

The **BIG PICTURE** Book



from Doug Perry
Fellowship Of the Martyrs

The BIG PICTURE Book

Wisdom is more rare
than you might think.

from Doug Perry
www.FellowshipOfTheMartyrs.com

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Heaven is Easy! Holiness is Hard!

The Bride gets her jewelry, but it's going to hurt to jam it on –
and she's never going to want to take it off again.



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Introduction

To tell you the truth, I'm not sure what this book will be when it's finished. The things that I write are "from" me, but they're not really "by" me. I was the one used (and it's possible that I got in the way and it didn't come out pure), but the goal is to simply be a conduit for wisdom that touches people's hearts. This book in particular is intended to be a compilation of some of the deepest things the Lord has shown me over the last few years of this wild faith walk. Things that no pastor taught me and that you probably won't hear anywhere else.

Some of this may be familiar to you if you've read the other books or watched the videos. But I've never really pulled the bits of wisdom together in one place. Some of those other books were about specific topics and it wasn't the right place to explore the nugget of wisdom just for the sake of wisdom. My hope is that this book creates more Fear of the Lord in you and expresses His bigness in a more personal way. I hope the prayers embedded in this book will lead you to a deeper walk.

This is not a systematic theology book. I'm not trying to answer all the questions and solve all the problems here. If anything, I may end up asking more questions than I answer! I want to simply expand horizons and point out that it might not all be as simple as we want to believe – and yet it's all so perfectly simple that it's been under our noses all along. I know that is a conundrum and I don't care. His ways are NOT our ways. And it's a good thing, too, because our ways stink.

I don't know what the "market" is for this book. I don't know who might be the target audience. I know that the "natural" man is going to have a really hard time with some of this stuff. I expect some pastors and theologians to toss this into their fireplace with prejudice. I tend to say things that substantially disrupt systems and structures that have become trusted and relied upon. It's bad enough for the folks in the pews to have their faith shaken and the "system" of churchianity threatened, but the guys up front, whose house payment depends on it, can get really irritated. My goal isn't to irritate or to do harm. I just want to speak Truth – and sometimes that disrupts things and people don't like it. But if I don't speak what the Lord gives me to speak, then I'm going to be held responsible for all the consequences – and the ripples of the consequences.

But, as always, I accept responsibility for anything here that isn't pure. If it is in error and causes any to stumble, may the Lord put it all on my head. I'll try my hardest, but you have to understand that I see through a glass darkly, too. I'm learning just like everybody else and what I know today is just what I know today. Tomorrow He might just expand my horizons out past the limits I didn't think I had anymore! I don't know what all is out there, but it's really pretty and He's really big. I don't want you to take my word for anything. Go study the Bible, talk to the Word of God (Jesus Christ) and see if what I'm saying makes sense. Take it to the Lord and ask Him to confirm it to you by whatever means you're able to hear Him.

In the meantime, let's get started with this:

Father God, we come to You in the Name of Jesus Christ and ask You to pour out wisdom on us. Please bind up anything of the enemy or anything of us that would keep us from hearing Your voice and receiving all that You have for us in this time. If there is anything in this book that isn't pure and isn't of You, please let it fall harmlessly to the ground and not stick. If there is anything true and perfect here, please write it on our hearts and show us what to do about it. Thank You for Your promises that we can always come to You and ask for wisdom and You will give liberally and without reproach. Even if we abused it last time, You'll give us more. Please pour out Your Spirit and teach us the deep things of God. I'm sure You want us to know You better, so I'm sure this prayer is inside Your will. Thanks in advance for answering it. We ask all of this in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

More Introduction

I don't know if the process of this book matters, but here's how this went. Way back in 2005-2006 I had written like six books in rapid succession. A couple of them were written in less than a month. I was just alone in a hotel room listening to the Lord and the book came out in one draft. The only books I wrote after that period were "DEMONS?! You're kidding... right?" and "The Dad Filter."

But it was during that earlier time, maybe early 2007, when He told me that I was to write another book called "The Big Picture Book." He gave me one word headings for each chapter. I think on only maybe three or four did I have any idea what was to go in that chapter. It has taken nearly 20 years to get the revelation and learn what He meant – or wants – for each chapter. Even now (Fall of 2025), when I feel like it's finally time to compile this thing, He's still adding chapters to the original list.

I sure hope that I will continue to receive wisdom and could add to this someday, if He wanted. He promises that if you ask, He will give you wisdom "liberally and without reproach." (James 1:5) That means that even if you wasted it, let it sit stagnant and rot, or didn't implement it – you can still go back to Him and ask for more. Maybe this time you'll get it right.

My whole life it seemed like asking for wisdom was the right thing. When people talked to me about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit it never occurred to me to ask for the Gift of Tongues. Solomon asked for wisdom and got everything else besides. So I asked for wisdom, to see through the eyes of Jesus, and instantly it wrecked my life forever. No kidding. It was less than an hour from the time I prayed that to the time EVERYTHING started shaking and changing. I was unrecognizable as the same person. (If you want to hear that story get on our site or on YouTube and search for "Doug's Vision that started this crazy ride." Notice how much younger I look. It's been a hard ride to get here.)

So, count the cost. Wisdom brings with it a MUCH higher cost than does knowledge. You can go to school and get lots of degrees and know a lot of stuff. You can memorize Pi to 1,000 decimal places or be able to recite the whole Quran from memory. But wisdom is another thing altogether. Wisdom leads to Truth and Truth demands your life.

Dedication

The older that I get and the more I deal with people in need, the more I see how I had a tremendous advantage, a giant jumpstart in my relationship with Father God because I had a really great Dad. There are lots of people that believe that God the Father REALLY loves them – because Uncle Doug loves them real good, so it must be possible. Some have no other frame of reference for any male figure in their life being kind to them, much less loving. I've had the great privilege to be used by God to love unloved people until they could accept it from me – and then receive it from God. I've had 60-year-old men lay their head in my lap and cry while I pet their head and told them they were a good boy and how proud I was of them. I had a seventy-year-old lady snuggle up under my arm and take a nap while we were praying when she finally was able to receive the love of the Father. One dear sister was having a hard time and I just knelt in front of her chair and gave her my full attention and she burst into tears – and was healed – because she saw Jesus in my eyes. All I did was be kind and considerate. I'm just a tool for Him to be manifest to the world. But I'm only good at it because my dad, Robert Perry, was a great tool to be God to me until God could be God to me. The enemy of our souls wants to destroy fathers so we can never have a right relationship with The Father. And he's good at it, the cursed worm. And my dad would say that he was only able because of his dad, Bobby Perry. I don't know how far back it goes, but I know I'm the beneficiary of a lot of amazing men that loved God with all their hearts.



Chapter 1 – Hubris

OK, this one is for sure going to push some buttons. Can't be helped. I gotta call stupid religion out when I see it. There is a chunk of Christianity that has aligned itself with Luther and Calvin and their lazy theology. And don't think I'm on Arminius' side either, he's just as lazy. Anybody that thinks they have God all figured out and have shoe-horned Him into a simple five step plan – is too full of hubris to ever qualify getting up front and teaching anybody.

Did you already throw this book across the room? If not, maybe you're willing to reason together carefully and be a good Berean. That would be shocking! Honestly, I'm used to being around people that are willing to really consider carefully and have enough fear of the Lord to question the status quo. I don't have a lot of patience for Christians that worship a guy that died 500 years ago as if he were infallible.

Anyway, you made it this far in the book, so maybe you can handle this.

T.U.L.I.P – Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace and Perseverance of the Saints. The acronym of the Calvinist argument.

Typically, the Five Point Calvinist would argue that we are either unconditionally elect or we are made for destruction. That God established it from before creation and that it's irresistible. Some would say that we don't even have to repent for anything (or can't because we're so depraved) and that to do so would be a "works based" salvation. If we so much as have to say a Sinner's Prayer, we've worked for something. And since they believe in the "perseverance of the saints" then there is no amount of sin that we can do that would put our election in question. They would also argue that Jesus only died for those that He knew ahead of time were foreknown and elect, because it wouldn't be fair to make Him suffer for people that were never going to accept Him anyway. They would say that we are all Predestined in every way and everything is on the rails marching inexorably toward a predicted outcome.

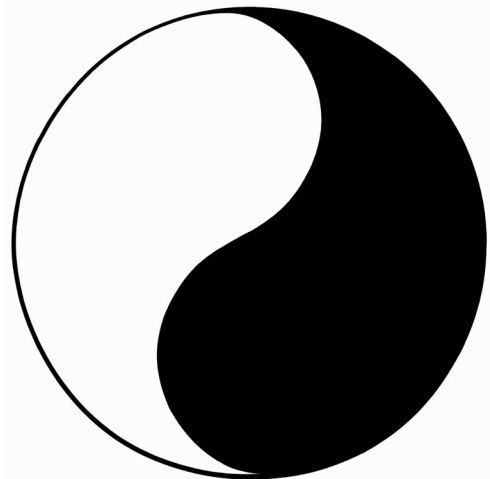
They would say that there are those that are made for destruction, that have no hope, that could never be saved, that God knew that from the beginning and there's no point in even trying with them. They would point to verses to defend their arguments. You're welcome to look them all up. Some of them definitely talk about some people being elect and some people being made for destruction. Some of the verses definitely make it sound like people don't have many choices and things are on the rails. At least some people. To be fair, here are the typical verses to justify their positions:

Romans 8:29-30, Romans 9:10-23, Ephesians 1:4-5, Ephesians 1:11, John 6:37, John 6:44, John 6:65, John 10:26, Acts 13:48, 2 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 1:9, 1 Peter 1:2, Deuteronomy 7:6, Malachi 1:2-3

Additional "destruction" verses used by Calvinists: Proverbs 16:4, 1 Peter 2:7-8, Jude 1:4, 2 Peter 2:12, 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12, Isaiah 6:9-10.

So, if you graph out the total population of the planet according to their theology, give or take some adjustment of percentages, it looks about like this:

Of course, the good guys are white and the bad guys are black. Of course. Look familiar?



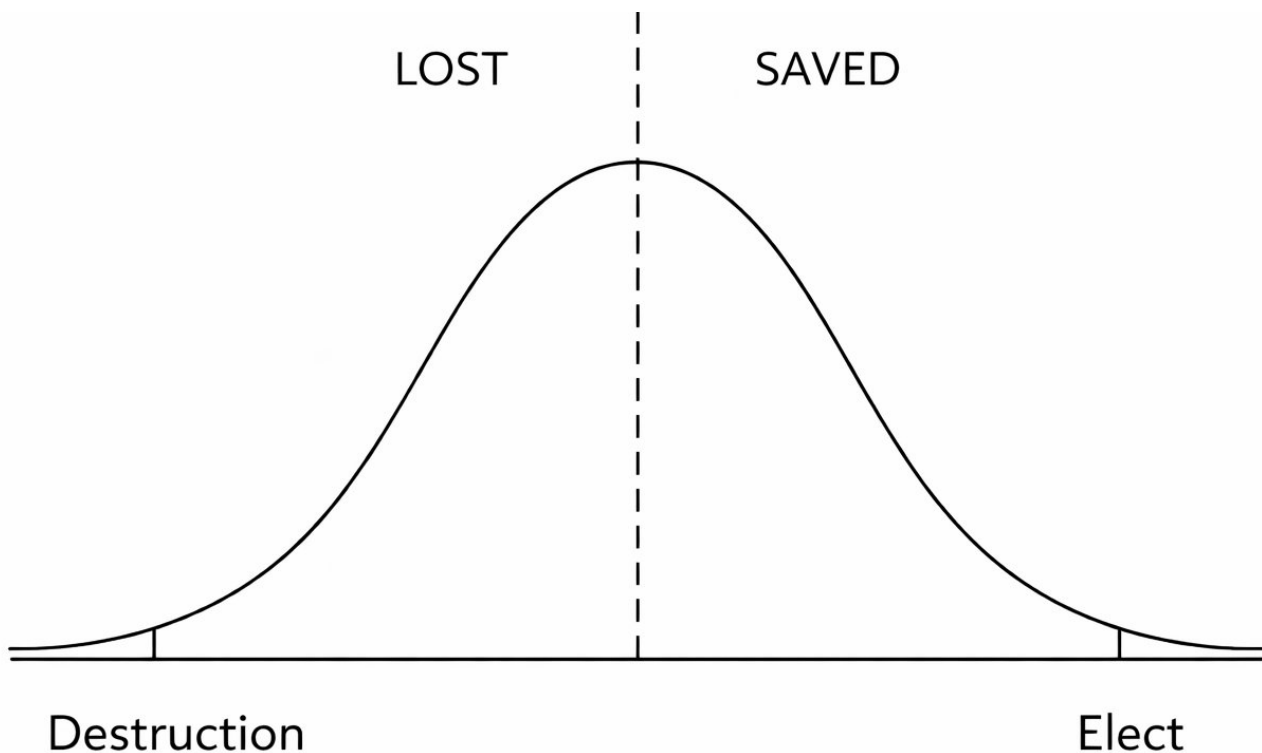
Here's the problem. The only way can get to a belief system like this is by ignoring LOTS of other verses AND by slamming shut your eyes and your brain and not thinking through the reality around you. It should be no surprise that the denominations that typically follow Calvin and Luther are also good at denying the Gifts of the Spirit and that God talks to people through dreams and visions. They have gotten really good at just flat refusing to look and see the MILLIONS of testimonies around them of God moving in mighty ways all over the world. It's just not convenient. It doesn't fit nicely in their theology.

