

## THE TWO WAYS

As I was praying about the next season I felt strongly that what is coming is not a new season, but a whole new era. A time which is more significant than any other time on earth in terms of the church being shaken into the purposes of God. Seasons will merge as we move forward, just as the seasons on earth are being mixed up and weather patterns are surprising forecasters, so the church will begin to be unsettled as the winds of change begin to blow on all that is 'known'.

At the start of this time I saw two pathways opening up before each child of God. One was a flat path – called '**Known**' and the other was a steep and winding path called '**Unknown**'. Along the first pathway were many words 'of man'. The way ahead from the beginning of this pathway seemed to be clear – with a clear destiny/destination. Many voices could be heard discussing the best way to walk along this pathway. Along the second pathway were many words of the Lord. The way ahead for this path twists and turns and it is only possible to see a short way ahead. One voice can be clearly heard amidst the stillness and relative silence along the path.

I knew that both pathways were costly to build and costly to walk on everywhere there were many places at which a 'toll' must be paid in order to go on.

The starting point is the same for both paths – they joined together at the beginning and it was possible to start with one foot on each path. But then they widened sharply and the only way to make a step forward was to choose which path to take. Each path was diagonally opposed and it was almost impossible to see the other path once the first steps were taken.

Each 'step' on both paths required choices - life choices, relationship choices, position and place choices. Once the first steps were taken there was no more opportunity to have a foot on both paths, as one path is the way of human choices and the other is one of abandonment to the leading of the Holy Spirit. However, the Lord was present on both paths. He was close to all who were walking on each of the paths. Once a decision was been made and the path was taken it was impossible to 'view' the other path. This was the grace and mercy of God to avoid confusion and judgement among the people.

Also, once a path had been chosen it was almost impossible to turn back. Both paths had the presence and purposes of God on each side. But they were very different.

The 'known' path will be for those who have faith to do great things for God. Those who take this path will find that they get what they have faith for. Much 'success' will be evident and the Lord will be present to speak wisdom to whoever will hear. Prophetic voices can be heard on this path and they are true voices – those who have seen what the Lord wants to do and many of the saints on this path are

courageous and confident in the Lord, eager to serve him and willing to pay the price to see God's will done on earth.

The 'unknown' path looks very different. Everyone on this path starts off on their faces, empty of all confidence in their own ability. These people have faith in God, but have been brought to the end of their own strength. All old visions and dreams have become meaningless to them as they realise this is a new era and that they have nothing in themselves to bring. Badges of success from the past, though valid and true, are irrelevant for the new path. Each one on this path is aware of great weakness in their own ability. They start to walk almost like they are crawling, almost flat on their faces, holding on to hope in the strength of Christ. Few voices can be heard at the start of this path and there is only one prophetic voice to be heard at the beginning – it is a simple phrase repeated over these prostrate saints – “let him who has ears, hear, what the Spirit is saying”.

The two paths lay before us, **Known and Unknown**. The Unknown – where the Holy Spirit is totally in control. The Known – where people work hard to serve the Lord,

Both paths are populated with God's children.

The starting point for the Unknown path is realisation, recognition and relinquishment of any vestige of self-reliance or expectation of ability to do anything in human strength. This starting point is not a choice – it's a position, where self is at an end – personal 'bankruptcy'; a crashing from self – weakness, wretchedness, blindness, and poverty of spirit – of self.

Helpless but not hopeless.

There's stillness, a silence, not even sighs or sobs – for these have gone before. At this place sighs are really too deep to be uttered. The last breath of confidence in self is expelled.

Leadership on this path will be sacrificial to God and man – it will be to release people.

A new kind of church will emerge – built by the Spirit of God and populated by those who hear and see what the Spirit is saying and doing. Any other way will be untenable on this path.

Badges of success gained before this point in time will be meaningless. They will be a hindrance and distraction. For it is not what has gone before that will count – it will be each step forward into God's purposes, led by the Spirit. This is a new era.

New Era

You can't read about it, learn about it, think about it or talk about it for it is not like any time before. It requires a place and position of surrender – to human plans or God's leading.

Each path will be populated across the span of diversity in the church – from Catholic, Orthodox expressions, through to Pentecostal and Charismatic – all coming together by the Spirit of God.

This is the time for choices. Many people have been struggling in the past few weeks, unsure of what is happening and why they are feeling so unsettled. They know that something is about to change but are not seeing the way ahead. The next few months will be a time of significant choices. Even the smallest choice could have great significance. The choices will reflect the chosen path.

Let us pray for right choices, courage and commitment.

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