


## From the Father's Heart.....05/10

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"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us". We know what this means concerning the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus, but what does it mean once we have come to know Him? Is the Word still made flesh, and if so, how?

In 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:1-3, John speaks of "that which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. (For the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ."

How do we hear, see, look upon and handle the Word of life? Is this something that we only accept by faith as a spiritual reality? Were the disciples of Christ the only ones that can lay claim to the reality of "handling" the Word of life? The word "handled" means "to verify by contact". How do we verify our relationship with the Father and the Son, by contact? How do we have a relationship with the Father in which the life of God is manifested to us?

Largely, our relationship with our Father has been more abstract than manifested. The word abstract means "withdrawn or separated from material objects or practical matters", or "existing only in the mind". What am I saying? I'm saying that too much of our relationship with the Father has become a relationship in which we do not "handle" Him or "verify by contact" the reality of knowing Him in a way that is manifested (can be seen, heard, looked upon and handled). We are excited about things like "glory" and "power" and "rivers". However, if pressed about what these concepts really mean, we can only lay claim to signs, wonders and miracles. These are all things that we hope to see, but in reality we cannot see, hear, look upon and handle them. They remain only in the realm of our desires, in our mind, bordering on the realm of fantasy and illusion. We all know our Father is capable of miracles and wonders. However, where, if at all, are they found in the realities of life?

Our challenge is found in moving away from an abstract relationship and into a relationship with Him whereby we are able to "handle" Him for ourselves and see, hear and look upon Him in fleshly form. How can we experience this "manifested life"? The key words that identify the answer to this question are "our fellowship". This "fellowship" is the Greek word *koinonia*, which means, participation or social intercourse. It's one thing to talk about our vertical intercourse with the Father, but how is this intercourse manifested horizontally to us so that we hear, see, look upon and handle the Word of life? Without the reality of being manifested to us, we are left to abstract religious tokens and rituals to hold onto until we "go to heaven". Does the Father have something better for us here and now, before we "go to heaven"?

One of the ways the Father reveals Himself to us is through "spiritual fathers". These "fathers" are sent into our life to make possible the reality of knowing the Father in a "Word made flesh" relationship. This is our opportunity to be "fathered" into maturity by someone who reveals the Father to us by their love and care for us as a son.

Let's look at some scriptures that show us this principle. In 1 Corinthians 4:14-17, Paul shares, "as my beloved sons, I warn you. For though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, you have not many fathers...I sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved son...". Again in 1 Thessalonians 2:11, he says, "we...charged every one of you, as a father does his children...". And again in Philippians 2:22, he speaks of Timothy "as a son with the father he has served with me...".

I have had the privilege of walking with a spiritual father since 1998. He has exemplified Christ to me in his character, integrity, and in his love and care for me as a son. He has always pointed me to Christ as my head and has never positioned himself as "over me" or "above me". He has always served me as a father and has never profited himself as one who is there for what he can get from me, but is ever seeking my growth and potential in Christ. He has "watched for my soul" and helped me with the development of my character, integrity and life example. My life as a son of God, as a husband and as a natural and spiritual father is better because of my relationship with a spiritual father. Because of this relationship, I am able to participate in the manifestation of my relationship with my Father in heaven. I am experiencing the Father through the "Word made flesh" in a man sent into my life to represent Him.

This is the paramount need in the earth today. We need "fathers", in our spiritual life, in our natural life, in the church and in the world. The lives of men are reeling because of a dearth of mature character. Men are fathering children, both in the natural and spiritual, and have no experience to draw upon as to how even be a father to them. The only way to reverse this is for our Father to raise up fathers. We need fathers among us who will love and care for the sons of God. The "whole creation groans and travails in pain" to see the "manifestation of the sons of God".

Just as Jesus became who He was by His relationship with the Father, the sons of God today have the same opportunity. But, how did Jesus experience the manifestation of this relationship? In Luke 2, we find Him going to the temple, seeking out the "fathers" to learn about His "Father's business", coupled with the fact that He responded to His parents' instruction and "went down with them...and was subject to them." He had "fathers" in His life!

If you are not presently walking with a spiritual father, I urge you to pray to your Father and ask Him to reveal to you whom He is sending into your life to make available to you a manifested relationship with Him. The heart of our Father in this season is for all of His sons to be "fathered" and come into maturity as sons who represent Him in the earth.

When you position yourself as a son to a spiritual father, you will be given grace and favor by your Father in heaven. You will be privileged to experience "the Word made flesh" in a relationship that exemplifies the solution to fatherlessness. The need has never been greater. We must know the Father, and the world needs the "manifestation of the sons of God".

I call you blessed,

**Richard**