Now, just after Calvin died (at 54, younger than me), Arminius came along and disagreed with Calvin. His simple Five Step Plan was basically just the opposite of whatever Calvin had said. He argued that we really did have free will, that people needed to come to Jesus, that you COULD fall away, that Jesus died for all even if they didn't receive it, but that not all would be saved. Still a hubris-filled, short-sighted, lazy batch of surety that you know God's ways – when HE specifically says that we don't. Arminius (or rather his followers that made the argument after he died at 49 – still younger than me) had their verses to justify their own position. Among them: John 12:32, Titus 2:11, Romans 10:17, Acts 17:30, Deuteronomy 30:19, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:1–2, 1 Timothy 2:3–4, 2 Peter 3:9, John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:6, Hebrews 2:9, 1 John 2:2, 2 Peter 2:1, Matthew 23:37, Acts 7:51, Luke 7:30, 2 Corinthians 6:1, Hebrews 6:4–6, Hebrews 10:26–29, Galatians 5:4, 2 Peter 2:20–22, Colossians 1:23.

If I graph out Arminius, it's still basically the same Yin/Yang as Calvin, but with more freedom.

What if it's not like that at all? What if both are taking extreme positions and just smooshing them together.

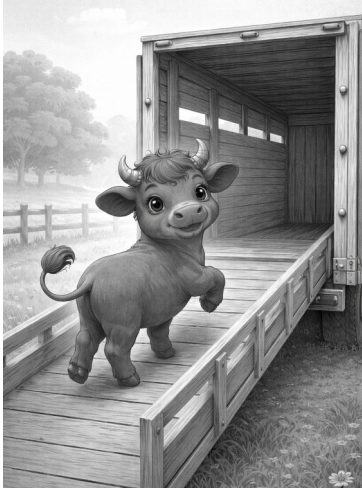
What if it's more like this:



If you go back to my chapter about Predestination, you'll see that it's not enough that God knows the END of each person from the beginning. That's a very small God. Our Dad knew every POSSIBLE end from the beginning, wove them all together with everybody for all time, had a million backup plans for every backup plan – and THEN launched it all. It's FAR too small for us to think that we understand the argument between Freewill and Predestination. Let me give this a try, kid sized.

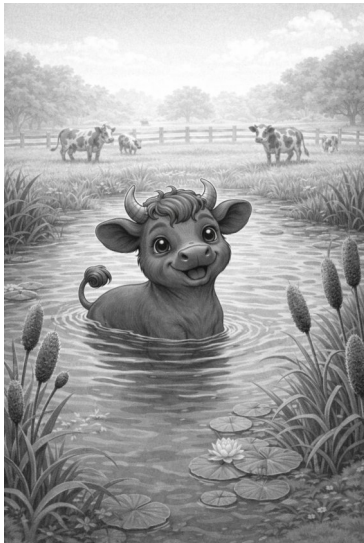
Episode One – Meet Tabasco

Let's meet our little cover model cow, **Tabasco**, who is out in the field. She's frolicking and having fun. She can eat whatever flower she wants. She chomps on the grass, takes a nap when she wants, plays with the other cattle whenever she wants. She has her favorite tree for shade and her favorite fence post to scratch. She is as free as a bird!



One day the farmer comes with a truck. They give Tabasco a treat and she marches up the ramp into the truck. It's different than where she was before, but she likes the farmer that gives him treats, so she's not scared. She could kick and fuss and make it a lot harder for the farmer, but she doesn't really feel like it and she's not worried.

They drive and they drive. Tabasco starts to get a little concerned, but before you know it, the truck is stopping and Tabasco can smell more cows. The farmer lets her out and she's SO excited! She had friends in the old pasture, but this was a chance to meet some new friends!



Tabasco gets to eat whatever grass she wants, she gets to sleep when she wants. She finds a new tree that she likes for shade. There are lots of cows here that she's enjoying getting to know! The farmer gives her treats – and this pasture has a pond she can stand in and cool off. She likes splashing around!

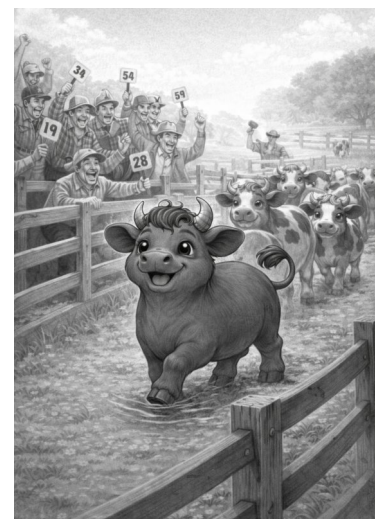
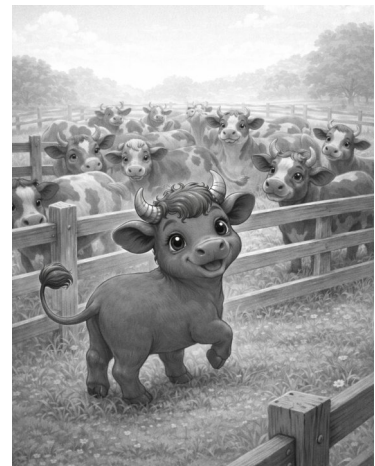
One day another truck shows up. Tabasco knows that it's safe, so she trots right up with a bunch of the cows. They're packed in tight – but it's OK, they're all her friends!

Pretty soon they get out of the truck to have a parade! Tabasco gets to lead the procession of all her new girl friends as they trot by bleachers full of people shouting and waving for them! Tabasco is as proud as she can be. She's been eating really well at the new farm. She gets a lot of grain and really good stuff! She's big and strong now! She struts proudly down the parade route.

Stay tuned for Episode Two – Tabasco visits the Slaughterhouse!

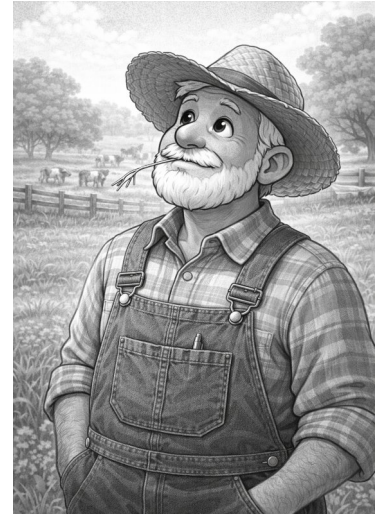
Oh, don't be sad.

She fulfilled her purpose! In fact, she did a great job. She was about as close to perfect as you can get! She did everything right. And she got blessed because of it. She didn't hurt herself trying to squeeze through the fence. She didn't pick a fight with the big Alpha bull and get beat up. She was just kind and happy and lived a great life.



What did the farmer have to say?

“Well, yeah, I really liked Tabasco. I paid for her before she was even born. Bought her with a whole lot of other cattle. She’s been with me since she was weaned. She even knew my voice. She never gave me a lick of trouble. Sometimes they kick at me when I’m trying to get them to go somewhere. But that Tabasco was just as gentle and sweet as she could be. I always knew where she was. Like clockwork every day she’d be under that tree over there at 3pm. She’d run right up to me every time I called for her and shook the bucket of treats. Boy, I had her trained good! After we took her to the feed yard, she fattened up real nice. Got top dollar for her at the livestock auction, I did. She’s gonna make a bunch of nice steaks for somebody, I can tell you that!”



So did Tabasco have free will? Or was Tabasco predestined?

Jesus told stories – because it works. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a cute little red heifer named Tabasco that thought she was on top of the world and was queen of her domain. She knew there was a farmer that gave her stuff and was nice, but she had no idea that the farmer put up the fences and had a plan for her. She couldn’t even get her head around what the inside of a slaughterhouse might look like or why. It was far beyond her capacity. She knew that she could eat this grass or that. That she could sleep or not. That she could play or not. She knew that flies bite. She knew that sometimes her friends would disappear and didn’t come back. She didn’t know where they went.

The farmer knew exactly what the plan was. He had planted the right grass in that field. He put up strong fences so the cattle couldn’t run off. They didn’t have as many choices as they thought they had. They might have had aspirations of being a bucking bull in the rodeo, but milk cows don’t get to do that. They might have wanted to be a Brahma bull in India that was worshipped and could wander anywhere, but they were born into THIS farm. If they did manage to break out, the Farmer would bring them back, one way or the other.

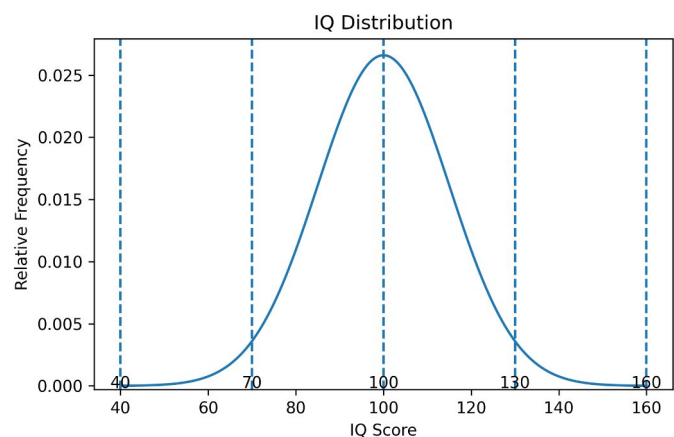
So what’s the answer? Did Tabasco have free will? Yes/No. Was she predestined? Yes/No.

Let’s try more pictures:

Maybe, instead of an On/Off switch, this question is more like everything else in our lives and is more of a bell curve distribution.

Rarely in human experience is anything so simple as just this or that, yes or no, black or white – particularly when very large populations are involved.

Just one quick example: As we measure IQ across the general population there aren’t just 40s and 160s. In fact, both are pretty rare. Below 70 is borderline functional. The US Army won’t accept anyone below 80 because they’ve shown that they can’t produce more than it takes to supervise them. Most people sit somewhere on one side or the other of 100. At 130 you enter a gifted range that we would call “genius.” MENSA won’t take anyone with less than that. At 160 you’re in really rarified territory and may have trouble even understanding anybody else.



