

Strengthen the Stakes

I began last November with this series entitled 'Deeper' to seek to create a hunger for more of God and desire within the church to raise the spiritual temperature.

During this time we have made use of two metaphors - the well and the tent. I spoke about how we need to open up the blocked wells and dig some new ones; and with regard to the tent about extending, stretching, lengthening and strengthening.

We are almost at the end of this series and I am presently looking at Isaiah 54:2 and the phrase 'Strengthen your stakes' ... as a picture of growing our devotional lives.

1. *The Privilege of Worship*

In Hebrews 10:19 – 22, we are encouraged to '*Come boldly into the presence of God*'. Just consider what a privilege this is that we have access onto Holy Ground, in the OT only the High Priest could come into the presence of God, *once a year!*

We are able to do what all of creation longs to do – worship God. We are what the Father has been looking for (John 4:23)

2. *The Worship Journey*

I want to take a few moments to consider the worship journey. In a sense what I am talking about is the way in which we move from 'entrance to encounter'.

Coming to Church, entering the gates and the courts of the Lord does not guarantee that we will have an encounter with God.

I think that there is something of a process, a journey of worship that needs to be undertaken. I find the route that High Priest would have taken in the OT a great illustration of this.

He would have moved from the outer court of the Tabernacle, through the Holy place and into the holy of Holies.

This journey can be observed in many ways. For example in a **musical sense** there is often the observable movement of music from Celebration to Declaration to Adoration.

It is observable in a **physical sense** in that in the beginning there may dancing, clapping and lots of hand raising, however as the journey progresses these actions will be replaced by kneeling, actions of yielding and so on.

It can also be observed in a **spiritual sense**. The essence of what is happening here is that we are moving through different levels of personal engagement ... *the body, the soul and the spirit*.

Let's do it.