, at the age of thirteen, another paradigm shift took place. I wasn't looking for it, I didn't ask for it, and I didn't deserve it, either. My Dad's old WWII war buddy, Bill Taylor, invited me to go on a trip with him to visit his family in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. I had never been out of my home state before. I saw new roads, new cities, and for the first time tasted the salt in the water of an ocean I'd never seen before. Those new vistas and new experiences changed again the way I looked at my world. I discovered, like I did in Uncle Walter's Cessna, that my world connected to a much bigger world. I grew a little more that week by Revelatory Grace.

Four years later, at the age of 17, my mom's brother in Frankfurt, Germany invited me to join him and his family on their vacation. I didn't ask for it, I didn't look for it, and I know I didn't deserve it. But for the second time in my young life, I was back in the air, only this time on a jet and nothing like that little Cessna of Uncle Walter's.

And this wasn't a 12 mile flight from New Carlisle to Springfield, or a road trip to Cape Cod. This was a flight to Germany where I saw more of our country from the air, only much higher than I experienced on my first flight.

When we flew over the Atlantic Ocean...the last time I'd seen it was when I swam there with Bill Taylor's family in Cape Cod. Though I was in it, I didn't have the slightest understanding of how vast that ocean was until I flew over at a level of 30,000 feet. This time I was above the clouds, watching those towering, giant dough boys to my left and my right; sometimes getting a peek through the cotton at patch of deep blue sea below.

When I landed in Germany, I stepped into an unfamiliar language and culture filled with street signs I couldn't read. I experienced castles I had only seen in books. We went through Holland to Amsterdam where I saw museums filled with original art framed like giant rugs hanging on vast amounts of space on the walls. These paintings I remembered in books I could hold in the palm of my hand. But here the people on the canvas were as big as me. I even got a new revelation when the kids my age laughed at my skin tight pants. They were wearing bell-bottoms, the new European trend which made my look very obsolete. Very! So I bought bell bottoms and wore them my senior year, ahead of the trend coming our way from Europe.

When I left America for Germany I was a small town teenage boy. Six weeks later I returned a young man with a larger world perspective. I had experienced a bigger world than my little world of New Carlisle. I had tasted a higher level of revelation which my school friends, my brother, and my sisters could not grasp. I walked in Revelatory Grace...knowing something I didn't look for, ask for, or deserve.

I couldn't give everyone back home my revelation or understanding, I couldn't give them the images I had, I couldn't give them the experiences I had, but they made note that I came back a different person. The difference was significant enough to take me from the "B" class of student popularity to the "A" class. How did that happen? It happened because I was different. I had a revelatory experience during my summer break. Something had changed in me. Even the cheerleader in my art class I had a crush on for years, suddenly became interested in me because she saw a different Jay Zinn.

I had gone from a small town mentality to a world traveler mentality. I had experienced a bigger world than my own. I had discovered there was more to life than New Carlisle. I had discovered a larger world, a grander world, a more adventurous world. And, suddenly, I lost the contentment I once had in my old paradigm.

My eyes, my mind, my heart enlarged to embrace something bigger than my life and my world. I had tasted more and I couldn't go back to being content with what I had. I couldn't stay in New Carlisle anymore. I had one year left in High School so I set my sights on leaving as soon as possible so I could get back to greater heights.

My comfort zone, my cave of convenience had been turned upside down and I planned to look for more of what the world had to offer. I could no longer fly at twenty to 3000 feet above the ground, I wanted to get back on the jet and soar at 30,000 feet. I wanted to get back to that feeling of life and adventure that surged through me on that trip to Europe.

Ever had a feeling like that? Ever been ruined by an experience that makes everything else in your life become common?

What I have painted for you through my days of youth is called “progressive revelation.” Revelation means “to unveil, to pull back the curtains and expose something that’s been there all along, yet unseen. Something that’s available if we have the means to get there, but it costs something. It cost me something to go to Germany. I had worked and paid for my own trip from the money I had saved working a paper route, bagging groceries, and stocking shelves until I had enough to go.

Progressive revelation, unpacks the unseen treasures within reach. It is the process of going from one paradigm of understanding to a new one. This word “paradigm” is defined as “a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitute a way of viewing **reality** for the community that shares them, especially in an intellectual discipline. A paradigm was once new, embraced initially by the few, and then it expands to the rest of the population until it reaches the tipping point of changing the culture and environment. It becomes the accepted norm with its own shelf life until the next act of Revelatory Grace occurs. Throughout our lives we cycle from “Paradigm 1” to “Paradigm 2.” The second paradigm becomes our paradigm one until we’re drawn to the next paradigm that comes along. That is, new concepts, values and practices God uses to build on some of the “old paradigm, but not all of it. He strips away the baggage and misguided perimeters we’ve added to our last paradigm, our last new revelation.

