

## **Waves of God** - by Bob MacDonald

When I first started my Bible school training, I attended a college in California. My first semester was during the winter months here in Canada so I was glad to get away from the cold and the snow.

About three quarters of the way through the semester a friend said, “Bob, lets go body surfing.” Being a Canadian, I said sure - not quite knowing what body surfing was. We went to the beach and I found out that body surfing was swimming out into the ocean and then trying to catch a wave that came along, using your body as a surfboard. When there was no wave, we had to do the basic things such as floating (dog paddling for me) to keep afloat until the next wave came along. It was a basic sequence of wave – calmness – wave . I have to admit I had limited success with body surfing! I think I spent more time floating and waiting for a wave and then tumbling in the wave than I did any surfing.

That adventure in surfing taught me some things about waves and I believe what I learned has application for the spiritual life of the church in Canada now.

I’ve been a Christian from a young age. During that time I’ve observed a number of significant moves of God in revival. But I have also observed that when there is a wave that comes through, it is followed by a time of quiet and consolidation before the next wave comes. During that time of quietness is when we need to get the basics of Christian life in hand and practicing them fully. Some of the basics I am speaking of are evangelism, discipleship, holiness and sanctification. These are the things of God has sought to bring about through the wave of revival. Now we need to solidify them in our life. By establishing these in our life we are preparing ourselves for the next wave of God.

However I am observing a trend that disturbs me. I see many Christians who are trying to cause a wave or move of God. I see them chasing after various unique signs, demonstrations and manifestation that they are saying are of God. It troubles me is these “signs” or manifestations have no biblical precedence. What I mean is I don’t see in the Scripture that says these things are of God. If it was a matter of physical healing or deliverance or salvation – yes those things clearly are in the scripture and we can know they are of God. But where in the Bible does it talk about gold flakes as evidence of God’s presence? Where in the Scripture does it talk of oil pouring off of the hands as evidence of God’s presence? Where in the Scripture is it clearly indicate that we should be having conversations and experiences with believers who have now gone to heaven?

When I hear of people having visitations from their dead girlfriend to give them guidance, all my alarm bells start going off. From the way I read the Old Testament, God clearly indicated that we should not be communicating with the dead. He calls it necromancy. Yet I see Christians using this “experience” and other experiences as some type of indication that they are moving in a higher plane of spiritual reality. My concern is that they are being deceived. The way God provides guidance is through his Word and through his Spirit!

God has built natural rhythms and cycles into nature to indicate that it is part of the way that He moves in the spiritual realm. Yes let's enjoy and be refreshed in the wave that God sends. But when it's time for the quiet between the waves then let's not try to stir up a wave. Let's not go chasing after things that may not be of God. Rather, let's get established in the basics for the next wave of God. Where do we find the basics? We find them in the Scripture where God tells us that we are to be prepared for His coming, that we are to be witnessing to others that they need a Savior. We need to disciple them so that they will begin to live lives of obedience and holiness.

I desire revival as much as you! But my little body surfing experience also taught me that waves come in cycles and that there is quiet between the wave. If there is no quiet between the waves we call that a storm.

I'm calling for us to be discerning, to know the ways of God as outlined in the Scripture. I'm calling for us to be solid in the basics of winning the lost, knowing the word of God and living holy lives. These are the things that will keep us from being deceived. These are also the things that will prepare us for the next wave so that we can "surf with God" when He sends the next wave.