

Encounter with the Gospel

Zerubbabel — We talked last night about the radical demands of the gospel and radical life it produces. When the sent ones came to Chazaq's house, there was a tremendous contrast between his response and his wife's response. She had visited the Community with him, and she knew what the life was like. She knew what it would demand of her, and it was the stench of death to her. She knew that her sovereignty was at stake.

That's really what the life we live together does — it emphasizes the gospel; it's the "play" that goes along with the "narration." Without the play many people don't understand that their life is going to be demanded of them — their sovereignty, their freedom, time for themselves, the way they do things, where they live and what they do. Words alone don't get through to them. Christians have read the words over and over again, "Oh, yeah, give up everything. I've done that. I've given everything up in my heart..." But when they see the life that goes with the words, it separates the gnostics from those who are actually willing to do our Father's will.

For Chazaq, it was the fragrance of life. He was fed up with running his own life. He realized he wasn't doing a good job of it and he didn't want to do it anymore. He just wanted to pour out his strength in a way that was actually going to build the Kingdom of God. But his wife saw the community life and thought of her little independent life with all her little comforts and shopping sprees. It made things all too clear. She loved her life in this world, and Chazaq hated it.

Sho'er — *Radical* means getting to the root. If you go back to the root, you go back to Acts 2 and 4. That's the lifestyle the gospel produced and that's what has to be restored on the earth. What greater calling could there be than the restoration of all things? The Holy Spirit has come on the earth to restore all things, and part of that restoration is Acts 2 and 4 — the lifestyle and the culture of the Twelve Tribes. It's not the culture of the world. It's radically different. It's not going on shopping sprees and doing whatever you want and living wherever you want and having your own life. It's denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Him. That produces a life of love that can only be done through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are getting back to the root — the very foundation of the gospel and what it produces. Without that lifestyle you've received another gospel, because community is what the true gospel produces.

Did Chazaq have an encounter with the gospel? Did his wife have an encounter? Or did both? If you look up the word *encounter*, you'll see that it's not a neutral term. It

means a hostile confrontation, a difficult struggle, an unexpected conflict of wills or opinions. It comes from the Latin word *contra*, which means *against*.

Did Abraham have an encounter with our Father when He came to him and told him what to do? Was it a conflict?

Shoer — If so, it was very short, because he completely surrendered to our Father's will.

It wasn't an encounter for long, was it? We have to encounter people. For some it is an encounter with this new lifestyle. But with Chazaq it wasn't an encounter. He received it. He was willing to do our Father's will. He started hearing the words of our Master through the sent ones. He received because he was willing to do our Father's will. Abraham was willing to do our Father's will. Our Father chose Abraham, or He *knew* Abraham, as it says in another translation. He knew Abraham would command his household after him, and his children, to keep the way of Yahweh and do righteousness and justice, in order that our Father could bring about what He promised him.

We are all like Abraham. We received the gospel the same way he did. It wasn't a conflict. Somehow we were willing. Like our guests yesterday — for the wife it was not an encounter, but it's still a conflict with the man. He's judging how we are, wanting to make sure his children will be taken care of. So what is he going to do with his children out in the world? What is their eternal destiny going to be? The conflict is there because he is not willing. Perhaps he will change.

For Melody it wasn't an encounter; she was easy pickin' — she fell right off the tree. She was willing to do our Father's will. She was ready. The holy angels led her to go to that rock concert. It was the first time she had ever been to one, and it was just to meet us.

For some people it is not an encounter with them because they don't even understand the gospel. There is nothing in them. They just go on and on, listening and

listening, and it never does anything to them. I think I would rather it be a conflict than to just be so dull that you can't hear what you have to do in order to be saved.

Sho'er — The world is stamping out more and more people who are absolutely brain dead when it comes to the gospel. They just aren't there anymore. They are walking around with some kind of spiritual shock treatment. The evil one is trying to level people to the point that it's not an encounter, it's not a conflict, because they've got nothing going on inside their soul anymore. They've been dehumanized.

I'm thankful that there is a witness coming on the earth that can cause that encounter. Somewhere it says, "so that they can come to their senses..." The encounter has to shock them into reality, something that is vivid and loud and affects your senses when you encounter the gospel. It is this full-time, radical life that is so much different from the world — the high-definition, three-dimensional reality of the Body of Messiah. It should cause sensory overload if you are not completely leveled. Of course, Satan's plan is to completely level everyone so that when they encounter the gospel it doesn't penetrate the façade.

I'm thankful there are still people out there who are not that way, or who are teetering on the edge of becoming leveled, but the gospel can still shock them back into reality, and they can wake up and come to their senses and be saved. Our lifestyle is going to shock people. It's not that it's an abnormal lifestyle, but it is an abnormal society.

We water everyone and the true wheat will start growing and the tares will raise up their proud heads. They don't humble themselves. Their heads become black while the wheat becomes golden and bows down. In time we see who our brothers and sisters are. Don't go pulling up those you think are weeds. What you think is a weed may be wheat. Don't judge prematurely. We love everyone and the wheat grows and produces wonderful fruit.

Holding up our hands mean we surrender to Him and give our bodies as a living sacrifice.