So maybe the Calvinists see the verses about “elect” and the verses about “made for destruction” and just smooch them together, ignoring that there might be anything in between. Luther and Calvin both seemed to be very inconvenienced by particular verses that they wished weren’t even in the Bible. Luther, in particular, though the book of James was “an epistle of straw” because it poked holes in his faith alone arguments. In his German translations, he didn’t remove them, but he “downgraded” James, Hebrews, Jude and Revelation to the back as a lower category.

Calvin didn’t attack the canon of scripture quite so directly, but he never wrote commentaries on Jude, 2 John, 3 John or Revelation. Mostly he just interpreted certain verses in a way that suited his argument – 2 Peter 3:9 “...not willing that any should perish” meant only among the “elect.” (Which is strange because if you’re elect and it’s irresistible, how could you end up any other way!)

All of these guys were young. Luther nailed his 95 theses on the Wittenberg door when he was 33 years old. John Calvin published his Institutes of the Christian Religion at 26 years old. Jacob Arminius began challenging Calvinist theology in his 30s. It’s strange that Luther, who felt he was predestined in every way and his life was utterly on the rails, would lament later near death and say, “I would burn anything I wrote at 20.”

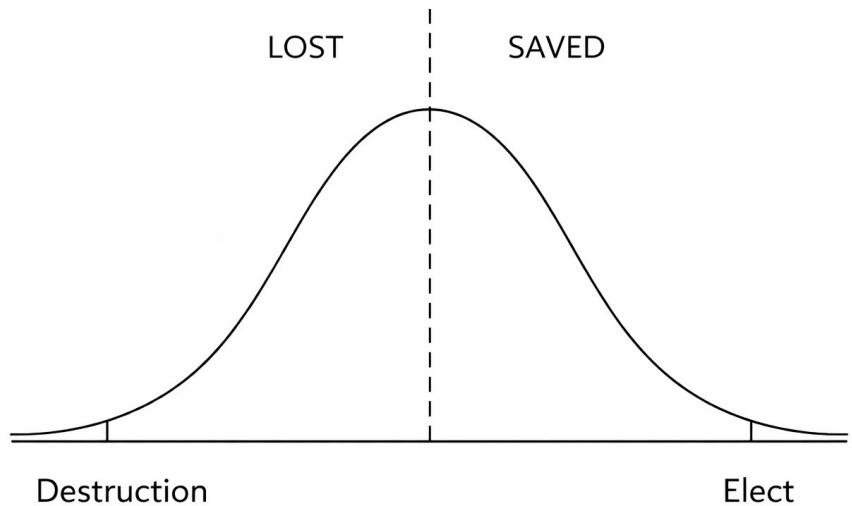
This year (2026) I turn 59 years old. If I were in an alley with 20 year old me, I would just smack that snot out of him! Intelligence, even a lot of it, is no replacement for wisdom gained from long experience and scar tissue.

If you’re a general making a battle plan, you have to factor in that there will be certain percentage of casualties – you may even know exactly what platoons are going to be the casualties. And you know that there are some specific people that you will make absolutely sure are safe and sound (like yourself). But then there is this wild card of all the folks in between. If you lose too many, the battle is a failure. If you can get out of it with zero casualties, that would be your first choice and would be amazing – but probably not going to happen.

So let’s talk about this. I think there are verses that clearly state that SOMEBODY is elect and predestined. I think there are verses that clearly state that SOMEBODY is made for destruction (and also predestined).

But there are also a whole bunch of verses that describe the folks in the middle.

A passage that Calvin particularly struggled with is Ezekiel 18:23.



“Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?” (KJV)

And then there is the follow-up in Ezekiel 18:32 – *“For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”*

You see? Calvin compresses humanity into two groups: Elect and Reprobate. And then says that you were predestined to be one or the other from before time began, it’s irresistible and you will persevere in

that state. So how can you get these passages to fit without a bunch of linguistic gymnastics?

Then there is this;

2 Peter 2:1 - *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”*

The phrase “the Lord that bought them” suggests that Christ’s redemptive purchase somehow includes people who later deny Him and face destruction. That wording throws into doubt the Calvinist point of Limited Atonement – that Christ only died for those how He knew would accept Him. Calvin has to argue that these false teachers are part of the larger covenant with Israel, not as individuals.

Then there are these:

1 Timothy 2:3-4 - *“3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”*

2 Peter 3:9 - *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*

John 12:32 - *“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”*

Titus 2:11 - *“11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”*

Hebrews 2:9 - *“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”*

1 John 2:2 - *“And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

Deuteronomy 30:19 - *“I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:”*

In all of these theology “packages” these verses have to be interpreted to suit the “package.” Like “all” doesn’t really mean “ALL” – it just means some specific subset of all. Jesus didn’t taste death for “every man” – just the “every” of the list of “elect.”

And this particular point of this five-point package is really offensive to me. By trying to make a “fair” system – Jesus would be forced to suffer for people that were never going to accept Him anyway – what you end up with is a stingy Jesus and an unloving God. God only sent His Son to die for those that he’d already chosen and preferred – and Jesus refused to be treated unfairly by dying for people that were going to reject Him anyway.

That is SO OFFENSIVE! It’s just insulting in the extreme. Look, Jesus died for our iniquities and our illnesses. If nobody had ever sinned in the Garden, if nobody had ever sinned all through history – but

you sprained your ankle and needed healing – Jesus would have gone to the Cross JUST FOR your ankle! He has NO problem taking on the sin of EVERYBODY just in case they do turn. Fairness is ENTIRELY our way of looking at things.

People look up into the sky and say, “There MUST be life on other planets. What a terrible waste of space that we would be the only ones here.” As if it’s ANY extra work for God to create one galaxy or a thousand trillion! He could create ALL of it – just so we would marvel when we look up. It’s a breath. A puff. A single word. You are limiting the love of Jesus and making Him be fussy about dying for a single extra person.

It’s no wonder to me that nearly all the Reform/Calvinist groups are also cessationist groups that say God doesn’t talk anymore and deny the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. They can’t afford to let Him out of their little box! If He were breaking rules all the time, doing unexpected supernatural things, giving revelation to people that might question them, then he’s not a tame lion anymore. He’s not predictable. And they can’t have that. Calvinism depends on us knowing His ways.

We look at a passages like this:

Isaiah 55:7-8 – “7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 **For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.**”

Ezekiel 18:21-29 – “21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. 22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. 23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? 24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

25 Yet ye say, The way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal? 26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. 27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. 28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

29 Yet saith the house of Israel, The way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, **are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?**”

But it’s not FAIR that someone would obey their whole life, but because they turned at the end would be damned! It says that his righteousness will not even be mentioned. But if the sinner turns at the very end, God will save his soul? What would Calvin say?

Which one was “elect” all along? The one that went to church? Which was that?!

Look, there are plenty of other verses that a plain reading of the Scripture just can’t fit into either of these two Five Point boxes that they shoved God into. He clearly and repeatedly says that His ways are above

us, that they are not our ways. And yet, we insist on telling everyone else that we have HIM all figured out. Why do we even have The Great Commission telling us to go and preach the Gospel to all nations if He's already decided who is and who isn't His?

I don't really want to debate Calvinism the way it's most often done online – back and forth, point by point, trying to defend Armenianism. I think they're both shallow, short-sighted and insulting to a might, mighty God – especially when HE says that we all see through a glass darkly.

Let's try another picture:

God built an ant farm. Some of the ants can see God's handiwork. At one point He even made Himself an ant to try to talk to them. But then the ants killed Him as quick as they could and tried to explain away everything He said so it wouldn't inconvenience them.

Now, they still see a giant face through the glass and know He's there. The "wise" ones have told everybody else that they have God all figured out. That they know exactly what He's thinking and how He does things. They have five points that everything about Him can fit into nicely – and it suits them just fine.

So, which of the ants knows what He had for lunch? Which of the ants knows why He started the ant farm in the first place? Which of the ants knows how to even speak His language?

I mean, yeah, He did say some stuff in Ant to try to help them understand, but that's not His native language. At one point He leaned over the tank and spoke out loud to all of them personally, but it scared them really bad and they begged Him to never do it again. (Exodus 20) So He's been waiting ever since, trying to find an ant that would SHUT UP AND LISTEN instead of making it up to suit themselves – and ignoring Him.



Why do we think we even have the WORDS to describe predestination or free will? Wouldn't God's word be far beyond what we could even grasp? Why are we so quick to believe that we can understand His ways?

I'll tell you what Calvinism and Armenianism and all the other -isms have in common – it's hubris.

I know it's not a word that we use much. I think the media purposefully avoids it. What is Hubris?

Hubris (noun) HYOO-briss – Overconfidence that leads a person to ignore limits, dismiss correction, or presume they fully understand things that are beyond them. Excessive pride or arrogance, especially when someone believes they are wiser, more capable or more important than they really are.

In ancient Greek thought and drama, hubris was the pride that made someone act as if they were equal to or above the gods, which inevitably led to their downfall. That is a great description of “religion” across the board, but especially anything that is absolutely sure that theirs is the one and only right way to see things. This book is an assault on hubris – including mine. It will have done its job if it makes all of us feel smaller and God bigger.

You know, the thing we all have in common is hubris. Maybe we could all just hit our knees together and weep for all the stuff we THINK we know and have taught, that might not have been the mind of Christ. Maybe we can acknowledge that this whole thing we call “church” is a giant flaming dumpster fire and that something needs to be done so He can come back for a bride that doesn't talk back to Him and insist on reinterpreting everything that He says.

In this book I'm going to share some things that I think God has explained to me over the years. It was 2008 when He told me to write this book and it took until 2026 to get an understand of what was to go in each chapter. This is supposed to be things you're unlikely to hear anywhere else. Things that I KNOW that no man taught me.

But they're also going to be things that are disruptive to the boxes. Things that shake the status quo. God didn't call me to start a church or found a movement or denomination.

God called me to be a giant wrecking ball that would destabilize macro systems, not leave one brick of ours on top of another, so that we could get it back on the right foundation and watch HIM build it with undressed stones.

Nobody likes wrecking balls swinging at them. Please pray for me.

Lord God Almighty, forgive us for our hubris. We're not smarter than You. We're just ants looking at the glass and trying to get You to endorse our plans. We're so sorry. Please reveal Yourself to us in whatever way You think best. We do want to know You more. We just want to know You personally, not by 500 year old proxies. Please hold us close and whisper to us about who You are and what You want us to do for You and Your Kingdom. We're really sorry about all this. We're going to try to fix it. Please give us just a little more time to turn this ride around. And please help Uncle Doug hold it together. We need everybody for this fight. Please, Father, in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Chapter 2 – Faith

Faith Like A Teenager

(excerpted from the book “Rain Right NOW, Lord!”)

We have three different, identical accounts of Jesus' clear statement that you WILL NOT enter into the Kingdom of God unless you receive it like a little child.

Matt. 18:3 *And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Mark 10:15 *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.*

Luke 18:17 *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.*

IF the Bible is true and right, THEN this is a pretty darn critical point and you might want to really, really be sure that you are getting this right!

So, how are you doing on this point? Do you have faith like a child? Perhaps a parable will help.

FaithLikeAChild sits in the back of the minivan and looks out the window and goes, “Whee!” FaithLikeAChild doesn't know how the engine works or where gasoline comes from and does not worry about whether the minivan has side air bags. FaithLikeAChild just knows that Dad is driving and we're going to Grandma's house and we're stopping at McDonald's on the way! FaithLikeAChild doesn't know how to navigate the route and doesn't care. FaithLikeAChild would never even consider trying to drive – it never even occurred to FaithLikeAChild that Dad wasn't fully capable of getting the job done all by himself. FaithLikeAChild just peacefully dozes off and enjoys the ride, even if it's bumpy. Nothing to worry about, because Dad knows what He's doing. FaithLikeAChild chatters with Dad and hangs on his every word because FaithLikeAChild adores Dad. Dad is his provider, rescuer, leader and generally his real-life superhero. Regardless of any physical or logical evidence to the contrary, FaithLikeAChild is just sure that his Dad can beat up your Dad.

