

Sermon Title: What Do You Want? April 18, 2010 (Scripture is from ESV)

Scripture Reading: 1Kings 3:5

Introduction

Good afternoon church. My name is John-Michael Becker and I am the lay pastor here at New Philadelphia Itaewon. If this is your first Sunday with us I want to welcome you here. Today marks our third service here at King Bar. I have a message to share with you all today, but first I want to share some background about myself and the words and visions God has given for this church.

Background about Me

I came to Korea at the end of 2005 to serve full time at an orphanage in Seoul called Geon Christian Children's Home. I have been serving at the home for the past four years and I live as a missionary here in Korea. I have also set up a children's home volunteering ministry called Jerusalem Ministry that has volunteers from various churches around Seoul serving at nine different homes around the city. God has given me a vision to eventually go into North Korea and establish children homes there for the many impoverished youth.

Since my very first Sunday here in Korea I have been serving at New Philadelphia Church, which was formerly known as JSEM. I have served in various capacities within the church as a prayer team member, a Bible study teacher, a deacon, and the healing and deliverance ministry coordinator. When Pastor Christian cast the vision for the Itaewon church plant last December I was initially filled with fear and wanted to remain at Hillside and keep my usual responsibilities. But within just a few minutes of praying that same night about the church plant I suddenly felt an excitement rising up within me. I knew God was telling me to step out in faith. While being a pastor for a church was never in my own plans, I could see God had set up this church plant to teach me about spiritual warfare, about His glory, and prepare me for leading a larger group into North Korea. Pastor Christian called me a few days later to ask if I would lead this church plant and I quickly agreed. It wouldn't be until late January that the team of 10 was established.

Prophetic Words for New Philadelphia Itaewon

As time has passed since I accepted leadership over the church plant God has been releasing a lot of prophetic words for this church. I want to share just a few that have really resonated with me.

Right after accepting the leadership position over the church plant I e-mailed my prayer supporters and informed them. I received a reply from one of my supporters who lives in Taiwan, Mike. I was surprised because I hadn't heard from him in nearly two years and wasn't sure if he was still receiving my e-mails. In his e-mail he wrote just this...

"As I was praying about the new church plant, I had a strong impression of a river flowing through the church. The "River of Life." Praise the Lord!"

That was it. I share this one because it was the first word given to me about the church, two because it was from someone who I never receive replies from so I knew it had to be a strong impression for him to e-mail me, and three because I was already feeling in my spirit that God is going to bring a mighty wave of healing through this church. The River of Life in Revelation 22 is described as having trees on either side of it with leaves meant for the healing of the nations. I don't think it is coincidence that countries from all around the world

are represented in this area of Itaewon. I believe the healing God is going to release through this church will not just touch Korea but will touch the nations. Amen!

Last March another prayer supporter of mine who lives in America, Susy, sent me an e-mail with a word about our church. Just the day before Pastor Christian and I had decided to go with King Bar as our church location, with King Bar being on the same hill as “Hooker Hill” (a strip of prostitution joints on one side), “Homo Hill” (a strip of transgender bars on the other side), and the largest Muslim mosque in Korea. I had yet to inform my prayer supporters about the church location when I got this e-mail from Susy...

“just wanted you to know that i was praying for new philly itaewon, and i was envisioning a hill covered with houses crammed against each other, and then a huge hand (God's) came and grabbed that hill. i know that itaewon isn't a hill (is it?), but i felt like maybe God's hand will just grab that mountain and shake it like never before... it was a good feeling, like He was claiming it for Himself, laying a hold of it. yeaaaaah. exciting.”

A prayer supporter of mine from here in Korea, Nathan, e-mailed me this note...

“I had a vision of King Bar being consumed in flames, there was a ring of fire that spread 50-100 meters out from Kings Bar. (I could hear God say) ‘My fire will consume Kings Bar and spread.’”

A number of people have said to me, “Expect an open heaven. Pray for it.”

Recently words from a well known prophet Bob Jones were posted on different Christian websites. The postings read...

Recently Bob was told that churches will become hospitals and bars will become churches. According to Webster’s dictionary, a hospital is an institution that provides medical or surgical care or treatment for the sick and the injured.

Isaiah 26:9b says, *when your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness.* (AMP)

As the world grows darker and darker and all that can be shaken is shaken, the church will become brighter and brighter. The light or glory of the Lord will arise upon the church and through His bride, and all who come shall be healed. The Healer has never left the church; the church has abandoned her duties. The world will come to the church to be healed spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, financially, socially and sexually.