So what does that have to do with the scriptures at the beginning? What does this have to do with you and me? When Jesus used the language of a new patch of cloth or new wineskin, he was speaking about paradigms. He said “You can’t sew a new patch of cloth on an old patch. When the new patch shrinks, it will tear the old. He also said, “If you put new wine into an old wineskin, the fermenting process will burst the old wineskin.” Basically, in today’s vernacular, you can’t put a new paradigm into an old paradigm because new paradigms destroy old paradigms.

When the kingdom realities of Jesus intersect with our old paradigms, his new set of values, concepts, and practices threaten the existence of the old in the same way that new technology destroys and makes obsolete old technology. What was once cutting edge five years ago is ready for the scrap pile today because the new is better.

Once I left the ground in my first flying experience, I replaced my old paradigm of a ground level experience with a **new elevation of revelation** about my world. Once I experienced it, I couldn’t go back. Something changed in me. Once I left Ohio and experienced new states and Cape Cod, Massachusetts, I experienced a new paradigm that changed my previous understanding of my world. And once I flew in a jet, the flight in that little Cessna didn’t have the same punch of adventure any more. Once I experienced a new world and a different culture in Europe, my little home town of New Carlisle became an old wineskin and I couldn’t contain it with the new wine I had tasted.

If you take two circles and barely overlap them, it would create a passage or door between the two circles. Once you’ve been through the door from the old to a new paradigm, it becomes a rite of passage.

In that door there is a vortex of grace that pulls you through. Sometimes we're reluctant to get pulled through it, but when God says its time, its time...and all the struggling in the world won't deliver you from the vortex's velocity.

Vortex is defined as:

1. A whirling mass of water, esp. one in which a force of suction operates, as a whirlpool.
2. A whirling mass of air, esp. one in the form of a visible column or spiral, as a tornado.
3. A whirling mass of fire, flame, etc.
4. A state of affairs likened to a whirlpool for violent activity, irresistible force, etc.
5. Something regarded as drawing into it its powerful current everything that surrounds it.

The Pharisees felt its pull and struggled to fight it and resist it when Jesus came on the scene as the personification of Revelatory Grace. People's paradigms were the laws of the Pharisees. The rules and regulations of their religious world was all the people knew. They had never encountered a personal God, they only knew of a wrathful God. They had never encountered a benevolent God, they had only known a punitive God. They had never encountered God in flesh and blood, they only knew a religious system of animal sacrifices, temple moneychangers, and pious, distant Pharisees.

Then Jesus appears on the scene with a new paradigm. A kingdom paradigm. The blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised, the multitudes are fed, the diseased are healed, the lepers are cleansed, and suddenly people are swept into this vortex of Revelatory Grace. Up to now, the true God that had been covered by the veil of the Old Covenant and the religious system of the Pharisees, but now, suddenly, he's been unveiled in Jesus, the mediator of a New Covenant, God come in the flesh. For the first time the Jews are tasting and seeing that the Lord is good, that God is exciting, that he is more than religion, that he is love, that he is personal, and that the old wine of the Pharisees can satisfy no more.

Jesus has brought out the best wine. The bridegroom has come. They don't have to fast, the bridegroom is here. Everybody is hearing about and getting a taste of this new wine. It was the new deal, replacing the old. The whole world went after him, but he became a threat to the paradigm of the Pharisees and they were not budging. They had tied themselves to the pipe in the ground like Helen Hunt and Bill Paxton did in Twister.

Jesus is the twister, here, turning over tables, opening the cages of animals, unveiling the hypocrisy of religion and revealing the true nature and heart of God to the world. He is irresistible to those whose eyes are opened, to those whose ears can hear what the Messiah is teaching and preaching and saying with more authority than the greatest Rabbis among them.

Jesus has come from a world that transcends the little world of the Pharisees. His world, his perspective is not confined to the natural law of physics, biology or the sciences. His world contains no sickness or disease, no hate or poverty, no filth or darkness. He flies at 30,000 feet, not bound to the world's paradigm. He walked in the freedom of Revelatory Grace that sets people free from small-mindedness.

Saul of Tarsus was such a man who got set free. His was a world of rules to which he followed blamelessly. He was the poster-child of Phariseism. He tried to resist the vortex of The Way with every ounce of strength he had.

These simple-minded ignorant disciples of Jesus were deceived. They were drunk on this new wine and needed to be sobered up and brought back to their senses. This new “Way” was messing around with the ancient landmarks. It was destroying the socio-religious fabric of their faith and would incur the wrath of his God upon his beloved Israel.

Saul also named Paul, resisted and became obsessed with hanging on to his old patch of cloth, his old wineskin, his comfortable paradigm, his small world of rules and regulations. So he persecuted those who had tasted and seen that God was good. God had unveiled himself, exposed his true nature through Christ, and once they tasted of Christ, they couldn't go back.