If you want to see another picture of FaithLikeAChild, try this:

Mark 4:37-40 – *And a furious storm of wind arose, and the waves kept beating into the boat, so that it was already becoming filled. But He [Jesus] was in the stern of the boat, asleep on the cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, Master, do You not care that we are perishing? And He arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Hush now! Be still! And the wind ceased and there was immediately a great calm. He said to them, Why are you so timid and fearful? How is it that you have no faith?*

FaithLikeAChild was the other name of that kid with a slingshot that said this to a monster named Goliath:

1 Sam. 17:26, 37, 46, 48

Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God? The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine. “This day the Lord will hand you over to me and I'll strike you down and cut off your head.” Then as the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly to the battle line to meet him.

And lots like him – Abraham, Noah, Moses, Joseph, Daniel, Gideon, Samson, Peter, Stephen and many more throughout history. FaithLikeAChild speaks boldly and fearlessly and RUNS QUICKLY to the battle line to meet the enemy. FaithLikeAChild doesn't worry about fancy armor or battle strategy. FaithLikeAChild knows that God can use anything and so he goes against the giants in the strength that he has - even a slingshot and five stones. FaithLikeAChild is supremely offensive to others because he is the most like Jesus. People think he is arrogant, foolish, senseless, suicidal, childish, short-sighted, capricious, unpredictable and generally impossible to deal with. He doesn't conform to the “world” at all. As soon as Goliath saw David, he despised him (I Sam. 17:42). David's brothers burned with anger towards him (I Sam. 17:28). Saul hated him (I Sam. 18:8-11 and elsewhere). There is no end of trouble when you start accepting the Kingdom of God like a little child! And no end to the reward.

But sadly, FaithLikeATEenager is far more common. FaithLikeATEenager doesn't want to sit in the back of the minivan. He just got his license and he wants to drive himself. FaithLikeATEenager pesters Dad to get into the passenger seat. FaithLikeATEenager doesn't want to go to McDonald's because it isn't healthy and he can't believe that Dad is unaware of the ecological and economic and human justice damage that a fascist global conglomerate like that is doing to the world. Dad is just not as well-informed as FaithLikeATEenager. In fact, sometimes FaithLikeATEenager wonders how Dad ever got along without him. FaithLikeATEenager doesn't particularly want to go to Grandma's house, but is just sure that he knows a quicker way to get there. FaithLikeATEenager doesn't doze off and enjoy the ride. FaithLikeATEenager turns the music up really loud, makes a call on his cell phone, drinks his organic, fair trade, wheat germ smoothie, drives too fast and tries hard to ignore Dad as much as possible. FaithLikeATEenager is just sure that he has all the answers and his way is best. In fact, he would really like it if Dad would just shut up and leave him alone. He is his own superhero.

FaithLikeAChild knows that he is completely safe because Dad is in control. FaithLikeATEenager thinks he is indestructible because he is really smart and cool. Which one do you think Dad would rather hang out with?

Why does it seem like God is moving in greater ways in Africa and India and China? Maybe because there are more people there named FaithLikeAChild. Why do we have tens of thousands of denominations in America and endless conferences and programs and books and superstar leaders that seem to have all the answers? Maybe because we are the capital of FaithLikeATEenager. In fact, we're the main producer and exporter worldwide. We're building fatter and fatter pipelines so we can pump all of our own special flavors of it into every country on the planet.

Are there any seminaries in America that offer a “Faith Like A Child” degree? And yet, isn't that what is required to enter the kingdom of heaven? Is the Bible true or not?

Who were the experts in “Faith Like A Teenager” in Jesus' time? The Pharisees and the Sadducees. The religious leaders are always the ones that think they're all grown up and that they know best. Go read Matthew 23 and see how Jesus felt about them. He's pretty clear about how He feels about FaithLikeATEenager. You better hope you're not one of them. I hope you're not teaching people to drive themselves around! I hope you're not trying to get them to figure out what THEY can do for God!

How about this?

Matthew 7:21-23 – “Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'”

If this is really true, then we might want to be listening to Dad more and obeying Him and not going our own way. Many will think that they are just fine – until they are told to their face that their new name is “FaithLikeATEenager” and they are a goat and that it has all been in vain. Despite their miracles and their

“anointing” and the works they did in His Name.

God is raising up the true warriors – those who will not question or doubt. Those who will go, no matter who says they are nuts. God is raising up an army of children with nothing holding them down. Children who will fearlessly wade into the battle with a slingshot (and an army of angels). They will kill the Goliaths (and the status quo) without mercy or pity. They will obey fully because the Lamb is their head and heart. They will not argue theology or doctrine or curriculum or programs. They will just listen to the voice of God and obey. And they will bring a flame-thrower to all the structures and systems of FaithLikeATeenager. Nothing will be able to stand before them – because God is on their side.

Just in case you're sitting on the fence about this when they come, consider this:

Matthew 18:3-6 – And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."

Or maybe this one:

Luke 9:46-48 – An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. Then he said to them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all— he is the greatest."

Just stop for a minute and look around and see if you or your congregation or denomination are arguing with anybody else about who is the greatest. See whether you are letting God direct your paths or you are leaning on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5-6 is pretty clear. All means ALL. None of your own understanding is acceptable. None of you directing your own paths is OK. Doing so means that you are not trusting the Lord your God with ALL your heart. And it means that your new name is FaithLikeATeenager and God is going to write it on your forehead. The first being to earn that name was Lucifer. If God writes that on your forehead – then, congratulations, you just got the mark of the beast.

If that's your name, even a little bit, then you might want to say you're sorry and beg the Lord to scrub it off your forehead and ask Him daily to kill anything in you that is more than about six years old – give or take.

Being a grown-up is not going to get this job done. We need more little kids with faith and five rocks.

Lord God, if I'm acting like that, please forgive me! I don't want to drive! Please, Father, I'm sorry for telling You that I know best. Please kick me into the backseat – or lock me in the trunk. Whatever you have to do, but please would You take over? I'm really sorry. I love You, Dad. I'm sorry for ignoring and insulting You and putting You in a box. I don't even know how badly I did it and how much damage did, but please show me so I can repent all the way. Teach me how big You are so I won't ever do it again. I love You, Lord, and I trust You. Please take over ALL of my life now. You know best. In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.





Chapter 3 – Filters

What people don't seem to understand is that God is very polite. He is perfectly willing to let us dictate the terms of our relationship with Him. He is very patient. There is a limit, but it takes a LOT to push Him to that point. The Bible says that what we bind on earth will be bound in heaven and what we loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. (Matthew 16:19 and 18:18-20) He says that if two of us agree on something, the Father will answer it. Do you understand how dangerous that is?

If you don't believe God talks to people, He probably won't talk to you. If you don't believe God heals people, then don't expect anybody in your congregation to get healed. If you don't think God can love you, you probably won't ever feel His love. That doesn't mean He isn't loving, but you don't think He can love YOU. Ultimately, it's pride because you think you are so uniquely special that God is incapable of fulfilling His promises to you, even though He does for everybody else.

This filter is like a lens through which we see God (and other stuff). It tends to be colored or fuzzy or opaque depending on our own preconceptions and expectations and the state of our heart. What we don't understand is that He will allow us to relate to Him according to our filter. That is, our Faith is the limiting factor in our relationship, not His bigness. Maybe a parable will help.

If you're a mother and you have a teenage daughter going through her "angst" years, she may come out of her room every day and ignore you or grumble at you. Maybe she thinks you're stupid and uncool. She tells all her friends how awful you are and how badly she has it, even though she has never missed a meal in her whole life and she even gets most of whatever she wants. Maybe she only talks to you when she needs money and even then not politely. You don't like it, but you'll take ANY kind of conversation you can get with her. Because you're a Mom and you love her. You'll take whatever you can get – and pray and hope that one day it can get better and she'll get through this.

But how much better if she came out of her room every morning and kissed your cheek and told you about the new boy she likes and wanted to go to the mall shopping with you and expressed an interest in YOUR life? How much better if she told you she loved you and she was your best friend? Which kid do you think Mom would prefer to talk to?

So how are you treating your Heavenly Father? Which one are you? Do you even wait for Him to respond when you pray or do you just talk AT Him and then hang up the phone before He can respond? Do you even believe God can talk to people? What kind of relationship are we going to be able to have with a mute Jesus? But, you see, if you don't believe God talks to people, He won't talk to you. If you don't believe God heals people, don't expect anybody around you to get healed. Pray for the doctors to have wisdom and to remember all that they've learned. That's pretty much all you've got. Good luck with that.

But it sure seems sort of sad and powerless. It sure seems like that kind of God isn't very powerful. Maybe you need to let Him out of the box you put Him in. It's like the blinders on a racehorse, you can't see anything except that little narrow window straight in front of you. And your relationship with the Father is never going to be very complex. More likely you just take Him off of the shelf when you need something or have an emergency. He really doesn't like that. He's a lot bigger than you and you probably need to say you're sorry. Just admit that you've been doing it and repent and ask Him to be God to you in whatever way He wants to be God.

Of all the filters and lenses that I've helped people lay down, the most dangerous – and most common – is the "Dad Filter". I wrote about it in one of the other books. I hope it will help you get free and see and

relate to Him in a new, bigger, better way. (That book, “The Dad Filter,” is available free on our site or you can order from Amazon.)

The Dad Filter

(Below excerpted from “Demons?! You're kidding, right?” expanded more in “The Dad Filter” book)

Characteristics: This is in the hip area because it affects their “walk” with God. In essence it is a lens through which they look at God that limits Him in some (or many) ways. Usually this cookie-cutter “box” in which they have placed God is shaped like their Earth Dad. **This is one of the most critical things that needs dealing with because so much of the other deliverance they may need hinges on this.** For example, if your father died when you were young and you learned how to be the “man of the house” at a very early age and depend on yourself and your own strength, you probably have a “filter” that says that God is unavailable and you pretty much have to depend on yourself. If your father was abusive, you probably have a filter that says God is a vengeful, angry God waiting to strike you with lightning at the slightest little sin.

The most common one is that people don't believe that God can be “Abba” (an Aramaic word for “Daddy”) and pull them up on His knee and speak sweetly to them and kiss their boo-boos – because they have absolutely NO experience with an earthly father that is like that (or maybe ANY man ever). I've seen Dad Filters of all kinds. One young man could not be delivered of the fear and anxiety and other things. When I asked the Lord why, He said, “Because of his Dad Filter.” This young man had lost his father at an early age and had been through all kinds of bad things and no one came to his rescue. Deep inside, he didn't really believe God was the kind of Father that would help in his time of need. He knows what the Bible says and he tells other people that God will rescue them, but he didn't really believe it for himself. When I named it and showed it to him, he acknowledged it and then I had him repent for putting God in a box like that, then take his Sword of the Spirit and hack that lens into a million pieces. When he did that, the Lord had me pounce on him and give him a huge hug and speak all kinds of loving things to him that the Lord had been UNABLE to say to him because he didn't believe God loved him like that. Then we pulled all the fear and everything off and showed him how to keep his cup full of Jesus all the time.



