

Experiencing His Power: Multi-Sensory Instruction

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Rarely have I experienced such contrasts in my life. Last week I slept in a hotel room in Portland, Oregon, barely 25 miles from the spewing and brewing internal inferno of Mount St. Helens. The volcano, like the mythical phoenix, had within two weeks sprung to life after 24 years of inactivity and was threatening to “blow” at any moment. As I lay in my bed in the early morning hours, I felt rumblings somewhere in the bowels of the earth beneath me—deep, guttural, and protracted. My Southern California relatives, used to such tremors, would likely have ignored this movement, but the shifting of the earth’s plates beneath me was something new, powerful, and unsettling. As I participated in NAD meetings inside the hotel on the banks of the mighty Columbia River, I positioned myself facing the windows so I could see Mount St. Helens in the distance, now at its highest state of alert. When the clouds lifted, I could see the outline of the mountain (minus the top 1,300 peak which had blown off in 1980), with its occasional bursts of steam. And I could still feel the trembling earth beneath me. With every unusually loud sound we looked, as a group, toward the mountain, expecting at any moment to see fire and volcanic ash erupting. Others in the hotel rushed to the decks with their scopes and cameras to witness potentially breathtaking eruptions. Amazing power!



And now for the contrast. This week my husband and I have been vacationing in Collingwood, Ontario. Daily we have walked, exploring the scenic Beaver Valley, dressed in its garish autumn finery. The Creator has shown no restraint with His paintbrush here. Just a riot of fall colours—everywhere. Yesterday, as we hiked a particularly scenic section of the Bruce Trail, I was reminded of a different and more subtle form of power. The Pretty River segment of the trail is heart stoppingly beautiful this time of year, with red, orange, yellow, and brown leaves all creating a kaleidoscope of colour. As we sat next to a small pond and ate our lunch, the air was hushed—completely quiet. No pulsating sounds of the Toronto din with its planes in perpetual landing position, or emergency vehicles charging frantically down Bathurst Street. No steady hum of traffic flooding my subconscious.

Just silence.
The occasional rustling of leaves
Overhead.
A crow soaring high across the pond,
The whirring of its rhythmic, flapping wings
Entering my consciousness.

Contrasts? You bet. Both of them reflecting the great power of an amazing God who still speaks to us through nature, reminding us—if we will listen—that He is still in control, that no challenge is greater than He is, and that He is just as present in the stillness of the

wooded splendor of the Bruce Trail as He is in the mighty displays of volcanic activity at Mount St. Helens.

“God is exalted in His power. Who is a teacher like Him?” Job 36:22 (NIV)