Bars or taverns will become churches. They will become a natural watering hole or well of redemption. **God is going to redeem all things for His purposes.** Bars currently advertise “spirits” now they will know “The Spirit”; the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Holiness, the Spirit of Love and Righteousness, the Holy Spirit of God! Now when they belly up to the bar they will come away full of the Holy Ghost with the expression of tongues in their mouths and fire in their bellies.

It is time for the church to begin building barns; it’s harvest time! Barns are the people coming together in home meetings where they learn to grow in their gifting and exercise their

faith. They are the harvesters! We're moving from the faith in God to a season of having the faith of God.

Jeremiah 22:3a says, *execute justice and righteousness and deliver out of the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed.* (AMP)

The harvesters will be able to deliver those oppressed by the spirit of this world and as they are delivered, God's justice and righteousness is restored.

Amen!

Churches to Hospitals

What is interesting is that the vision of New Philadelphia Church is to raise up an army of mighty warriors who will go out in the anointing of the Holy Spirit to bind up the brokenhearted and proclaim freedom for the captives. New Philadelphia Church has already been fulfilling the word that churches will become hospitals. In late 2006 demons began to manifest among certain members of the church and they were in need of deliverance. A deliverance ministry was soon established in the church and we have seen so many broken people enter the church and receive mighty healing and deliverance from their scars and bondages of the past.

The staff of the church alone includes leaders who have been delivered and healed from sexual addictions, drug addictions, committing abortion, and deep bondage to bulimia. And they aren't ashamed to share about their past! They have not just been healed and delivered from the sin and the scars of sin, but they have also been freed from the shame and guilt that Satan had thrown on them. They are new creations who are on fire for God! And these testimonies don't end with the staff, but nearly all of the leadership of the church have had their own healing and deliverance sessions along with many members and visitors. Because Korea is such a transient place for foreigners we have seen so many people come through our church for a year or even just a few months and experience God's freedom and power and then return to their home country on fire for God.

Just this past week I had the privilege of leading a healing and deliverance session for a leader at New Philadelphia Hillside. She is Korean and was the second daughter of her family. When she was born her parents were deeply disappointed she was not a son and for most of her life she had lived under that knowledge, with her parents even showing a lot of favoritism to her older sister. This deep scar she received the moment she was first held by her disappointed mother deepened throughout her childhood and eventually led to her becoming vulnerable to other scars and sins.

During the healing portion of the session in prayer I led her through some of her toughest memories of experiencing the rejection and disappointment of her parents. I knew that the root of her scars started at her birth so, in prayer, I led her into the memory of when she was born. By God's Spirit she could see the hospital room. She could see her being presented by the doctor and nurses to her mom and her dad. She could see the deep disappointment on her mother's face and she could see her dad trying to keep positive while trying to hide his own disappointment. She could see the doctors and nurses were happy to see such a healthy baby, but her mom was downtrodden. Now we know that Jesus never leaves us nor forsakes us (Hebrews 13:5) and that He is with us always (Matthew 28:20), so in prayer we invited Jesus into the memory and asked Him to reveal Himself. Her tears of sadness turned into tears of joy as she could see Jesus also standing by the hospital bed. He was so happy and was

delighting over her. In her vision she could see Him lifting her out her depressed mother's arms and into His embrace. He then spoke words of love and promise over her. He told her that while her parents had desired a son, God had planned from the beginning that she would be a daughter and that He has His own special reasons and plans for her.

With the help of my team I led her through her other memories and through confession and repentance of her past sins. At the end of the session I asked her how she felt and she shared, "I feel free" and "I feel so loved." You could see how lighter she looked. God is good!

Bars to Churches

So I believe the first part Bob Jones' word is already being fulfilled at New Philadelphia. Our church helps serve as a hospital for believers who have fallen away or who have been hurt or scarred. And for his second word, that bars will become churches... well, here we are in King Bar. But simply meeting in a bar is not a fulfillment of what he spoke. We now need to expect the other prophetic words to be fulfilled as well and for King Bar and the area around us to be redeemed. We need to expect and claim that the Holy Spirit will become a River of Life throughout this area.

And this leads me into a very simple message for you all today. The title of the message is, "What Do You Want?" Please turn with me to John 14:12-14...

John 14:12-14 – Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these he will do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you **ask** in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you **ask me** anything in my name, I will do it.