I could NOT do any deliverance on him until he stopped believing that he had to do everything in his own power and he laid down his belief that God was not the kind of God that would come and rescue him when he was in trouble. Now, had I not been seeing the demons and hearing God about the Dad Filter, I would have rebuked the Fear and made a lot of noise – and then both he and I might have been demoralized later when it didn't really leave (or didn't stay gone for long). But he gave the Fear legal ground and would have kept giving it legal ground to oppress him until he stopped putting God in a box and started believing that God's power would fight his battles instead of his own arm. You can't rebuke demons in the name of “Fred” – only the name of Jesus Christ will work! But if you don't believe God will come to your aid, then just keep rebuking them in your name and see how that goes for you.

I have seen this RADICALLY transform people and their walk with God. It's always a bad thing to put God in a box, but particularly a box shaped like a person. Some people I've ministered to had dads that threw them into the trunk of a car with dead cats, or sexually abused them, or invited friends over to sexually abuse them, or were totally unavailable, unreliable, unloving, or otherwise generally a stinker. One had her father repeatedly allow a witch to perform all kinds of disgusting things on her – so that his crops would grow!

It's practically unavoidable that children will look to their fathers as their hero and put him on a pedestal. It's hard-wired into us and a Dad has to do some pretty amazingly awful things to negate that fully. And it's also practically unavoidable that when that kid prays, "Our Father who art in Heaven" that they will have a flavor in their mouth (or flashbacks) to what Earth Dad did to them. The Bible says that what we bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven, so if we put limits on God or force Him into a cookie-cutter mold shaped like Earth Dad, God will go along with it. He would really rather you didn't do that, so you can experience the fullness of all He has for you, but He'll take whatever He can get.

Removal: They need to see what they've done. They need to acknowledge that they have put God in a box and say they're sorry. Preferably they really hate it and hunger for more of Him. It's enough for them to pray and acknowledge it before the brethren (even one), but usually I'll have them take their Sword of the Spirit and whack it into a million pieces (or some other creative way to destroy that lens). Just so they will have seen it happen in the spirit and can believe in faith that it is done. Usually that results in almost immediate changes in the depth of their relationship with God. The more they have Him bundled up, the more visible the difference will be. We all put Him in a box. If we didn't, then we'd probably BE God. We can't possibly get our heads around how big He really is and the depths of the ways that He wants to relate to us. All of us need to regularly check to see if we're limiting Him in any way – and say we're sorry.

Cautions: They need to expect changes in their walk with Him. If it freaks them out and they shove Him back in a box again, that is going to go very badly. They need to keep moving forward, even if it's hard. We've seen people regress substantially when they let God out of a box so He could be more involved in their lives and speak to them more, and then they didn't like what He was asking them to do and they shoved Him back in.

(end excerpt)

Any lens or filter that we've created will limit God. We don't even realize all the filters we have. We have American filters and denominational filters and environmental filters and family filters and all kinds of man-made doctrines and dogmas and lenses that we've absorbed and don't even realize it. We've even personally made up some of our own to self-justify whatever stupid thing we're doing and insist on believing that God doesn't mind. Below is a short list of some of the possibilities that I've seen (or had to get free from). All of which are NOT biblical and will prevent God from being God. All of which benefit the enemy the most in this war.

Just so I'm clear, you don't bind God because He's not big enough to override you, but because He's often willing to have a relationship that works within the parameters that YOU dictate – that is what Faith means. It's a Dial and not an On/Off switch. It's faith like a child that is rewarded the most. It's a life lived wide open to Him and His direction that can be most useful for the Kingdom and will feel the constancy of His Fatherhood.

Yes, sometimes He'll bust through and wreck your preconceptions, but even that is usually an answer to someone's prayers. I've seen Him substantially show up in new ways to someone who didn't even think it was possible. Muslims all over the world are having dreams of Jesus and visitations and visions. He is spreading the Gospel Himself since we refuse to go. But it is often related to a particular day in Ramadan when Muslims are encouraged to seek "Truth." So He shows up in answer to their call. There are certainly millions of Christians all over the world praying that God will manifest Himself to the Muslims in hard-to-reach places. And He is responding.

He stands at the door and knocks. He waits for you to open it from the inside. If you only open it an inch, He'll only come in an inch. If you slam it shut, He'll stand patiently outside again and keep knocking.

But He likes it best if you just trust Him all the way and fling that door wide open and then rip it off its hinges and throw it away. Then He can come in His fullness and He's never stuck outside again. But it might cost you everything to let Him be fully in charge. Be warned.

But there's no better payoff!! To hold His hand every day and to hear His voice is worth anything.

Just A VERY Few of the Possible Filters:

- When you're sick, you should call a doctor Filter
- God hasn't spoken to us since the Bible was written Filter
- If you have a nice home and family and money in the bank you'll be happy Filter
- The Pastor is more holy and closer to God so we should listen to him Filter
- The Virgin Mary is just as good as Jesus Filter
- God promises that obedient Christians will be wealthy Filter
- The opinions of Men can be trusted (popes might even be infallible) Filter
- Satan isn't real and/or can't touch Christians Filter
- Denominations and factions are OK Filter
- Once Saved, Always Saved Filter
- God doesn't want His children to suffer Filter
- The Old Testament doesn't apply to New Covenant believers Filter
- Dispensational God-changes Filter
- Gifts of the Spirit aren't for today Filter
- God doesn't mind if we program and schedule Him to be here between 10:30 and noon Filter
- Seminaries are God's way of equipping leaders Filter
- Going to "church" makes you a Christian Filter
- The Great Commission command to go is just for ministers and missionaries Filter
- God doesn't mind some sin Filter
- Seminary degrees verify that someone knows God and hears His voice Filter
- Depression and anxiety and fear are chemical imbalances, never spiritual warfare Filter
- God is a white American Filter
- Jesus was a wise man like many others before and since Filter
- God is happy to endorse OUR ideas Filter
- Lone wolf, prophet in a cave, I'm the only one left Filter
- Anyone that loses his family can't be hearing God Filter
- God doesn't have a problem with homosexuality Filter
- Christmas is all about Jesus Filter
- Building big sanctuaries is necessary to do "church" Filter
- God is happy with America Filter
- We're going to get "Raptured" before the shooting starts so we won't suffer Filter
- Repenting and crying and weeping is creepy Filter
- We don't need to pray for mercy from a loving God Filter
- Don't judge ever at all in any way or tell anyone that they're wrong Filter
- etc.

Dear Father God, I don't really have any idea of all the ways that I've limited You. I know that I have and I'm really sorry. Please, I know You are really big. Please show me just how big You are. Please just crush that lens – those blinders that I've put on and be God to me in whatever way You want to be God. Please show me the depths of the love of Abba and the severity and justice of Jehovah. Show me all the doctrines of demons or man-made things that I have allowed and believed as Truth. Strip them all away and show me Your Truth. Wash me clean in the Blood of Jesus so that I can walk before You in real communion and in the fullness of all that You have for me. I'm sorry, Lord. Please fix it. I know that You will, so I'm thanking You in advance. I pray all of this to You in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



Chapter 4 – Spirals

(excerpted from a couple of different books – plus new additions)

In my humble opinion, one of the big roadblocks to understanding the Bible is the tendency to see stories in the Bible as only having application to that particular person or audience or time period.

There were certainly things that prophets said to a particular person that only had application that one time, but it makes sense to me that if it made it into the Bible, it had a wider audience to whom it would apply. A lot of time has been spent arguing about "replacement theology," that is, whether the modern church has inherited the promises of the children of Israel and thus the Old Testament applies to the modern church and not to Israel anymore. Some for and some against. It divides up the Body of Christ into camps that won't even talk to each other anymore.

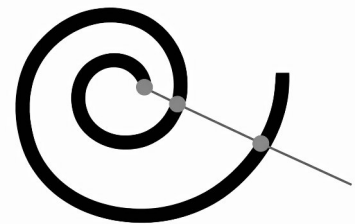
There's also a LOT of arguing about whether the book of Revelation (and Ezekiel and Daniel and others) is about something that happened in A.D. 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans or if it is about some future event in history - or both. A lot of wasted time being distracted with this that could have been spent spreading the Gospel. A lot of best-selling books, tapes, videos, etc., that sucked money away from more pressing needs – like reaching the billion or so people who have never ONCE heard the name of Jesus.

Look, I'm just a businessman who was given some insight. I was allowed to see a little bit more of the big picture. All the glory to God, it's not by MY power, that's for sure. My brain tends to process things in equations, as math problems. I see much of the Bible as computer code. That is, it's a lot of "If/Then" statements. IF you will abide in me, THEN I will abide in you. IF you lie, steal, envy, murder, commit adultery (etc.), THEN bad things will happen. IF you have other gods before me, THEN there will be trouble for your land. IF you will humble yourselves and seek my face, THEN I will restore your land. See? The whole thing is full of them. It's all full of formulas. All interconnected. (More about that in the Axioms chapter.)

The thing with code like that is that the variables you input affect the output, but they don't affect the equation. I know this is a little hard to follow. Let's try it this way.

If you have a behavior for which God has said there will be a specific consequence and you do that behavior a lot more, you should expect a lot more consequence.

Behavior A x 1 = Consequence B x 1
Behavior A x 100 = Consequence B x 100
Behavior A x 1,000,000 = Consequence B x 1,000,000



So, you see, the more people you put into one group, the accumulation of their sinfulness creates a certain mass of badness that's hard to overcome. By myself on a desert island, I might be out of step with God, but it's easy enough to hear from Him and change my ways. When I'm attached to a group of a million (or more), I might be doing great personally, but I'm still subject to the danger that others are reaping bad consequences for which we'll ALL be punished cumulatively.

The prophets in the Old Testament warned the whole nation of Israel of the coming judgements upon

them. In fact, the prophets often warned many other nations as well. But even the righteous remnant of Israel had to go into captivity and slavery and death. Have you ever thought about the children of Israel wandering in the desert because of their lack of faith? No, I don't mean the "Children of Israel" as a nation, I mean the children themselves. ALL the grownups died before their eyes. The kids weren't at fault, but they still had to suffer the loss of every single grown-up they knew – parents, grandmas, grandpas, aunts, uncles – before they could go into the Promised Land. See? They were subject to the consequence brought upon them by the mass of sinfulness of their group, even if they themselves were behaving as they should or were innocents at the time of the provocation.

Sure, there are times when God saves the few good ones (Noah, Lot, Rahab, etc.), but most of the time everybody has to suffer together. That's why it's so important to be accountable and watch out for each other. That's why the folks that are doing right can't just quietly sit by and think they're going to be free of judgement. If they hold their tongue when they should be speaking out, then they're not really doing right, are they? So they're probably not safe either. The darkness is THEIR fault if they had the light and didn't take it to the world. Why would God reward that kind of behavior?

OK, now here's where it starts to get more complicated. I think it's reasonable to assume that:

IF the Bible is the inspired words of God, **THEN** nothing is in there by accident.

IF nothing is in there by accident, **THEN** it must have some future application.

IF something irritated God at one point in history, **THEN** it probably irritates Him all the time.

IF God knows everything, **THEN** He must be able to plan ahead and see future applications for that warning.

IF the nation of Israel did something that brought judgement on them, **THEN** other children of God doing the same thing should also expect judgement when they mimic that behavior.

IF there was prophecy and warnings about Israel related to their misbehavior, **THEN** we should assume that that same prophecy relates to other folks doing the same thing.

We know God is great at conservation of resources and reuse of assets. Look at the ecosystem, everything has a purpose and is recycled from the elephant to the maggot to the dirt to the tree to the leaves to an elephant.

So, it seems to me that when God says something in the Bible it's likely that it could be recycled and used again and again. That's what it means to be a "living" word. The Lord's Prayer is good for kids in Sunday School, but it's also good for somebody worried about getting bread on their table. It's good for a Christian martyr on his way to a firing squad and it's good for someone like Jesus praying in the biggest possible terms for the Bride, the universal church (Our Father, Our Bread, Our Sins, etc.).

