



Connect Notes - 11 June 2013

GRAND DESIGNS: SPARE NOT - Ps Phil Pringle

Sing, O barren, You who have not borne!
Break forth into singing, and cry aloud,
You who have not laboured with child!
For more are the children of the desolate
Than the children of the married woman," says the Lord.
Enlarge the place of your tent,
And let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings;
Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes.
For you shall expand to the right and to the left,
and your descendants will inherit the nations,
and make the desolate cities inhabited. **Isaiah 54:1-3 (NKJV)**

The first thing we are asked to do in this passage is worship, "Sing O barren".

- Gather together and do not neglect our corporate relationship with Jesus.
- **Matthew 16:18** It is the church that Hell's gates will not prevail against, not individuals.

The second thing we are asked to do is to stretch and not to hold back.

- You get flexibility or agility by stretching. If you do not stretch, you become brittle and fragile.
- God leads us into stretching times on purpose, which Jesus describes with the illustration of the wine skin. You put new wine in new wine skins because the skin stretches with the wine's fermentation: it all gets bigger together.
- As the church gets bigger, the people must get "bigger"; the structures must change to fit the expansion.

We are not those who "shrink back" - **Hebrews 10:39 (NIV)**

- When we are faced with a stretching time we can see the danger and shrink back, trying to get back to a safe place. It is actually safer to see a challenge through; to bail out halfway is more dangerous!

Don't hold back: be a Sower - **2 Corinthians 9:10 (NKJV)**

- A Sower of seed in a field does not feel that he has lost what he has sown. He also does not expect to dig up the seed. He knows that God provided seeds to be sown according to what God wants to grow: over time your seed becomes a plant.

Genesis 22 - Study of Abraham in how to **stretch** and **not hold back**:

1. He was available: "here I am" (V1). God did not have to look for him as He did with Adam in the Garden of Eden.
2. He was prompt to obey: "early the very next day" (V3).
3. He got ready: "he split the wood" (V3).
4. He had faith in God's promise: "wait and we will come back to you" (V5).
5. He gave to God as an act of worship. He offered his best, his only son.
6. He could afford to be generous, recognising that what he had was not his, but God's.

7. He stretched out his hand: he was "agile not fragile". Even though it hurt him, he was prepared to get bigger in his offering to God.
8. God supplied the ram that he was to give, working behind his back to bring it within reach (V13).

TALK ABOUT:

- * **Have you ever had a time of stretching with God?**
- * **Are you ever tempted to "bail out" or "dig up the seed" in waiting for God to grow something in you?**
- * **Does it encourage you when God says you *shall* expand or His people *will* inherit?**

WEB RESOURCES

Did you know that we have some great resources available online?! Why not...

Read something that will lift your spirit - **Ps Phil's Blog** - philpringle.com

Catch up on past services online - **Church Website** - myc3church.net

See what's happening in C3 churches around the world - **Global Church Website** - c3churchglobal.com

View any of our media, conferences promos and upcoming events - **Church Vimeo** - vimeo.com/c3churchsydney

WHAT'S COMING UP:

C3 College Info Night

Thinking of studying part-time or full-time at C3 College? Join us on Tuesday, June 18, from 7-9pm in the Art Lounge to hear from the Principal, Leadership Ministry and Creative Trainers about the vision of C3 College and all courses available. We look forward to seeing you there!"Email: c3college@myc3church.net or call 9972 8683 to RSVP.