

TOWER OF BABEL

Chloe Raum
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Sometimes as I pass through the motions of everyday life, I hear God trying to tell me something. Something big, something profound, something to which I should pay attention. Something to ponder, something to record. For what purpose? That is not always clear in the moment. It is enough to recognize the instruction and to be compelled to obey.

A few days ago I had one of these moments while driving on I-565 past the Space and Rocket Center. It was a moment where I felt that God revealed a profound truth to me ... one of those "light bulb" moments. In an instant, I saw something clearly that I had not realized before. I knew I needed to ponder it, listening for what else might be revealed. I tried to make a mental note to come back to later, when I had time. But later I could not remember, and I felt a profound sense of loss, that somehow carelessly I had discarded something very precious.

How intimately God knows our human frailties! I should not be surprised that He is patient and would simply instruct me again, in much the same way that I repeat myself over and over to my two-year old. So yesterday as I drove down I-565, I heard Him again. Then as I found myself awake in bed this morning in the wee hours, I knew it was time to ponder and write. All is provided ... a quiet house, sleeping children ... and so I meditate on what I heard in the shadow of the towering Saturn V rocket.

Your people in this time are no different than those of old. You squander precious time and resources building your own Tower of Babel. You do this INSTEAD of doing what I have instructed. I created you, I know what you need to have a good life in your time on earth: physically, mentally, spiritually. I have clearly told you what to do. But your people instead neglect the work I have designed you for and pursue your own agenda. You think your way is better than Mine. You dare to believe that you can improve upon

My design! You are as stiff-necked a generation as I have ever seen! Rebellious as the Israelites, proud as the Pharisees. You stand in a time where your knowledge of history is unparalleled, yet instead of learning from it you are doomed to repeat it.

And then I felt the sadness, the agony of watching countless generations self-destruct. The part of me that is created in God's image can comprehend a hint of this pain. It's when I've thoughtfully designed a tool and then it inexplicably doesn't work. It's when I follow the recipe precisely and the bread doesn't rise. My creation is not doing that which it was designed to do. We humans know this sadness, yet understand that our imperfections are likely to be to blame when our creations fail, **but not so with God!** It is not that His design failed; it is that His design included free will.

I do not believe that technology is bad. Certainly God has blessed individuals with the intelligence to discover, reason, and create. What is wrong is when we dare to believe that we have attained the same status as God. When we believe that our designs are better than His. There is nothing that He has created that we can "improve." In our fallen world, there are countless opportunities to attempt to use technology to fix things that are broken. But we deceive ourselves if we believe that we can improve upon God's original design.

The frustration I sense is not that we have dreamed big dreams, probed the mysteries of the universe, or solved complex problems. We were created to do all these things! The frustration is that we pursue these things instead of taking care of the business that God intended for us to do. It is a matter of priorities. As parents, we have no trouble relaying this principle to our children. Children simply must learn to take care of chores before going out to play. They must finish their schoolwork before participating in sports.

So what did God intend for us to do? Worship Him alone. Obey. Garden. Clothe ourselves. Eat food He designed for us. Be fruitful. Multiply. Raise children to obey Him. Tell the truth. Do not covet. Share earth's bounty. Help the weak. Be good stewards. Guess what happens when you focus on doing what God designed you to do? You get a healthy amount of exercise, sunshine, and sleep. You get the nutrition upon which your body was designed to thrive. You recognize your needs and share your excess. You bear fruit. You are content.

These things are not difficult, but too often we view them as mundane. We pick and choose our favorites with which to comply, select a few "chores" that are least repulsive, do a half-hearted job, check our box, and head out to play. We live in the moment for selfish pleasure, and then are surprised when we see the later consequences of our actions ... poor health, failed relationships, squandered resources, lives filled with meaningless pursuits when viewed in hindsight.

So now ... what next? Understanding requires action. Are my priorities aligned with God's principles? How do I spend my time? What percentages of my daily activities are in accordance with God's commands? How are my resources allocated? Am I consuming more than I truly need? Have I taken care of "business" before going out to play?

Occasionally, I have seen the fruits of women who invest their best energy and time in their family and home. Regardless of how much or little her family has, their home is neat and clean. The laundry is clean, folded and put away. There is a menu plan. There is routine and order. Her budget is under control. The needs of the family are met. Once she has mastered the daily routine, she finds extra time to bless others, or to engage in other pleasurable pursuits.

These women are few and far between in our culture. I don't believe it's a magic gene that some are born with; it is a matter of developing self-discipline. It takes time to learn how to manage a home. Many modern women have not had the blessing of being reared in a well-run home, nor

trained to run one themselves. These skills should be acquired before or in the early months of marriage, when a woman has the opportunity to set up her own home. Perhaps a woman will need to learn about nutrition, how to menu plan, and cook real food. A woman must develop insight into how best to meet her family's needs. She must nurture self-control to take care of business before going out to play. The introduction of children into a family requires a learning curve as well. Some knowledge can be acquired beforehand, but all new mothers need time to adjust and learn how to integrate the needs of each new baby into the rhythm of the household.

More often than not, the women I see each day do not have these priorities. They feel that they simply must work outside the home in order to make ends meet. Forty of their most productive hours each week are given to an outside job, and all other obligations must be met with their remaining time and energy. This can be do-able in the years before children or after they leave the nest. However, in the childhood years, these priorities exact a toll that will likely not be fully understood for many years to come.

My lesson for today is to reevaluate my priorities: to be a child of God first, a wife second, a mother third, and to make my home a sanctuary from the chaos of the world. I should be giving my best time and energy to those things which are most important, the ones with eternal consequences. I trust that just as God is patient with reminding me of His truth, so He will also help me to meet my priorities in such a way that there is time and energy left over for the other work He has placed on my heart.