

## Process vs Possession

Last week I talked about the cross and how Jesus paid not only for our salvation and sins to be wiped away but to give us abundant life. Everything He did on the cross and in shedding His blood in 7 places had great significance to our lives today.

God has a process for everything He does and everything He wants us to do to obtain possession of His promises. Salvation is a process, not a one-time event. Sanctification is a process, not a one-time experience. These things are a process of continual pursuit and transformation to obtain possession of glorification when He takes us home.

**1 Corinthians 1:18** *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are **being** saved it is the power of God.*

Just because you were saved doesn't mean you are saved. You have to continue to walk in surrender in the process of God's salvation.

**Luke 9:23** *Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow Me.*

When we refuse to go through His process, we never come to possess the things He has for us.

Many are in love with the possession but wanting to bypass the process; some are in the process but never able to progress to possession.

We love the possession(s) of God but we hate the idea of going through the process to get it.

Just like anything in else in life, there is a process before there is a possession. We love clean laundry (the possession) but hate doing the laundry (the process). We love eating but most do not like the process of cooking it, ordering it and especially waiting on it. We just like to eat it.

Revival: Everyone loves the idea of possessing revival, but very few want to go through the process of revival. Revival starts with repentance and ends in revival but no one likes the process of repenting to get to revival.

The road to revival starts with repentance, then to reconciliation, then restoration, then reinstatement and finally ends in revival. Repentance is painful, we realize we've done wrong, hurt God, maybe others too and have to humble ourselves to admit it. Then we have to confess it and be willing to face our mistake(s) and allow God to discipline us. But through that process we come out refreshed through being made right and restored. Everyone loves God's times of refreshing but the Bible says that only comes through repentance. Acts 3:19 is the only mention of it in the whole Bible and is centered on repentance.

**Acts 3:19** *Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

There is a process to go through and trying to avoid the process to take possession will always end in delays, missed blessings, disqualification for promises, extended time in the wilderness and sometimes bondage.

Moses lost his temper and it cost him dearly each time. He killed a man in anger, spent 40yrs in the desert of Midian. Then later spent 40 days directly in the presence of God and comes back to an idolatry fest and immediately loses his temper and destroyed God's word for the people. It cost him 40 more days and a ton of work cutting new stone tablets.

Later on, again he lost his temper and struck a rock instead of speaking to it like God said and he spent 40yrs wandering around a mountain looking at his promise that would never be possessed because he refused the process of God.

**Refusing the process of God will cost you the possession of the promise.**

Moses missed the promise land because he refused to go through the process God prescribed. Caleb had to wait 45 years longer than he should have to take possession of what God promised him (Joshua 14) because of someone else's refusal to go through the process. Even so, Caleb was faithful to the process of God and took possession of his promise with the strength of his 40 year old self at age 85. Sometimes your process will delay someone's possession if you don't progress. Caleb was different. Even God said he had a different spirit. He wasn't born in Egypt, he was a child of exodus which means he wasn't born in bondage with the slave mentality. He wasn't born in bondage but in freedom. He and all his generation were who took possession of the promise land but they had to wait for the bondage, slave minded generation to die. Let that sink in...

**Process vs Possession: too many want the possession without going through the process to get it while others get stuck in the process and never follow through to obtain possession.**

Are you in love with His possessions but hate His process or are you in love with the process and unwilling to commit to taking ownership of what He wants you to possess?

**You cannot skip God's process to take possession of God's promise. You'll miss the blessing of the promise and the benefit of the process.**

The process is meant to teach you things, to grow you, stretch you, develop character, strengthen hope and build your faith. Be willing to go through the process to take possession of the promise.

What are you doing to obtain the things God has for you?

Some people try to shortcut the process. Some think they can give an offering as a way to purchase the anointing. Be careful! There is no shortcut to the anointing or the power of God.

**Acts 8:9-25** *Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, 10 and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is rightly called the Great Power of God." 11 They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. 12 But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw. 14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. 15 When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money 19 and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." 20 Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! 21 You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. 22 Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. 23 For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin." 24 Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me." 25 After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages.*

Simon was in love with the possessions of God but hated the process. Peter called him out for his inner wickedness. He was full of selfishness and pride wanting to steal the glory of God for himself. Peter told him to repent and to pray God forgives him for such a sinful act. But Simon asked Peter to pray for him instead because he loved the idea of forgiveness, the possession, but hated the process, praying and being intimate with God on his own. Instead he wanted the people who had been intimate with God, who had put in the time and work to be close with God to take care of his burdens for him so he could reap all the benefits without any of the work.

