



Tzelem Ministries Partner Letter 3.10

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Our Update

We want to thank everyone for their love, support, prayers, and encouragement over the last few months. Deborah and I have been in a period of transition between bible school and Colorado. When God called us back to Colorado, I believed it was to plant and establish a church that would focus on revival and soul winning. We took out a few groups and taught them to win souls, but we found the response to soul winning lackadaisical at best. We started to pray, and I felt like a change of direction was necessary. I felt like we needed to start with revival. The problem is that unrevived people will not go out and win the lost. Even if they do, they look at it as another program, verses a passion. When revival comes, people get to the point where soul winning is a passion verses a program.

With this in mind, we began to look for a church. We tried several churches before we found a good fit. We have found a church who has a pastor with the heart of an evangelist, and who truly wants to see revival. The church is small, but it is not numbers that matters, it is the heart and soul of the church and pastor.

So we have joined ourselves to this church and pastor to help them accomplish the vision that God has given them. We know God has great things in store, and we thank Him for what is, and what is to come.

During this time period, I have been to two funerals, and had a close friend loose a relative. All I have to say is after being to these funerals, if all that happened at my funeral was the preaching of the word to receive Jesus as personal Lord and savior, then I would be happy with that.

It seems that the passion to have altar calls even in regular sunday morning services is gone. I find it very sad that we have become so callous that we have forgotten that the soul that is unsaved in that service may not be there tomorrow, and face eternity. Perhaps we are too passionate about reaching the lost - or perhaps it is past time for revival, where the church falls in love with Jesus all over



again.

I Choose Joy

Last night, in a dream, the Lord spoke to me. He said “Joy is a choice.” Many times we choose to be angry, frustrated, bored, or any other negative emotion. If this is true, why is it that positive emotions such as joy are often not seen as being choices but rather as something that is just random?

Today, I am thinking about choices that we make, and how they effect the relationship we have with God. Since leaving Bible School, I have often chosen to look at circumstances, rather than God. I should know better, after all I’m the one that has preached to look to God and not circumstances.

When financial troubles hit your door, do you start looking for ways to make more money or to save the money that you have rather than looking to God who said He would supply for your every need according to His riches in glory? Have you stopped tithing because by the time your paycheck comes half of it is already spent? Jesus said that where men’s hearts are, that is where there treasure would be. So where are our hearts?

When family issues confront you: your parents being seemingly unreasonable, your children being disobedient, your spouse arguing over something, do you choose to forgive, love them anyway, and focus on the fact that God loves them as much as He does you, or do you strike back in anger, fear, jealousy, or bitterness?

Our choices really do reflect where our hearts are. Even the choice of how long we want a church service to last. In America, time seems to often time be more important than God when we schedule a church service for an hour to an hour and one half, and then we crowd the line for the lunch buffet down the street. Our love has turned from God to time, and we have made time our god.

I believe it is past time for me to stop choosing looking at circumstances, finances, family problems, and time, and get back to what is really important: seeking first the kingdom of God and



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His righteousness, knowing that all the other problems will be taken care of by Him.

Again and again the scripture promises that if we merely trust in God, that God will provide for all we need according to His riches in glory. Does heaven have sickness? Does heaven have financial lack? Does heaven have time? Does heaven have family problems?

It is our choice. We can choose to focus on challenges in life, or focus on Jesus. Challenges in life will come, but when our focus is on Jesus we will have joy, even in the midst of challenges. That is our choice.

The Father's Love

Luk 15:11-32 And he said, A certain man had two sons: (12) And the younger of them said to *his* father, **Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them *his* living.**

The first thing we learn about the Father's love is no good thing will He withhold from us. We sometimes forget this, because religion will try and teach us that we should be happy to be poor. Remember, the scriptures do not say that money is the root of all evil, but that it is the love of money is the root of all evil.

But it is not just about money, although it is a key tool for preaching the gospel. It is also about the signs and miracles that lead people to a saving knowledge of Christ.

(13) And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. (14) And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. (15) And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. (16) And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

Many years ago, God gave me an analogy. Suppose the younger son had embraced the fact that God still was able to do signs and wonders. He started out in ministry and along the way He began to not use the signs and wonders for God's glory, but rather for his own promotion. Now suppose the elder son was offered the same inheritance and refused to take it because of the younger son's abuse of the gifts. Would the Father be more displeased with the son who misused the gift, or the one that refused the gift? My



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contention is the one that refused, for at least the one that misused the gift did not reject the Father's love altogether.

(17) And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! (18) I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, (19) And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

This is where religion will tell you that you must come to the Father, and clean yourself up first. When, in reality, it is the Father that comes to us, and we respond by coming just as we are.

(20) And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

The Father comes running down the road as soon as sees the son! He does not wait for His son, in fact He gives no thought to how the son looks, smells, or anything else - this is His son!

(21) And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. (22) But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

A robe is symbolic of righteousness (Is 61:10). It is also called the garment of praise for a spirit of heaviness (Is 61:3). When we get saved, The Father gives us His righteousness, and we get the garment of praise in exchange for the weight we have been carrying. He also gives the son his shoes. Feet are the messengers of the gospel (Is 52:7, Rom 10:15). By giving him shoes, the Father gives the son the protection he needs to immediately preach the gospel. The ring is what is known as a signet ring, used as a symbol of authority. It says the son has the same authority as the Father. Jesus gave us all authority (Matt 28:18). We use this authority over satan and his legions.