History doesn't really repeat itself in equal measure since we're always growing. So rather than it being circular, it's **spiral**. There are always more of us to mess it up than last time! Our World Wars are not getting progressively smaller and less deadly.

And something in the Bible that had application at a particular point will probably have application again when the spiral pulls back around. So when an Old Testament prophet spoke judgement on the 10,000 people in a town or tribe that had taken on idolatry and then we see God's consequences on them for it - we should be able to predict that if 100,000 do the same exact thing it will be 10 times as bad. And if 100,000,000 do it, it will be 10,000 times as bad. Eventually, if enough of the earth is bad, the only choice is a flood (Noah) or a massive reboot (Revelation, fire, black sun, red moon, earthquake, 2/3 of population dead, other badness, etc.)

You see, the book of Hosea CAN be about us. Revelation can be about AD 70 and it can STILL be about the Last Days. Much of it was fulfilled, but some of the big, bad scary stuff can't happen until the final rotation. At some point the spiral hits a dead end because the consequences are too great for the

Earth to contain them.

The Church of America is doing every bad thing in Hosea or Jonah only MANY, MANY times worse. Go read it. See that the judgement could apply to us today. God doesn't change and there is no remission of sins without repentance. So then cry like a baby and repent of your part in it. Commit to trying to do something to push back the darkness.

The Bible is cram-packed full of lots of spirals. That is, repeating, increasing echoes of the same concept or behavior. So I look for the patterns of scripture, not just the direct instructions. If something someone is telling me isn't consistent with all the echoes and spirals, then I know it's man-made. A dear friend of mine says that if a particular theory or opinion can't bounce like a ball all the way through the Bible without hitting an obstacle or dropping, then it's not pure Truth.

I want the Lord to open my eyes so that I can see how a particular verse speaks on all the different "legs" of the spiral. How does it apply to me personally, my family, my city, the local body of Christ, the country, the world, the Bride, the future, etc.? I can assure you that it does. It can mean all of those things at the same time. God is VERY complicated. If the Bible is just a dead history book, then it's pretty useless. If a verse can't speak to our lives right now – and again in a completely different way tomorrow – then it was not written by God.

For example, we normally think Passover was first visible when the Children of Israel put the blood over their doorposts and the death angel killed the first born of the Egyptians. But when Noah and his family closed the door behind them and were saved from the flood, that's a Passover. (Genesis 7) When Abraham offered to sacrifice Isaac and he was saved and the ram given instead, that was a type of Passover. (Genesis 22) When the Assyrians are about to destroy Jerusalem and Hezekiah repents and they leave, that's a kind of Passover (2 Kings 18-19). When the Jews were faced with imminent destruction under Haman, but Esther turned the tide, that was a Passover. (Esther 8) When Jesus as a child avoided being killed by Herod because of Joseph's obedience, that was a kind of Passover. The Jewish tradition instituted by God to celebrate the Pesach (Passover) was a reminder of all the times that God had covered them and they had escaped sure death. But the big fulfillment of the Passover "spiral" was Jesus, the Lamb of God that was slain and His Blood spread on the doorposts of our hearts so that we might not die. All those other mini-spirals were pointing to Him. And we still don't fully understand what He did for us because it's not complete. There is yet a restoration of all things and a new heaven and new earth to come. The Book of Revelation speaks of another global Passover when the remnant of the Bride rises glorified and spotless and pure while there is death all around Her. The Church is the spiritual body of Christ. The natural body went first, but the spiritual body will rise glorified as well.

In the same way, there are lots of examples of water baptism spirals and ritual cleansing and the need to be washed clean so that the Lord can use you. The Children of Israel had to put the blood over the doorposts in order to be saved, but then they also had to obey and leave all behind and go, and they had to go through the waters of the Red Sea and come out the other side. This is a type of baptism that cleansed them – and their Egyptian pursuers were trapped below the water. They arose from the water as free men (and women). The anointing on King Saul that made him a new man was a kind of baptism. (1 Samuel 10:1) The ritual cleansing of the priests before they could be useful to God is another example (Exod. 29:4).

Are you getting this? Spirals. They are like ripples in a pond when you throw in a rock. These repeating patterns help explain and understand what God is doing and will do. Consistency with the spirals is VERY important to Him. If something used to annoy Him, it still annoys Him. If something used to please Him, it still pleases Him. It's just a matter of the quantity involved. If America does something that is just like what Israel did and it brought massive judgement down on their heads, then we should not expect it to be any different with us. You just have to insert the quantity to get an idea of the expected severity. Because we are three part beings – Body, Soul and Spirit – these spirals can have application across multiple levels all at once. Some can be physical manifestations, some spiritual – sometimes both at the same time.

One can use the spirals to better understand and predict what God is saying. For example, He made them man and woman. Jesus is husband to the Bride, who is the Church. The Holy Spirit impregnated Mary to have Jesus so that God would be His Father. Over and over you see God refer to Israel as His Bride. The Song of Solomon is all about Jesus wooing His Bride. All of the spirals are about a man and a woman – and not only that, but a man in a role as the head over the woman. There are all kinds of examples of how badly things go when the order is reversed. Adam obeyed Eve and original sin came in. Abraham obeyed Sarah and Ishmael (and Islam) were the result. Ahab listened to Jezebel and was killed for it. Over and over we see what is God's order and what happens if consistency with the spirals is violated.

But the enemy always wants us to step outside the spirals and reverse God's order – or corrupt it completely. The enemy wants to foment homosexuality and feminism that disrupt the spirals. God's blessings come when you are walking on His path. And His path isn't linear, and it isn't circular – it's spiral.

Anyway, I want to illustrate just a few of the spirals about lighting a fire.

The fire of sacrifice that Abraham was willing to light, even if it cost his own son is an early example. That fire transformed the world. Without his willingness to light that fire, who knows what would have happened. (Gen. 22)

The Lord also lit the fire on the burning bush that didn't consume the bush. That is what got Moses' attention so that he would come to God and get drafted into service. It wasn't as big and flashy as the pillar of fire, but it was just for a personal application, not nationwide. Still, it's a spiral.

The Lord also lit the fire that led the Children of Israel out of Egypt and protected them from the Egyptians. The Lord Himself provided a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. This directional beacon guarded them, was a witness to their enemies of the power of God, lit their way and generally reminded them of the constant presence of God. (Exod. 13)

At the bottom of Sinai, the people watch as Moses goes up to meet God. The Lord doesn't need to light the fire, He IS the fire!

Ex 19:18 (KJV) – *And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.*

The seven pronged golden lampstand in the Tabernacle and the Temple are foreshadows and spirals of the seven independent golden lampstands in Revelation. (Exod. 25; Rev. 2-3) They were one lampstand when it was one people worshiping God in one place, but now WE are the “church” and we are independent one from another because of locality. There is no single temple. It jumped from the “natural” to the “spiritual” because of Christ. And yet, Christ walks among us and amongst all the Lampstands. In Leviticus, the priests were to tend the lamps all the time and make sure they never stopped burning. Christ didn't come to revoke the Old Covenant, He came to spiritualize it – to transcend it and make it even harder. Now it's not just actions, it's even thoughts that are judged.

The Ark of the Covenant itself is a type of spiral because it is a symbol of the power and presence of God in a place. When the Ark went before them, no enemy could stand against them. And it was untouchable, lest someone die. (2 Sam. 6:6-7) God's fire is real, but the power of it is too much for any man to try to harness – much less make DVD's and books and try to profit from it. It WILL reach out and kill you – and you might not even know you're dead. Be warned.

When the Children of Israel first go into the Promised Land, the VERY first thing the Lord has them do is light a fire all together. He sent them against a pagan capital, Jericho, told them how to crush it, then had them light it up like a giant sacrifice. (Joshua 6) This is very much like the bonfire the Ephesians have in Acts 19 where they burn all their pagan idols. There was lots of good stuff in Jericho that they could have used, but it was a kind of First Fruits offering to God, so all of it was off-limits and to be sacrificed. This is a communal, nationwide, Lamplighting ceremony to go ahead of the Children of Israel into their Promised Land. And it worked, it scared the pants off of all the people who lived in the land!

Another good example is Gideon in Judges 6. The Lord had sent the Midianites to oppress Israel because they all had altars of Baal in their backyard. But He hears their cry and decides to free them (after sending an unnamed prophet to tell them to repent), and raises up Gideon to do it. But before Gideon can go, he has to get the altar of Baal out of his own backyard. God will not send him out to conquer 135,000 men while he still has a fire burning to a foreign God on his own land! So God doesn't require Gideon to go and preach to all of Israel and get rid of ALL the altars, just that he get ONE fire burning properly. Get one altar to God doing what it's supposed to do and then the MASSIVE weapons of war you get access to when God is your defender will kick into gear. So Gideon and ten servants go under cover of darkness and knock the altar down, use their own resources against them and burn the Asherah poles (big pointy, male fertility symbols that God hates – much like the steeples on churches) and then he used his dad's second best bull as the sacrifice.

Judges 6:25-31 (KJV)

25 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: 26 And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down. 27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had said unto him: and so it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night. 28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built. 29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing. 30 Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it. 31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.

Immediately after this, Gideon blows the trumpet for war and the whole tribe shows up to help. Now, get this, they wanted to kill him, but why didn't they? Why didn't they convert the altar back? All Joash said was "Aw, c'mon guys, let Baal fight his own battles." And they left. And THEN they answer Gideon's trumpet for war a verse later! The answer is, they HATE change. Their instant reaction was to kill whoever disrupted the altar they were so used to. But something inside of them knows that the kid has a point. Yahweh is their God and this altar is better anyway. So they leave him alone. They don't go home and knock their own altars down, but they wait and watch. When God gives Gideon victory with 300 guys and the craziest warfare strategy in history, then ALL the altars to Baal in all of Israel get knocked down and the people live at peace with God – until Gideon dies.

The Lord began speaking to me two years ago, "Give me ONE altar. Light ONE fire and I'll give you victory over the world. Fix the altar in your own backyard and then see what happens." My backyard is Liberty, Missouri. That one Lampstand needed to be lit. And it was lit – Praise God – on October 31, 2005. It's not a physical fire, because Jesus transcended the natural boundaries and walks among the spiritual Lampstands of the City Churches.

Other examples include times when the Lord lit the fires of repentance and restoration Himself. Like the showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. (I Kings 18) The whole nation got to watch God light the fire and they repented substantially and killed all the prophets of Baal.

When Solomon builds and dedicates the Temple, the Lord lights it up Himself.

2 Chron 7:1-3 (KJV)

1 Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the house. 2 And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house. 3 And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the LORD upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.

There's also practically no end to the number of times in the Bible when God is REALLY mad about all the times we light fires to foreign gods. Even when we have high places to the Lord that aren't where He intended them to be or aren't doing it right! If you complain and grumble too much, He might even send His consuming fire after YOU! (Numbers 11,16)

But God is faithful and He says He will never let it go too far. And yet, even embedded in this verse is a symbolism that references the spirals we're talking about – baptism with water and with fire.

Isaiah 43:2 (KJV)

2 When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

Here it is specifically laid out. Can't deny it – it's right there in the Bible. (Did you already get the “fire” part? Still waiting for it?)

Luke 3:16 (KJV)

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

The Lord Himself lit the first City Church Lampstand when He sent down tongues of fire on the people.

Acts 2:1-4 (KJV)

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

That was a change in the spiral from lighting fires on sacrifices and inanimate objects to putting the fire directly into all people. Now that WE are the temple, the fire itself doesn't change, but the vehicle changed. He didn't change. The Holy Spirit didn't change. But because we were ready and it was His time, the fire could manifest inside of us. There's no reason to believe that this fire in us stopped being necessary when the Bible was completed. These are increasing spirals with increasing applications across broader and broader groups and in more powerful ways. They don't ever dead end or go backwards. They might jump back and forth from natural to spiritual, but they don't stop increasing.

