

# Out of the Cave, Into the World

*Life in the Cave, Part Three*

I mentioned a few weeks ago that I'd grown up near Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, and have gone there quite a few times and have taken quite a few of their tours.

In 1812, the owner of the cave's main entrance discovered calcium nitrate, or nitre, in the soil of the cave, which could be converted to potassium nitrate, or saltpetre, which could be combined with sulphur and charcoal to make gunpowder.

The gunpowder made in Mammoth Cave was essential to the United States winning The War of 1812 against the British and maintaining the US' independence. But... it the mining and refining process was carried out by about 70 slaves.

The men who were instrumental in providing gunpowder to help protect the freedom of these United States never enjoyed that freedom themselves, but that's been the story of the United States for a long time.

Also in 1812, the New Madrid earthquakes occurred. The Richter Scale hadn't been invented yet, but modern seismologists estimate that the biggest of the quakes would have measured about 8.9. Those quakes made the Mississippi River flow backward for three days and rang church bells as far away as the east coast.

The slaves working in the cave felt the air in the cave move and saw small rocks tumble down from the cave's ceiling, so they ran out of the mouth of the cave. When they saw what was happening up top, they ran back into the cave for safety.

The destruction they witnessed on the surface was far greater than anything happening in the cave. Why? Because seismic waves don't travel through air, only through solids, so the cave itself created a breaking point for the earthquake waves.

Sometimes, it's easier just to stay in the Cave.

- To remain silent rather than to face opposition and criticism.
- To remain a slave to sin rather than to fight for your freedom.
- To stay isolated and alone rather than to risk relational pain.

**God will prepare you for his purposes in the Cave, but he uses you to accomplish his purposes in the world outside.**

You have to emerge. You have to face the light.

When the fighting men who were so discontented under Saul's leadership had made their way to David, they made the decision to emerge because there were some causes worth fighting for.

**The church is a collected people.  
But we are also a sent people.**

**We are sent to love God and to love people.**

#### **Matthew 22:37-40 NIV**

Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

**We are sent to share the good news about Jesus.**

#### **Matthew 28:18-20 NIV**

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

**We are sent to do great kingdom works.**

#### **John 14:12 NIV**

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

Let's get out into the world and love God, love people, and do great kingdom works around us - bringing Jesus' truth and love to bear on the world around us!