(23) And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it*; and let us eat, and be merry: (24) For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

The best time to praise the Lord is when another soul is saved!

(25) Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing. (26) And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

(27) And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. (28) And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. (29) And he answering said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: (30) But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

The elder son represents religion and tradition with all of it's



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trappings. It believes that someone cannot be saved unless they do penance. It believes that righteousness must be earned, it is not granted. It believes that only those who have proper education can preach the gospel. It believes that signs, wonders, and the power in preaching the gospel passed away with the apostles. Yet none of these things can be proved by scripture, and in fact can be disproved by scripture.

(31) And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. (32) It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

In other words, those who are well have no need of a physician. We forget that God wants us to rejoice when one sinner is saved. We forget that we were once the sinner. Yet, we should never forget, and always be grateful for a loving Father who ran to come get us.

Deborah's Update

Hello friends and blessings to all!

Well, the family is really enjoying being back in Colorado. We've already had cold weather and a little snow. It didn't stay though. Living in Colorado though, you know that eventually in winter you will get a good snow that will hang on the ground for days.

We dearly miss our friends and The River back in Florida. We don't miss the climate in Florida though. We got spoiled at The River. When you're not there in that special environment you *really* learn how to dig in for yourself.

For us it seems a bit like we're going through a desert. We are learning now, like never before, how to dig in for ourselves. We listen to CD's when we can and watch online when possible. It helps. Other than that what helps me most is when I'm picking up and delivering a car for Enterprise (that's my part-time temp job). When I'm driving a car I take that time to pray and worship uninterrupted. It's in those times I most feel at peace.



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The desert..... Now that's a subject. Israel wandered in the wilderness/desert for 40 years. I don't want to wander in the wilderness. However, I do think though, at least for me, that that's when you learn to trust God's Word more. That He will *never* leave or forsake you. You definitely cannot go on feelings. They will deceive you. You *have* to trust that He is there. You can't see or feel air, but you know it's there because you're breathing it. If we waited until we could see or feel it we would die because we wouldn't breathe. It's the same way with God. Even though we can't see or necessarily feel His Presence, He is still there just the same.

Faith... Now faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. That's when we either grow or die in our faith. Just because we can't see or feel anything is happening about the things we are praying or believing God for doesn't mean that He's not answering. He's always taking care of us and working in our behalf.

We all have friends and family. We can't always see and feel them, but, that doesn't mean that they don't exist and are alive. They are just a phone call away. God is in a manner of speaking, just a "phone call" away. That "phone call" is prayer. The difference is that He is never too busy to listen any time we "call". It's never a "bad time" to talk when we call on Him. He always has time to talk and listen to us. We can "call" any time or the day or night and any day. He loves to hear from us. He loves talking to us. The question is, "Do we have "time" to talk to and listen to Him?", or are we "too busy"?

Are we so busy in our daily lives that we say things like, "I have to get to work", "I have to get ready for church", "I have to get the kids to school", "I have to get dinner ready", "I have to get the house cleaned before the guests arrive", etc. We may as well just



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have an answering machine that says something like, “I’m sorry I can’t get to the phone right now, I’m quite busy. I have a lot on my plate at the present time. Please, though, do leave a message and I’ll get back to you when I can. I can’t say when that will be, but I will get back to you eventually. Thanks and have a great day.” Beep.

God *never* does that to us. Why do we do that to Him. We can talk to Him while we are “busy” doing all the things we have to do in the course of the day. He *always* has time for us, and there’s no one as busy as God. He has the universe to run and all the billions of people to deal with here on this earth. Yet, He’s never too busy.

He loves us. He loves us so much that He knows how many hairs are on our head. He knows how many fall out when we comb our hair. He knows how many tears we’ve cried in our life and has them in a bottle. He laughs with us, He cries with us. He hurts with us. He gave His *ONLY* Son for us so that we could live and walk in healing and health and have every need provided for. He loves us. He *ALWAYS* has time for us. He *always* listens to us.

So, when we are in those “desert places” we need to remember He’s there with us all the way and all the time. He’s our oasis in the desert and He’s *always* with us so we can rest in the oasis at any time. I suggest that we get so down that we forget to talk with Him and listen. The desert can be a quiet place. A quiet place is always a good place to be still and listen because there’s not much to do in a desert except keep trudging on to get across and through. If we stop there though and give up then we’ll never reach the other side and find the fullness of the wonderful things that are on the other side.

So, when we are going through the desert, let’s remember that we have the “Oasis” always there with us and He will give us the refreshing we need. He will sustain us and help us reach the other



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side. He is our strength and through Him we can do all things because He sustains and strengthens us. He will carry us if we need Him to. All we have to do is “call” Him. He’s not too busy and never asks you to leave a message and I’ll get back when I have the time. Beep. He loves spending time with us. He loves listening to us and talking with us. He loves to hear from us. Call Him. You’ll be very glad you did.

Love to all and God Bless and keep teaching you to rise and soar on eagles’ wings.

Love and prayers,
Deborah