

Prophetic Word: The River is Calling You

Recently I had the opportunity to attend one of the most powerful events that I have ever been impacted by called the Forerunner Conference (Bristol, Virginia). This event was hosted by Apostle Ryan LeStrange, with special guest Apostle Dutch Sheets, Prophet Jennifer LeClaire, and anointed worship through Annie Edwards and New Sound Worship and Psalmist Naomi Raine.

It truly is an understatement to tell you that the conference was life-changing. I realize we often find ourselves saying the same thing when describing an event we got to be a part of. However, for me as well as for many others, there was something significantly different about this event. During the first night of the conference, the Lord began speaking to me concerning our position as leaders and what must be done to advance the kingdom of God. It would turn out to be a process about which I did not fully get the understanding at the beginning, nor the liberty to say anything about the word until the second night of the conference.

I heard the Lord say:

Many have developed themselves at the well because they know the encounters that they have had with Jesus. They've gone back to the well in order to draw from previous encounters, but the mandate is shifting to the river. What you do in the river will cause the shift of the heavens to declare. What you do in the river must be done. In the river, there is going to be the releasing of a strategic anointing. Not a strategy, but strategic. Strategy is a plan, but the plan has already been birthed, and the depth of the river will shift you into strategic. No longer will the need be to keep going back to dip from the well. Dive deep into the river that the

heavens will open and declare. The river is calling for the forerunners who will become the Father's, who are willing to have the mandate to do what must be done.

The Well

We must recognize that somewhere along the way, we had an encounter that forever shifted our perception or understanding of who we are. Many of us could accurately describe that moment to being very similar to the woman at the well (John 4:7-30) when she had an encounter with Jesus. This is the image that came to me when the Lord began speaking to me concerning wells.

Many individuals, no matter how long they have served the Lord, relate to a moment in time where they had a revelation of not only who Jesus was to them, but who they are to Jesus. However, over a period of time, life begins to throw its curve balls and challenges, and we find ourselves struggling to grow from that revelation, seeming to end up in a rut.

During those seasons, we often go back to that same well to dip from the same experience to reignite the fire/passion that once burned within us. We soon discover that it works for a moment. So we go back to the well to dip again. Only each time we go back, we learn that the fire doesn't burn as long as it did before.

With each trip we make back, we become more mundane and routine, therefore becoming an image of what we once were. In other words, we simply become religious. Caught up in doing the same thing over and over again. Hoping to produce the same results we have become so familiar with.

As great an impact that the well has been in our lives, it has created a void of purpose. It was at the well that you received the true identity of Jesus in your life. From there, you were released into your assignment, and you burned with

passion. Sadly, many became overwhelmed with life and simply made choices to go back to that same well, recreating purpose instead of creating from revelation.

The River

The immediate image that I got when I heard the word concerning the river was the scene of John the Baptist and Jesus in the River Jordan. The Scripture (Matt. 3:13-17) tells us that when John baptized Jesus in the river, the heavens opened up with the voice of the Lord declaring Jesus was the Son of God. Jesus says something very interesting during this moment when he tells John the Baptist that this had to be done in this particular manner. Although John felt insignificant, Jesus was saying He had to be the one to activate the destiny. That's when what God was saying hit me: He is calling for the leaders of today to get back into the river where what they do will open the heavens.

You see, the river has many applications throughout the Word of God and our spiritual walk. However, the most significant is that the river is a place of life. The place where we discover our true identities as sons of God, and the place (spiritually speaking) where we are baptized in Holy Spirit. When we recognize we are positioned in the river, it's the things we set ourselves to do, we discover that heaven will open and declare what is needed for the moment to literally shift into a movement. When we position ourselves from the river, we are no longer running from the enemy, but because of what heaven declares, the enemy is now put on alert to our identity. The amazing thing about this was how Apostle Dutch Sheets would bring a word that not only brought the forefront of this prophetic word, but he shifted the atmosphere, and heaven would be opened with a declaration of reformation that no man could deny.

From Strategy to Strategic

Many of you are waiting for some kind of strategy to move you forward, but I want to go back to something that Prophet Jennifer LeClaire shared in her message on “Dream Wild.” She began to describe how many have already been given dreams, but many had laid the dreams down. They had failed to see the dreams fulfilled for different reasons. When she was speaking, I realized the strategy had already been given. Your dream is your strategy. You have already been given a strategy. The problem is that you laid down that plan.

I believe God is saying unto you that if you will stop dipping from the well of past moments and position yourself in the river again, you will become strategic. Not because you took a position, but because from the place of life you are mandated with a destiny that will shift the heavens to declare the fulfillment of Dreams. Do you see it? Do you understand? God is advancing you from being a planner to a Son who is activated with purpose: what you do in the river. That’s not a strategy, that’s strategic.

Forerunners to Fathers

When you begin to see how this unfolds, it then becomes a reality that God is calling us again to be forerunners. We have to remember that John the Baptist was a forerunner—not only a voice, but also an individual who paved the way for what was coming. You see, a forerunner is someone who is willing to make a way for others when there is no way. A forerunner is someone who isn’t willing to go down the same road again and again, but one who is determined to discover beyond natural limitations or boundaries.

What is interesting in this is the call for forerunners to be fathers. There is a real need in our day to see fathers arise to not only love sons, but to lead sons into their destiny. We need fathers who aren’t wanting a son to become a carbon copy of themselves, but those who are willing to raise sons and set them on their own paths. The only way a father can truly send

a son out into the unknown is for the father to have the DNA within them to be a forerunner themselves. When fathers have no desire to go beyond the realm of the known, they begin to build their private empires to keep everyone close to them at all times. However, when a father has the heart of a forerunner, he will raise sons to discover the revelation of their destiny.

It was the heart of Apostle Ryan LeStrange to invest into the kingdom the purpose of being a forerunner. He not only opened the door for the opportunity but released the assignment of Jehu upon a generation. For many of us, we have never been this way before. And yet, the Lord is calling you to the river. He is calling you to do what must be done and in so doing, Heaven will open and declare the mandate upon your life. What you do as a forerunner is just the beginning, while what you do as a father will turn generations shift the fatherless to their purpose.

The river is calling you! {eoa}

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