He went from town to town railing against the church, breathing out murderous threats, and hauling off families to prison in his crusade to halt the leak in his wineskin. The overlapping of the paradigms is the door where you let go, go through, and trust God for what will happen on the other side. Or you can resist, die in your sins and religious acts that lead to death. If you let go of the door-frame, the Revelatory Grace of God will cloak you with the smells and sounds of treasures in heaven.

If you position yourself next to the door of the new paradigm and refuse to stay in your comfort zone, you'll be swept into a height that will pull all the pieces of the puzzle together. You'll see things as they really are and not just what you think they are. You will be changed and not realize you've changed. You will be seen by others as different, something they can't put their finger on, but it's really there. There's a new confidence, a new boldness, a new authority. Suddenly you're speaking a heavenly language, from a culture, a world you've never experienced before. You're speaking from an experience of seeing things at 30,000 feet rather than twenty.

But not everyone will get it. Not all will see what you see. Not all will *want* to see what you see or listen to what you have heard. They're happy right where they are, thank you very much, so don't mess up their world, don't mess with their dysfunction, and don't bring your fanaticism to them.

Jesus encountered this reaction from his own family, from the established religious system, and from the disciples who followed and left. He spoke the language of the kingdom. Some heard, some didn't, and some couldn't because it required something costly to fly at that altitude. It costs you your life. It requires losing your life for his sake. It requires taking up your cross and following him into the 3rd heaven of Revelatory Grace.

The final blow for Saul was when he got apprehended on the road to Damascus. In so many words Jesus said, “Enough Saul...I'm through with you kicking against the pricks, kicking against the vortex of my heavenly paradigm, ratified by my blood of the New Covenant that fulfills what Abraham saw in his day, in advance of his time.” Once Abraham saw Jesus as Melchisedek, he was never the same. And once you've met Jesus yourself, you're never the same and the people who know you will notice a marked difference in your person.

From his encounter with Jesus, Saul was smitten with blindness for three days later until the scales fall from his eyes.

Saul finally gets swept up into the vortex of revelation he had been resisting for so long. He was no longer Saul, breathing out threats and slaughters and reeking havoc on the church. He became Saul, graced by the unveiling of a new paradigm that had been hidden from him his whole life until the timing of the Messiah's arrival and crucifixion was in place.

He could now taste and see that the Lord was good. He could now enjoy God apart from all the meticulous rules and regulations he had carried out daily. He was freed by the elevation of revelation. He wasn't looking for it, he didn't ask for it, and he certainly didn't deserve it. By the grace of God, the timing had come; the sun had dawned and risen upon a man who was completely and radically changed by Revelatory Grace.

It was a place where Paul could no longer return to Saul's paradigm. God provided him with the grace to see that his former reality was no longer reality. He discovered the riches beyond the veil and became smitten and obsessed so much so that he was willing to suffer as Christ suffered until the day of his own departure, crucified like Christ, by the order of Nero.

Today, I stand before you as man who has been tied to the pipe of an old paradigm and I'm letting go to be swept into the vortex of God's love and new smells and sounds of a heavenly culture of prayer. I'm done with flying at low levels and ready to climb to the heights of God's revelatory grace and I can't go back.

I want to fly where great women and men of God got to fly. I want to fly where Jesus flies in the throne room of God. I want to see everything, like the four living creatures before the throne. I want a kingdom perspective that's bigger than my world of Churchianity and Christendom. I want his kingdom realities. I want to know him. I'm done with flying low. I want to soar!

**This statement was written by a young African pastor.
Found among his papers in Zimbabwe after he was martyred...**

I'm a part of the fellowship of the unashamed.
The die has been cast. I have stepped over the line. The decision has been made.
I'm a disciple of His and I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still.
My past is redeemed. My present makes sense. My future is secure.
I'm done and finished with low living, sight walking, small planning, smooth knees, colorless dreams,
tamed visions, mundane talking, cheap living, and dwarfed goals.
I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, plaudits, or popularity.
I don't have to be right, or first, or tops, or recognized, or praised, or rewarded.
I live by faith, lean on His presence, walk by patience, lift by prayer, and labor by Holy Spirit power.
My face is set. My gait is fast. My goal is heaven.
My road may be narrow, my way rough, my companions few, but my guide is reliable & my mission is clear.
I will not be bought, compromised, detoured, lured away, turned back, deluded or delayed.
I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice or hesitate in the presence of the adversary.
I will not negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.
I won't give up, shut up, or let up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, and preached up for
the cause of Christ.
I am a disciple of Jesus.
I must give until I drop, preach until all know, and work until He comes.
And when He does come for His own, He'll have no problems recognizing me.
My colors will be clear!