I want to point out that Jesus emphasized that need to ask for Him to do it. He said that twice. Now turn with me to 1Kings 3:5...

1Kings 3:5 – At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "**Ask** what I shall give you."

This is the word I feel God has for us in this hour: "**What do you want?**"

Now I'm not saying God is a genie or Santa Claus, but Scripture clearly so that if we ask Him of something we will receive if we ask in faith (Matthew 21:22). I believe a lot of the church, speaking of the global body of believers, has missed out because we have not been asking. Many Christians have a mindset that, "I need to keep humble and obedient to God. I will choose to be thankful no matter what happens. I know I will receive blessings at some point, whether in this life or the next." While this mindset seems honorable, I believe it is flat out wrong. And I believe this mindset has limited God's work among the believers today.

An analogy would be if you were sitting under an apple tree and an apple fell into your lap, and you chose to rejoice and thank God for the apple and treasure the apple, **while there are so many more apples right above you just waiting to be picked.**

The Bible is clear in Galatians 6:7 that "You reap what you sow." But I believe many Christians have so faithfully sown over their lives, but have never gone out to reap. It would be like a farmer who plows the fields, plants the seeds, faithfully waters them, but then goes into his house and waits at his table for the food to be brought to him. No farmer would ever do that. Instead he goes out and reaps the harvest.

I believe as a result of the obedience of New Philadelphia going forward with this church plant, as a result of the faithfulness of the church plant team in preparing and giving generously towards this church, and also the fact that the harvest is *plentiful* here in Itaewon, God desires us to reap violently. And He desires for us to reap more than just lost souls here in this area. God is about to blow us away. But like with King Solomon, He is looking for us to first ask. We are His friends and children and God wants to bless us. So how do we ask and receive these blessings? I have two keys for you all. Two simple keys. Are you ready?

I am Worthy

The first key is this: “**Knowing I am worthy to receive.**” In order to reap anything, we first need to know we are worthy to receive.

Repeat after me, “**I am redeemed.**” “**I am a child of God.**” “**I am a friend of God.**” “**I am loved and accepted by God.**” “**I am royalty** (1Peter 2:9).” “**I am worthy.**”

You are worthy to receive from God. **You are worthy!** Hebrews 4:16 says we are to approach the throne of grace *with confidence*. So many Christians put a ceiling over themselves for how much blessings they are allowed to receive. When they are doing well in their walk they might raise the ceiling and expect some extra blessings. And then when they struggle in their walk they bring the ceiling down and expect punishment rather than any blessing at all. But how many of you know that there is no ceiling to God’s love?

God’s love is not based on works. We are not God’s servants. We are God’s sons! That alone makes us worthy to receive from God. Even the prodigal who had done everything to deserve punishment instead received love and gifts from his father. So right away, no matter where we are at in our walk, we need to know we are worthy of receiving from God. God **LOVES** you. Please turn to Romans 8:32...

Romans 8:32 – He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things.

Reflect on that verse (read it again).

Many Christians in prayer will approach God, “God, I know I haven’t been as faithful as I should and I know I don’t deserve much, but could you please just grant me this small request...?” What mindset is that? *God already gave His Son for us*, and that was when we were sinners!!! Jesus is far more valuable to God than all the stars in the sky and all the creatures on earth. And God gave Jesus up for us!!! So not only are we made worthy to receive from God through Jesus’ sacrifice, but we now know that we can ask for *anything*. When we were still sinners God gave us His Son! Now that we are saved, how much more are we to know that God has deemed us worthy to receive *anything* from Him.

So key number one, “You are worthy to receive.” Jesus died for you. He loves you, no matter where you are in your life. His love never fails. His love never ends. He loves you. You are worthy. One more time repeat after me, “**I am worthy!**” Amen!

Spell It Out

The second key to reaping is, “**Spell it out.**” Be clear about what you want. You are exercising faith every time you ask.

Psalm 2:8 – Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

God says “Ask!” When the Israelites first came out of Egypt they never asked God for anything. They all but ignored God. Instead they complained to Moses or grumbled amongst themselves. And these same Israelites never entered into the land God had promised for them. God **had promised** the land to them, **and they never got it!** They never asked for it. They never said they really wanted it.

