

John's notes on

Starbucks Spirituality - Finding God in our Coffee Culture

By John Van Sloten

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[Start w/ a long, aroma filled, savouring sip of coffee]

This week I read (1) two different books... each told a creation story... **PAUSE**... one was a theology text which looked at topic of **God creating the world**... other was a business bio looked at former **CEO Howard Shultz creating Starbucks**...

At one point in the theology book; Q was asked, "(2) Why did God create all of this? What motivated him to bring everything into existence?" **PAUSE**... Answer was "Wasn't a **need in God** lonely... God is perfect community [TRINITY]... wasn't an **accident**... nor **boredom or necessity**... No God made it all because of **who God is**... Who God is hugely about others!... heart of O about **causing others to flourish**

"...(3) according to God's intelligence [who God is, his very being], the way to thrive is to help others thrive; the way to flourish is to cause others to flourish; the way to fulfill yourself is to spend yourself." Dr. N Plantinga

PAUSE... That's the heart of **God**/heart of **Christ** (there at creation)... God created it all give himself to it all!... so that **we** could flourish/find life!... **PAUSE**... it's all about **self giving for the sake of others**...

Then I read this quote from the **Starbuck's bible**... (having just read author Shultz's background... Projects in Brooklyn... Dad meaningless life/jobs... once injured/ no benefits... vowed, "if ever in a position to help another avoid that, have meaning/flourish...] Shultz wrote "**(4)** First, I want people to pursue their dreams... Second, and more profoundly, I hope to inspire leaders of enterprises to aim high. Success is empty if you arrive at the finish line alone. The best reward is to get there surrounded by winners. The more winners you can bring with

you – whether they're employees, customers, shareholders, or readers – the more gratifying the victory." P7...

Hmmm... create a company so that other's can flourish! Great concept!... he's following a good model! (whether he knows it or not Shultz is reflecting the One who make him!)... **PAUSE** "Spirit of X" work in him!

As I read the Starbucks story this week & thought about the whole coffee house movement past 2 decades a lot of '**what it's about**' is a reflection of **who God is!**

God is a God who calls us to **enter into his community**, who seeks to **serve us**, to offer us **something special**, who desires that we find a place of **joy, peace and rest**, who wants to **converse, share himself with us, to listen and care**... **PAUSE**... Talking with a few folks on blog Carol caught it(5)

LONG PAUSE... (6) When God make his community gathering place he included 28,000 fish species... 250,000 types of plants, 750,000 species of insects, billions of unique human beings, and one hundred billion galaxies each with one hundred billion stars!... **PAUSE**... "**Would you like a little extra foam on that sir? ... and maybe a few sprinkles?**" **PAUSE**...

"(7)Taste and see that God is good!" Psalm 34:8... God is a god who creates lavishly... wants us to **revel** in and **celebrate** the **goodness of this creation**... in many ways He's a God of excess... surely he could have stopped with 2 or 3 types of **flower... fruit... coffee bean...tea leaf... beverage recipe**... **PAUSE**

And then I think of **(8)**Brandon's comments on Tuesday night group talking about God who created it all.. speculating why Starbucks is here... **[RANYA story]**

God is the **god of lavish gifting**... at the same time God who cares for the poor... Jesus said, "**(9)** I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10 ESV and he also said

"(10)...When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind..." Luke 14:13 we need to live in the tension

of that as NA consumers! **[Explain]** doesn't mean throw '**Latte out w/bathwater**'... may mean **moderate!** (better for our waistlines anyway!)

Talking with a **Starbucks regional rep** this week hearing about global/local initiatives... (water projects, aids, they do pay 72% more for coffee...) I think they're trying to **live in the tension**... (who else offers health benefits/ stock options to part time coffee shop staff?) Got to think there's a bit of "**God's just heart**" at work in this corporation! ... **LONG PAUSE**...