See?

Matt 5:13-16 (KJV)

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

In Acts 19, God uses an encounter with a demon to motivate the Body of Christ in Ephesus to come together, get cleaned out and light a fire that changes the town forever.

Acts 19:16-20 (KJV)

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

The final application of this spiral is when we are all in One City with One Lampstand – and it's the Lord Himself.

Rev 21:23 (KJV)

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

Won't that be great?! All together in one New Jerusalem with one Lampstand – and it's HIM!! All we need to do in order to see what He wants from us is to go out to the final spiral – the biggest possible application of the City Church and the Lampstands – and then backtrack through the spirals and see how it applies to us now. What we need to do is get everything that we have now to act as much like it will in heaven as possible. Sounds reasonable, right?

If you pray the Lord's prayer, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." - then shouldn't you want us to be One Body under His headship with His fire burning right now, just like we will be later? Are we going to have denominations in heaven? Are we going to have strife and dissension and division and sects? Are we going to try to hide HIS light under a bushel?! So why is it OK to do that stuff now?

If you can't pray it and really mean it, it's probably better if you just stop praying the Lord's Prayer at all.

More Spiral Stuff

Most of the arguments across the Body of Christ are pointless. They are because people see an application for scripture and believe it is the one and only application. They dig in their feet and insist that they know God and they are 100% sure of what He is trying to say in a particular verse! At it's root it's a huge pride problem! Not only do we think we can get our heads around God, but we're sure we know exactly what He meant and He only meant the one thing that He has thus far revealed to us. We break up into "Schools of Opinion" over things like this. Galatians 5:19-21 says those are "heresies" and those who do such things WILL NOT inherit the Kingdom of God. Why? Because it's pride at it's root and it grieves God. Stop putting Him in a box.

2 Tim 3:16-17 (KJV)

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

At that moment, the New Testament wasn't compiled, so that "scripture" that Paul is talking about is the OLD TESTAMENT. If you come at me with that, "The Old Testament doesn't apply to New Testament believers" argument, I'm going to ask you to hand me your Bible and then I'm going to start at Genesis and rip pages out and quote you 2 Timothy 3:16 over and over until you make me stop. It's arrogant in the extreme to dismiss giant chunks of God's word. And probably a violation of Revelation 22:18-19. Just in case, you might want to knock it off.

Rev 22:18-19 (KJV)

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

That doesn't exhaust the topic. Maybe someday I'll write a whole book just about the spirals. But I think you get the idea. God is a lot more complicated than you want to believe. He's not as easily compartmentalized and you don't know Him nearly as well as you think you do. And if you're sure that you do, then you have a giant pride plank in your eye and you have God in way too small a box.

Dear Father God, please show me how to rightly divide Your word. Show me all the applications and how it relates to me on all the different spirals. Open my eyes to see the complexity and majesty of Your design and Your word. I'm sorry for having listened to men. I'm sorry for teaching people things as if they were absolute truth when in fact I was guessing based on my limited knowledge. Please purge it out of me and let me walk in humility and brokenness before You. Let me speak only Your words and let them be True. Please Father, I'm sorry. Please forgive me and wash me in the Blood of Jesus. Please give me wisdom and expand my understanding of You. I know this prayer is inside Your will, so I thank You in advance for answering it. I pray all of this in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.





Chapter 5 – Ripples

There is a term used in business called “Opportunity Costs”. What this means is the potential loss in revenue because of missed opportunities. That is, you might have made \$1,000,000 on that business deal, but because you acted late and didn’t pull the trigger fast enough, you missed making an additional \$500,000. Those are the “Opportunity Costs” because of the way the deal went down.

For example, I might as well be transparent here and take this opportunity to apologize to you all. In the Spring of 2005 I was invited to speak at the “John the Baptist Conference” in Olathe, Kansas. I was all fired up and I was sort of the token business guy that could speak about waste and fraud and financial mismanagement in the church. It was on November 23rd of 2004 that I had a massive experience with the Lord and He showed me a vision of how desperately bad things are and I had been weeping and groaning and repenting ever since. About a month before the conference I was in my prayer closet and I asked the Lord to tell me what He wanted me to say at the conference. For about thirty minutes this weeping, moaning, repentant prayer comes out of me involuntarily. Just blasts through and I see a vision of me on stage on my knees crying out to God in front of this whole room of people. When it's over I try to catch my breath and I say, “Oh, God! Nobody will be able to stand up under that! They will all be on their faces!” He says, “Yep. That's what I want. Do that.”

Well, as the conference gets closer I forget about it. The brother putting on the conference talks me through something he wants to make sure I address because I'm really strong on those, but avoid these topics because there are others speaking on those and I'm not qualified there. I start thinking about the statistics of church mismanagement and all the information I've gathered and how it might be good to do a PowerPoint presentation or something. Even on the day of the conference a sister gives me a Bible verse that I never did look up – and as I'm walking up onto the stage a brother hugs me tearfully and asks me to do the right thing. I don't have any prepared notes, I'm just going to try to get out of God's way and let the Spirit lead.

Then they hand me a microphone and I think it might be good to tell everybody a little about me. So I say some good stuff, but I ramble around sort of aimlessly and talk about none of the things I was supposed to and some of the ones I wasn't supposed to, I go way over time and cut into the next speaker's schedule and throw off the lunch schedule. The organizer is giving me a cut-off sign but I just keep right on talking. Then it's finally over, I say a little terse prayer and walk off.

A lot of people heard something in there that was helpful to them. God used it and will find a way to redeem us. But I did a lot of damage to the relationship with the brother in charge. Nonetheless, I felt like the weekend went really well. But on Monday afternoon, I get a phone call and the brother is pretty worked up and wants to talk to me about my prideful, immature display. I feel like it's the better part of discretion to put him off for a day so that we can all calmly pray first before it goes somewhere that isn't going to please God. That night I'm seeking the Lord and I honestly thought everything went alright. Then the Lord reminds me of that time in prayer and He says, “You asked me what I wanted you to say at the conference and that was the ONLY thing I ever told you to do. I didn't send you there to talk about yourself and make your little speeches. There were plenty of others there that were going to do that. This was a repentance conference and I gathered about 500 of the biggest guns from all over the world and not ONCE did you all hit your knees and repent for anything. You were all so glad to see each other and come out of your caves that you never actually repented for anything. And that's what I sent YOU there for – to do it in front of them and put ME in charge. And I stood in the back and waited, but nobody ever called. And if you had done what I told you to do there would have been a PILLAR OF FIRE over the Holiday Inn in Olathe, Kansas and the Kansas City revival would have started and spread all over the world. And the blood of EVERY person that didn't get saved or healed or delivered because of that is on YOUR head – from then until the pillar of fire DOES show up.”

So then He gave me a glimpse of exactly how big that number of people might be and I cried and cried and wailed and moaned and wept a puddle, curled up in a ball under the desk in my office.

And when the brother called me the next day to say that everything I did at the conference was about pride, I agreed with him. And I didn't fight back and I didn't point fingers. The Lord said that He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and I was to take it and shut up. And there was nothing the brother could say that would make me feel any worse than what God had already said to me.

I have no idea how much my failure might have changed the lives of you, dear readers. But I'm sorry. I am sincerely sorry. Please forgive me. And I've tried to live every day since going full-speed and not backing down from any instruction of the Lord. I've got enough blood on my head already and I don't need it to get any worse.

That is a very personal illustration of the reality of "Opportunity Costs". The "ripples" are the consequences of our actions or inactions. We can't possibly really understand the total consequences of the things that we do.



ONE sermon that is pulled out of the file instead of inspired by God might only have changed one life, but that life reached one, and that life reached one, and THAT life reached the one that reaches all of Africa with the Gospel. But because you pulled a sermon out of the file and didn't speak the anointed word of God that was needed at that moment, that person didn't get reached and the blood of it ALL is on your head.

You see, we're going to have to answer for every idle word. There will be a judgement. The books will be opened. They're not going to just look in the Book of Life, see your name and wave you on through. There's going to be a trial. And all the evidence against you is going to be presented. And I'm going to have to look Jesus in the eye (if I can) while they replay the pride and the porn and the selfishness and the gluttony and the theft and the lies and the pain I caused others – and all of it. And I'm going to know that more than anyone else, I hurt my Savior and Lord and Lover and Husband Jesus. And just because at the end of it they will find that He took my penalty on Himself, doesn't mean that I'm going to enjoy that trial. I'm going to want to crawl under something. I don't want it to last ONE instant longer than absolutely necessary. I love Him and I want to obey Him, because it will please Him and because God is a JUST God and I don't want there to be any more accusations against me than are absolutely necessary. That He is my Savior is not an excuse to keep plunging a knife into His chest by my constant disobedience.

And worst of all, He suffered and died for His inheritance – His people. And by my actions in 2005, there is some (gigantic) number of people that remain untransformed, unhealed, unsaved, unreached – and in the enemy camp. We were supposed to strip them from the enemy's hand and return them to Jesus as His just inheritance for His suffering. But I made it worse. Now, He and I are all square on that, but I'm not sure there is anyone that would not have somehow been affected by now had a pillar of fire shown up in Kansas City in 2005.

People often come here to get their pipeline cleaned out, get delivered of whatever is messing with them and learn how to get their cup full and keep it full. One of the most desperately needed things at this moment is for the members of the Body of Christ to have more fear of the Lord, particularly the leadership. I have had these kinds of conversations with people over and over. All different flavors. This conversation is not so much a quote as a collage. I don't want to embarrass any of the people that have

come and been transparent and revealed some really deep areas of disobedience.

Typically, when we start to try to identify why it is that they used to hear God but can't anymore, we'll go back to when they were on fire and hearing Him well and then when they first noticed that it stopped. When you cease to carefully obey God, He will turn you over to a strong delusion. You will be blind, naked, wretched, poor and lukewarm, but you'll think you're rich and have need of nothing. I thought the conference went really well – until God took the scales off of my eyes and showed me how HE felt about it. Over and over I've counseled with people that thought things were OK, until the Lord had me show them something so desperately dark that provided a little glimpse of how the “self” in them had done massive damage to the body of Christ – and it put them on their knees weeping and groaning.

It goes like this:

Doug - “So, Brother, when did you stop hearing God really well and feeling His presence?”

Brother - “Well, I think it was about eight years ago, just before I left that particular ministry.”

Doug - “And what was the last thing that you remember hearing God really well about?”

Brother - “Oh! I had this REALLY vivid dream about the leader of the ministry and how he was in danger and how, because of some doorways of lust that he still had open, the enemy was sending this really slinky, beautiful woman to seduce him. I saw him fall for her and it wrecked his marriage and divided the ministry and did a lot of damage.”

Doug - “OK, so what did you do with that dream?”

Brother - “Well, God told me to confront the leader and warn him of the danger and show him what he was doing that was keeping the doors open, but I was angry with him for some things that he had done and I didn't think he would receive it anyway so I kept my mouth shut. Well, sort of, I did tell the dream to some other people in the ministry – and it probably did get back to him somehow, but by then I was already being pushed out the door.”

Doug - “And so, what happened with that ministry?”

Brother - “Well, it's dead now. He divorced his wife and married another woman and it tore the whole thing apart. A lot of people were really hurt and disillusioned by it.”

Doug - “And what happened with you after that?”

Brother - “Well, I struggled a lot after that and I fell away from God because I was so angry. I got into some sin and it ended up costing my marriage, but things are all better now.”

Doug - “Except that you haven't heard God speak in about eight years and you're directing all of your own paths and you're empty inside and really don't have any idea how far outside of His perfect will you are right now.”

Brother - “Well, yeah, except for that.” *sniffle*

Doug - “Do you understand that God recycles everything? That He is very good at saying one thing and it applying to more than one person or situation?”

