

The Nazirite Vow

By Matthew Lilley

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I have not shaved one hair on my body since Worshipfest this year. I will not be shaving my head again until next year's Worshipfest on 08.08.08 at the Greenville Convention Center. My plan is to shave all the hair on my head on stage next year at Worshipfest.

If you have seen me lately then you know I am starting to look a bit homeless, and I am sure it will only get more noticeable as the year goes on. Why the craziness? Well there was a Jewish tradition called the Nazirite vow that is pretty exciting. You can read about it in Numbers 6 in the Bible. The Hebrew word for Nazirite means "consecrated or devoted one." The Nazirite vow was a voluntary decision to devote one's self to God. It was usually a temporary vow in which did not cut their hair. When the vow was over, the person would shave their head. There were also some other restrictions such as not touching carcasses and certain foods which were inappropriate.

When I attended my first Morningstar conference many years ago, it was prophesied over me to be a Nazirite. I did not know what that meant, so I thought they had said "Nazerene." I figured Jesus was from Nazareth so maybe they meant I was to be like Jesus? However, when I picked up Lou Engle's book "The Elijah Revolution" I was amazed to find a whole chapter about Nazirites. As I read that chapter, I knew this was one of the things God was calling me to do.

The Call is about to host its first event since Nashville on 07.07.07. It is The Call Las Vegas and the whole theme is the resurgence of Nazirites. Lou writes on his web site:

As I read the Scriptures, I believe the Lord makes very clear the reasons why He raises up Nazirites throughout history - to save a nation from Her enemies (Samson), to restore a nation to its moral foundations and establish a worship and prayer movement (Samuel), and to raise up a "voice" burning like a torch that can turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the rebellious back to the wisdom of the righteous (John the Baptist) and thus, prepare a nation to receive the visitation of Jesus Christ.

The call of the Nazirite is tough. It can be lonely and it may feel like no one really gets you. Just look at the freaks of the Bible who were Nazirites Along with those mentioned above, Paul mostly likely took a Nazirite vow (Acts 18:18, 21:22-26) and many believe Elijah was one as well because of his appearance (2 Kings 1:8).

As Christians I do not believe that we are required to take this sort of vow to be saved or to truly be devoted to God. I would not want to downplay the

power of the cross of Jesus Christ. We should never believe the level of our spirituality has to do with our own works, so that we could boast or become proud. It is only by God's grace and power! I do believe however that the heart of the Nazirite vow is still alive. So while I am not completely following the formula of the Nazirite vow, I am doing my best to embrace the heart of a Nazirite and set myself apart for God. I am not shaving my hair, but I do not believe that the particular act of not shaving is powerful. I believe it is powerful for me because God is calling me to do it as an outward sign of where He is taking me inwardly.

I am also not trying to classify Christians as "Nazirite" or "non-Nazirite" or say that some are more holy than others because they use this term. But I do believe God is calling his people to a deeper, more consecrated place that few will be willing to go. Jesus made it clear that the road is narrow. The New Testament makes it clear that the road is hard. Are we willing to do what it takes? Are we willing to receive the mantle of John the Baptist or Elijah or Samuel or Samson? Are we willing to be out there" to be obedient to God? Some of you reading this know you are not called to the typical life of American Christianity, but you have settled. Wake up! God is not letting you settle. He led you to this article because He is stirring you again. Remember those dreams? Remember those convictions? Remember those things He has spoken to you? Pick them up. Do it. Take this year go hard for God. Come ready to shave your head with me at Worshipfest next year as a sign that you belong totally and completely to Jesus!