We are never to expect God to just give to us or to fulfill His promises for us without us doing a thing. This mindset is fatalistic, lazy, and faithless. It would be like visiting a sick relative in the hospital and saying, “God said by His stripes you are healed, but it seems to me your pretty sick. I guess you are meant to be sick until God chooses to heal you. Good luck.” By just expecting God to give to us whenever He wants we are removing ourselves from relationship with Him. **We are doubting our standing with God and acting out of fear of disappointment or letdown rather than acting out of faith and the knowledge that God does all things for our good.**

Before Jesus went up to heaven He instructed the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high. So what did the disciples do? They returned to Jerusalem and devoted themselves to prayer. They had received a promise from Jesus and they wanted it fulfilled. And sure enough the Holy Spirit came down on them with power only ten days after Jesus’ ascension.

The journey out of Egypt into the Promised Land could have been done in just weeks or even days according to most estimates, but instead the Israelites wandered for 40 years because they never pressed in and asked God for the Promised Land. Imagine if the first disciples never devoted themselves to prayer? Rather than 10 days it could have been 20 years before the start of the church.

In John 5 Jesus went to an area where there were many blind, lame, and paralyzed people. According to Scripture **Jesus only healed one of them**, and only after asking the man, “Do you want to be healed?” Jesus wanted to hear the man exercise faith. He wanted to hear the man ask. Out of Jesus’ grace He did heal some who never asked, but we clearly see in John 5 that He did not heal everyone around Him. But as for those who requested healing, we **never read once** of Jesus refusing to heal them, no matter their background. **Jesus healed every person who asked** for His touch. It is critical to ask! It is critical to pray!

The cripple that Jesus healed is never named in the Bible. But a blind man who cried out to Jesus for his healing was clearly named in the Gospels. His name was Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52). Bartimaeus cried out to Jesus so much for his healing that he was rebuked by the disciples. But Jesus instead called Bartimaeus to Him. Jesus had huge crowds wanting His attention, **but Jesus chose to stop and call** this blind beggar to Him. Jesus chose to show honor to this man and the Gospel writers took note of this.

In the first 9 chapters of 1Chronicles there are lists of genealogies. Name after name after name. But amidst all the names, the author chooses to set aside a few verses for one person who isn’t even listed in the genealogies. To the people of his time likely this man was not that important, but in God’s sight he deserved great honor.

1Chronicles 4:9-10 – Jabez was more honorable than his brothers; and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, “Because I bore him in pain.” Jabez called upon the God of Israel, saying, “Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my border, and that your hand might be with me, and that you would keep me from harm so that it might not bring me pain!” And God granted what he asked.

Jabez knew his identity in God. He knew that God is loving. He knew that God listens to him. He knew that he was made in God’s image and chosen by God. And so he called upon God’s name and God blessed him. And God even honored him amidst all the genealogies of the people of Israel.

What Do You Want?

So church, I believe God is asking us in this hour, “What do you want?” What do you want for this church? What do you want for your workplace? What do you want for your personal life? He wants us to spell it out. He wants us to pray and ask out of the identity of knowing we are worthy to receive from Him.

Let me tell you what I want. I want to see the River of Life flowing through this area. I want to see God reach down and take a hold of this hill. I want to see the prostitute healed and affirmed in her identity in God. I want to see the gays and lesbians discover a love that is better than life. I want to see Muslims on their knees in love and reverence toward God. I want to see God’s glory. Moses asked God, “Show me Your glory” and God showed him His glory. I believe this is the same request God wants to hear from us. Show us Your glory God!

I believe God has brought many of you here as a foundation for this church. Some of you are already healed, set free, and walking strong with God. Others of you are coming back to the Lord and God is ready to heal you and bless you like never before. I know that as we press in together to see God’s glory that He is going to show up in a mighty way.

Last year while on a mission trip in Myanmar a team member, Kevin, fell into a trance and was taken up into heaven. While in heaven Jesus showed him many different things. Just before the end of his visitation, Jesus spoke to him about our church, New Philadelphia. Here is what Kevin shared...

“Jesus mentioned how much He loved New Philadelphia. How special this church was and how important of a role it will be playing in preparing for His return. Everything Jesus showed me and said was pointing to His return. He mentioned how His Spirit will be poured out on every member of the church--both new and old--and that everyone will be sent out. There wasn't anything specific in terms of when and where...but when that time comes we'll know.”

I believe we are nearing the fulfillment of this word, and I want to ask you all to join me in praying it through. It will only be through the Spirit’s presence that Itaewon can be healed and blessed. And I believe this power is not just for this area, but also for our families, our workplaces, and for us personally as well. God is about to do something amazing and He is asking us, “What do you want?” We are worthy to receive. And we need to ask and claim his promises.

Jeremiah 33:3 – Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.