

Standing in for Jesus

We are living in the midst of an increasingly troubled world while we anticipate the Lord's imminent return to collect his Church. Organizations and institutions that people have depended on are not working, and public leaders clearly do not know what to do. Fear is setting in as an ever present partner of many on earth who do not know the Lord.

Often I write about all this when considering aspects of that coming return. But even if the world is a mess all around us, all who know the Lord should be focused on him! It is God's great love for his creation that has given us the opportunity to look forward to eternal life with Jesus and the Father and to wonder just what is about to unfold. So, focusing on Jesus and not on the events in this world, I offer this vignette from a couple weeks ago for your meditation.

Recently I sat in a quiet private session with just a few others and a precious little girl who was fighting a dreadful disease. For a few minutes I talked about divine healing, about God's great gift. And then I prayed for healing. As God's truths came out, as we moved forward to the key point, I suddenly began to say: "Standing in for Jesus here, I say ..."

Now I have said that before. This time as I looked into her wonderful little face, at those precious innocent eyes, and as I said, "Standing in for Jesus, I..." there was a sudden rush of the Holy Spirit all over me. I could scarcely speak. I had to take a moment to be able to form words. His amazing presence just took over.

Standing in for Jesus...Representing Jesus...Speaking for Jesus... Several times I have sought to explain that in meetings. Sometimes I have said simply, do you realize that when I stand here speaking what I am led to say, I am in reality standing in for Jesus. This is the Lord through me speaking, healing, doing what he wishes. The Holy Spirit takes over. Always my silent prayer: Take over Holy Spirit. Lord, your will here tonight. Your words.

Years ago once when praying the Holy Spirit told me, "John, if you don't have time to prepare, I'll speak for you." I have always counted on that. I always spend time seeking and searching and praying before meetings and services. And I always count on the Holy Spirit.

It is really true. Whenever I am preaching before a group the anointing comes. There is a strong anointing on me whether people in the audience experience that or not. It took me a while to realize that sometimes those listening experience the presence and sometimes not.

But that is what it is – standing in for Jesus. The Lord through me. The Holy Spirit handling things. That's the way it works.

That's the way it can work for you too when you step out and stand in for Jesus.