“(11) ...the way to flourish is to cause others to flourish; the way to fulfill yourself is to spend yourself. Jesus himself tried to get this lesson across to his disciples by washing their feet, hoping to ignite a little of the Trinitarian life in them. The idea is that if – in a band of disciples, in a family, in a college, **[in a coffee shop]** – if people encourage each other, **pour out** interest and good will upon each other, **favour each other** with blessings customized to fit the other person's need, what transpires is a lovely burst of shalom(**peace, life as should be**).” says the **Seminary President**

“(12) One person can only do so much. But if he gathers a company of people around him and inspires them and taps into their inner drive, they can perform miracles together” says the **Starbucks CEO... (he's following a good model)**

This week I asked myself, *“Why the coffee shop thing flourished?”* [recall when started, “Never pay \$2 for a specialty coffee!”] ... Yet obviously we will... **PAUSE**

(13)Are we so desperate to be treated in a special way? Recognized? Served? Known? **[17th ave thing]** Are we so wanting to **belong**... be a **part** of something, Grab it wherever we can get it?... even **“to go?”** Are we so looking for a **meaningful getaway/breather**, a more **spiritually inviting, spacious place**... for rest, for shalom? **LONG PAUSE**... that we'll even pay a premium for it?... **PAUSE**... And hey, that's a gift... **Great cup of Joe** is God's gift... but it's never going to bring the lasting 'shalom' we're all thirsting for... created for... **“(14)** Are you tired? Worn out?

Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.” Jesus in Matthew 11:28-30

“(15) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” Jesus in Matthew 5: ESV

PAUSE... Christ - motivated with a desire to see you flourish, filled with a heart to serve you, see you, speak to you, to touch you and clean you - **comes to you... to us... to you...**
PAUSE... **“Meet me in this quiet place... it's just around the corner... we'll have a Latte together... talk... PAUSE... and I'll buy!”**

(16) Then, sitting in comfortable chair near the fireplace ... some nice world music playing in the background... he speaks those words you've lived a lifetime to hear, **“You do belong... you belong to me... to my Father... I'll show you how that works!”** **PAUSE**... **Feel a respect... dignity... value... beats any coffee!**

And for some those words **tap into their inner drive**, and they **end up performing miracles**... **PAUSE**...

Starbucks and the like... teach us about **our need for community**... demonstrate **God's lavish serving heart** teach us **God is good, life is good, caramel M's are good**... **LONG PAUSE**... perhaps most NB lesson **(17)Our need to be served... need to be served by Jesus Christ!** the one who **poured himself out for you!** ... **PAUL one his 'miracle performing' followers** “But when God, our kind and loving Savior God, stepped in, he saved us from all that...Our Savior Jesus **poured out new life so generously**. God's gift has restored our relationship with him and given us back our lives. And there's more life to come—an eternity of life! You can count on this.” Titus 3:4-8

“Sometimes there's this beautiful thing that happens when you stop for coffee and get, not only the balm of a peaceful moment over a hot cup... but when you also get this sense that someone poured a little of themselves into the cup as well. It doesn't happen all the time... especially in our current labour crunch. But, when it does... it really is wonderful. Sometimes you get a glimpse of someone who truly loves what they do... they love owning and running a coffee shop/a meeting place, they love creating new intriguing beverages, they love drizzling the perfect caramel crosshatch, they love presenting a latte with a perfect flourish of foam and espresso on top. I can't help but see God in that... in a heart that loves what it is doing. In hands that really care about what they are creating. There's nothing like ordering a Caramel Macchiato and having your Barista say ' I LOVE making these!!' and seeing in their eyes and hands - that what they are doing is so much more than just a job to them. It's in these moments that I can't help but think of the God I know who delights in presenting me with a stunning cloud formation, a brilliant starry night or the beautiful face of a friend. And He doesn't have to...He could just hand me life and be done with it, but He makes it beautiful.”

While travelling to thailand this year for a month we were in dire need for a good cup of coffee. While thailand is known for it's amazing food they are really hurting for coffee. The streets are littered with advertisements for Nescafe which as we know is instant and crap. I actually met my wife while she was working at a coffee shop called the Roasterie. She knows good coffee and is a major snob about it. So after about 2 and a half weeks of no good coffee we found a Starbucks in Chiang Mai. Right on

it's very obvious corner right by the town square just like here. everything about it looked and smelled the same. My wife was so excited I think she drank a few cups for the first couple of days because she could. I had a hard time with it. I am cheap in Canada but in Thailand this would be like flashing around a brand like prada to these people. A cup of coffee in thailand would be about 25cents and there it was actually a bit more than here so around 4 bucks for a latte. The only people in the shop were "farang" or tourists and i felt bad ordering coffee that would be the same price as a nice meal out for the thai people.