Just like the people of Israel when God invited them to all come up to the mountain where He was and they had hard hearts and said no and sent Moses instead. Moses, you go and come back and tell us what God has said. They wanted the benefits and things of God without the intimacy. You can't get close to God through someone else's relationship with God.

Our focus is wrong in the modern church. We have a wrong model for how things work in a New Testament church. We want to use an Old Testament model of coming in, everything centered around church when we're supposed to be a sending church that goes out. The idea you have to invite people to church so the preacher or evangelist can get them saved is wrong. You're supposed to get equipped here to go out there and win the lost. If you don't feel you can win someone to Jesus then you're not doing your part to be equipped, you're not sure enough in your own relationship with Jesus to say you know Him well enough to share Him with others and/or you're not confident in your everyday living to be an effective witness to share your faith with others. The Church has stopped praying, stopped reading, stopped studying, stopped repenting, stopped committing, stopped responding, stopped being sensitive and grown cold towards the Holy Spirit which is why our nation is in the shape it's in. Don't you blame a politician or a party or a belief system or ideology for the state of our nation. Look in the mirror and ask, "What have I done to neglect my duty to let this happen on my watch?" How long will we be tolerant of complacency, apathy and indifference before we turn back to God wholeheartedly? How can we expect a nation to do what we ourselves refuse to do?

In John 5:1-9 there's a man at the pool of Bethesda who'd been stuck in a feeble sick condition for 38yrs. Jesus walked in and asked him if he wanted well. Let's read it.

**John 5:1-9** *After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had. 5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" 7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me." 8 Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your mat and walk." 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.*

He gave all the excuses of why he couldn't be healed but Jesus simply told him to get up, take his mat and walk. He was healed because he took a hold of a word and left behind what he'd lived in. The man had to do 3 things: 1) Get up - which means be willing to be released from the condition. 2) Take his mat - which means pick up the thing that represents comfort and complacency. 3) Walk - which means be willing to move from where you're sick and comfortable and go to the place of freedom.

The pool is like church; it's what people think is the answer but it's not the pool, it's not the water, it's not the people there who refuse to help, it's Jesus and His word that is the answer.

When the man obeyed what Jesus said, believed it and then literally walked in it, he was healed. Too many people say yes to believing, yes to wanting but fall short of actually putting their feet to work the words of their lips.

What are you depending on others to do for you? Are you expecting “the pool” (the church) to be the answer for you instead of Jesus?

When Jesus shows up, he confronts our complacency and excuses to see if we really want what He offers or if we just like the attention we get because of our condition.

How often do you pray for what you ask everyone else to pray for in your life? Don't you ask for prayer if you have no intention of praying for it yourself. We are not your answer and we are not your prayer life.

We are not your process so you can shortcut God to get to the possession by avoiding the process. If you want closer to God, then spend time with Him alone every day, every chance you get.

**Intimacy demands privacy.** If you are never private with God, you can never expect Him to share more of Himself with you. You don't get to know someone better by sharing them in a group setting. You learn how they really are when you're alone together, behind closed doors with no one looking, in private. There is where you learn their heart, their ways, their secrets and their true heart.

**This man had to repent of a way of life for 38 years in order to step into the process of God and receive the possession of his healing in Jesus Christ.**

**He had to hear the message, believe the message and then apply the message to his life.** If you never hear the message, you cannot receive or believe what you've not heard. If you hear but refuse to believe, you can't receive. If you hear and believe but never apply it to your life, you will forever be in the process and never progress to the possession.

Many love the idea of God healing them but have no desire to change their lifestyle. Many sicknesses can be reversed with a change of lifestyle. Why would you ask God to heal you of high blood sugar if you refuse to regulate your diet? Or high cholesterol or high blood pressure that most of the time can be fixed with a dietary change. But we want Jesus to heal us and make our bodies like a newborn again so we can have fun clogging up our arteries all over again. God is a good steward of His gifts. Oftentimes people don't get healed because God knows the intent of their heart. He sees they have no desire to change anything so He being the good Father He is, doesn't reward bad behavior which will spoil the child.

What have you been holding onto and made a way of life?

What do you need to repent of?

God has a process for everything He does; maybe you've been trying to shortcut the process to get to the possession.

Maybe you're stuck in the process and not progressing towards the possession when God has said “Go take the land” or “Get up, take up your mat and walk!”

Are you refusing to get up? Are you willing to take up your mat? Will you walk out of where you're comfortable and walk into where God is calling you in His freedom?

The altar is open for you to get up, bring your mat and walk.