

Don't Build an Altar, Take a Stone!

By Connie V Scott

Many people live their lives in the past. They had an encounter with God at one time in their lives and the experience was so profound that they stopped right there and lived in that moment as long as possible, many times way beyond what God intended. They built an altar, a permanent structure to memorialize the event.

In the Old Testament, the children of Israel were led through the wilderness for forty years. Scripture tells us that they had a cloud by day and a fire by night (Exodus 13:21). God told them to build a tabernacle in the desert, a place the Ark of the Covenant (the very presence of God) could rest. This tabernacle was not a permanent structure, but a large mobile one. Moses would go in and speak with God and get direction and directive for these three million people he was leading through the wilderness. He was instructed to follow the cloud of the presence of God. When the cloud lifted, the children of Israel were to take up their tents and move with God (Number 9:22).

God is always forward motion. He may allow us to settle for a short time. In that time, we may get rest, revelation, and further clarification of the journey ahead. Then, God moves. It is in that moment that we are presented with a choice. We can stand and get in the flow of what God is doing; moving forward with Him, or we can pitch our tents, build an altar, and stay in that place.

Don't get me wrong, God wants us to remember the things He does in us. Our encounters with Him are vital to our lives in Christ. The revelation you receive from God is invaluable. It is these events that shape who we are. We should treasure the moments, as they create a testimony of God's goodness! At times, God has us build an altar to that encounter with Him. He wants us to rest in that moment and never forget what He had done. Our salvation experiences should be altars in our lives. We should go back often and give an offering of praise and adoration to God for awakening our spirits to the reality of Jesus Christ.

However, most of the time, God does not want us to camp out on that mountain top experience. Instead of building an altar, He simply wants us to take a stone! What does that mean? God wants us to take the memory with us, allow it to do the work in us that it was meant for, and continue onto the next thing He has in store. We learn the lesson and then continue in the flow of what God is doing in the now.

"Look to the here and now, through which all future plunges into past" (Yates). God is eternally now and wants us to live this day to its fullest! We can't stall out trying to relive the awesome moments of the past, nor can we be consumed with what may be coming. *"This is the day The Lord had made, I will rejoice and be glad in it"* (Psalm 118:24). Live for today, fully abandoned to what God has for you today.

Matthew 6:28-34 says, *“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”* We are called to live from our position in heaven and God only lives in the now. As we press into His heart today, then He will prepare us for the “tomorrows” of our lives. And when you face tomorrow, know that it is already today!

Daddy God has great "ah-ha" moments, great encounters with His Spirit, and revelation that He desires to drop into your heart! When those moments in your life come, don't halt your lives! Don't be too eager to build an altar and stay in that place the rest of your life, because God has so much in store for you. He wants to impart His heart into you, so you can reach those who've yet to encounter Him themselves. So, learn all you can from that encounter, grab a stone, and live full on for Jesus.