Brother - “Yeah, I get that.”

Doug - “So why do you think the Lord gave that dream to you in particular? What application did it have for your own life?”

Brother - “Well, I did have some open doorways and I was looking at porn a lot. But it wasn't about me. It was about that ministry head.”

Doug - “Yeah, so because you thought it didn't have any application to you, you didn't receive it as a warning and repent or shut those doors or anything. Right?”

Brother - “Well, no. I guess not.”

Doug - “And if you had understood that God tries to give a word like that to someone that can relate to it and can apply it personally, then you might have been able to go to that ministry leader in humility and brokenness and as someone who was personally repentant and could speak to him from a place of lovingly imploring him to learn from your lessons instead of pointing fingers and blaming.”

Brother - "Well, yeah, I guess so."

Doug - "And if you had done that and he would have received it and implemented the warning God sent that you refused to deliver, it might have saved his marriage and his ministry and even now he might be effective for the Gospel instead of a lame duck. And the gossip you spread by telling it to people other than the person God intended might not have further harmed the ministry."

Brother - "Well, yeah, I guess so."

Doug - "Did you ever repent to the Lord for not delivering that message as you were told to do? Did you repent for telling others?"

Brother - "No, I didn't. I figured God would send someone else."

Doug - "Did God send someone else? Maybe you were the last one in line."

Brother - "No. I'm not aware that anyone else ever confronted him after that."

Doug - "OK, well, then it's all on your head. All the people that didn't get reached and all the damage that was done that might have been averted if you had obeyed and gone in humility and love is on your head."

Brother - "OUCH! I don't think that's right. God doesn't hold me responsible for the actions of others!"

Doug - "Well, let's just ask the Lord right now. I'm going to pray with you and focus ALL of my attention on you being able to hear God really good on this. I'm just going to run a jumper cable from my antenna to your antenna so you can get a clear answer. You ask the Lord if He holds you responsible."

Brother - after prayer "Wow. He does. He says it's all on me." snuffle

Doug - "Well, would you ask God how many people are not going to be in the Kingdom because of your disobedience?"

Brother - "I don't think I want to know." snuffle

Doug - "Well, then we can't really repent all the way, can we? If you want to clear the slate and keep this from happening again you probably need to have this written on your heart. You prayed for more fear of the Lord."

Brother - "OK." after prayer "Oh, God! The Lord says 450 people are not in the Kingdom because of what I did!" snuffle, snuffle

Doug - "Well, I was asking, too, and I'm hearing that those are the people directly impacted by it. But that's not the total. You see, the people hurt aren't preaching the Gospel now. And the people that would have got saved, but aren't, they're not preaching the Gospel. And the people they reached and the people they reached and on and on. That ministry might have continued and grown. I have no idea how the ripples might have gone out by now. Would you ask the Lord for the TOTAL number of ALL the missed opportunities of all the ripples as it extended out?"

Brother - "I don't think I want to."

Doug - "Yeah, I know. I'll pray with you. You're not alone. But I'm pretty sure this is important."

Brother - "Yeah, me, too." praying, crying, praying, crying, deep groan, wailing - then very quietly "The Lord says 253,000 people didn't hear the Gospel because of me." snuffle, snuffle, snuffle. "OH GOD!! I'm SO SORRY!! I had no idea! I'm so sorry! I'm a wretch! You died for them and I totally screwed this up! I'm so sorry, Lord! I see how my pride and unforgiveness and arrogance did awful damage to Your Body. I'm so sorry, Jesus! Please forgive me! Please help me make it right! Please kill anything in me that would ever do anything like that again! Please help me not to ever miss another opportunity! Oh, God. I'm so sorry." snuffle, snuffle, groan. "Please help me hear Your voice again. Please, I deserve far worse. Please just get me back in Your perfect will and direct all of my paths. I'm so sorry, Lord."

Then God starts talking to them again and we start tracking down anything else that might be in there messing with them. Filters and lenses and strongholds and other areas of disobedience. We teach them how to get their cup full and keep it full and how to obey ALL the time. Because there is no safe place

other than ALL. If you stick your head out of the Strong Tower to see what's going on outside, you're going to catch an arrow in the eye. Stay IN Jesus and don't come out! There is no telling what the ripples and consequences and opportunity costs are going to be for even the slightest act of disobedience. Only God can anticipate all the ripples and only God can direct your paths through the minefield that is trying to kill, steal and destroy your life and that of your brothers and sisters.

Are you getting this? I'm not sure what else to throw at you if you're not. Go ask God how many people are not in the Kingdom, are not written in the Book of Life because you didn't trust God for the money to go on that mission trip He told you to go on. Ask God how many got missed because you refused to be inconvenienced by going to the mission field where He told you and instead stayed home. Ask God how many got missed because you refused to stand up and say the hard thing even when you knew the pastor was wrong. Ask God how many got missed because you refused to obey Him about where to have lunch yesterday and the waitress who needed prayer died last night in a car accident. Ask Him if He wants you to just SHUT UP, listen real good and do whatever HE tells you – ALL the time. Ask Him which of your own paths it's safe for you to direct yourself. (Prov. 3:5-6)

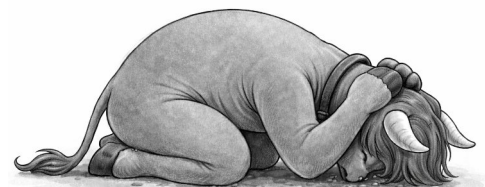
Ask God to give you a hunger for souls. Ask God to let you see the Big Picture and see through His eyes. Ask God to let you see the ripples.

It's going to hurt, but it's absolutely necessary if you want Fear of the Lord. And Fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of Wisdom. If a leader doesn't show any evidence of Fear of the Lord, I'm betting they don't have any Godly wisdom, either.

There's no way to march shoulder to shoulder without jostling each other if we're not hearing God and obeying ALL. I don't want to be in a foxhole with someone that obeys SOME. If you can't hear Headquarters and get clear commands on the fly, you're no good for this war. If you are unwilling or unable to see that a LOT might depend on your absolute obedience to commands from Headquarters, then you're careless and reckless and you're not ready for war either. In fact, it might be hard to tell whose side you're really on.

Read Ezekiel 3:17-21; Ezekiel 33:1-9 – If you don't give warning, I will require their blood of you.

Almighty God, this is really scaring me. I have no idea how bad this is. I'm just barely getting a glimpse of the potential losses and costs and it's really scaring me. I trust You, Lord. You know what I can handle. Please open my eyes and give me wisdom to see as You see. I trust You to hold my hand and get me through. I want to repent before You. I want to weep and mourn. I want to see my part in all of this mess. Please show me, even if it hurts. Show me how my actions or inactions have hurt my family and my brethren. Tell me the numbers. Show me a picture of what it would have been like if I had obeyed. Please, Lord. Please write it on my heart and give me more Fear of the Lord. Do whatever You have to do to me so that I will obey ALL. Please fix me. Just put a ring in my nose and drag me like a bull where you want me. I'll try not to resist You, but please don't let me go. There is a monster inside of me and it's ME! Please crucify me so that Christ in me can live and work and breathe and speak and fight and be seen by all the world. To Your glory, Lord. I'm nothing and deserve nothing after how badly I've handled all of this. Please fix me. I'm so sorry. I know You're going to answer this. Please just help me really good and don't let the enemy gain any more ground. Don't let me turn this into guilt or paralysis, just keep it before my eyes to motivate me to move faster. Please, Lord. In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.





Chapter 6 – Axioms

An “Axiom” is simply a logic progression or a maxim or statement generally agreed to be true. What I've done here is string together a bunch of axioms to show a logical progression to a conclusion. In a sense, it's an extension of the “spirals”. It's like in the illustration above, I gather all the “C” notes until we can play a chord and see the extension into unknown “Cs” that aren't on the keyboard, but must surely be consistent with what we already know. Sometimes it's just illustrating “Cs” that we all sort of know are there, but we don't want to admit because it would require sacrifice or change.

I've used this method in several different books. A collection of the Axioms are gathered here for illustration and enlightenment (hopefully). Take it all back to the Bible and see if it harmonizes. Take it to Jesus (the Word of God Himself) and ask Him to explain it to you. Feel free to correct me if you think I'm wrong. But don't argue with me just because you don't like the conclusions I've come to, but you can't debate the path I took to get there. I'm tired of pastors telling me that there is nothing I'm saying that they can disagree with, but they just want me to go away. At some point somebody is going to have to be discomforted by this stuff and still actually ACT ON IT!! Once you've been enlightened, there are no more excuses. As of this date, no one has ever argued with my conclusions and the Biblical nature of the Axioms; they just try to shut me up. But if I'm right, it changes everything!

The Fear of the Lord Axioms

(excerpted from the book “Do It Yourself City Church Restoration”)

Fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of Wisdom. You need all you can get!

IF we sin, **THEN** we must not have enough Fear of the Lord. (The Father AND the Son.)
IF we don't have enough fear of the Lord, **THEN** it must be because we don't see Him clearly.
IF we don't see Him clearly, **THEN** it must be because we have been deceived about who He really is.
IF we have been deceived, **THEN** we might be worshiping another Jesus.
IF we are worshiping another Jesus, **THEN** we are not saved.
IF we are not saved, **THEN** we will go to hell.

IF we believe many in the church, **THEN** we accept Jesus into our hearts as our personal Savior.
IF Jesus is our Savior from that moment on, **THEN** there is no need for any further action on our part.
IF the act of accepting Him as Savior is sufficient, **THEN** we can do whatever we want after that.
IF it is a one-time thing and a completed work, **THEN** there is no further need for obedience to Him.
IF we say “Lord, Lord” but mean “one-time Savior”, **THEN** He may not acknowledge us before God.

IF we believe the Bible, **THEN** we accept Jesus as our Lord and Master.
IF Jesus is our Lord, **THEN** we are entirely at His mercy and direction thereafter.
IF we accept Jesus as our Lord, **THEN** He will acknowledge us before the Father.
IF we accept Jesus as Lord, **THEN** He will fight our battles and His nature in us will keep us from sin.
IF we fully accept Jesus as Lord, **THEN** He can direct ALL our paths.

IF we declare Him to be Savior, **THEN** we place Him in a position of one-time needfulness.
IF we declare Him as Savior, **THEN** we leave open the position and title of Lord.
IF Jesus is not Lord, **THEN** we won't look to Him for daily direction.
IF we're not looking to Him for daily direction, **THEN** we will look elsewhere.
IF the position and title of Lord is vacant, **THEN** some Man will try to become that over us.
IF the position and title of Lord is vacant, **THEN** the religious establishment leadership benefits most.
IF the religious establishment preaches Savior, **THEN** it may be because they want to be your Lord.

IF we accept any Man as our Lord, **THEN** we are at their whim.
IF we are at the whim of Man, **THEN** we will not have peace and joy and victory.
IF we do not have peace and joy and victory, **THEN** we are under the control of the enemy.
IF we're under the control of the enemy, **THEN** we're on the wrong team – even if we fed poor people.
IF we're on the wrong team, **THEN** Jesus will not acknowledge us before the Father.

IF we had a little fear of the Lord, **THEN** we would see that He is Sovereign and there is no other.
IF we had more fear of the Lord, **THEN** we would hate the “world” and everything in it and seek Him only.
IF we had lots of fear of the Lord, **THEN** we would weep and mourn and groan for days for the massive blackness of our hearts (individually and collectively) and the distance between us and Him.
IF we had fear of the Lord, **THEN** we would have the beginning of wisdom.
IF we had the beginning of wisdom, **THEN** we wouldn't be tossed by every wind of doctrine.
IF we had the beginning of wisdom, **THEN** we would pray that He would give us more fear of the Lord.
IF He gives us more fear of the Lord, **THEN** it's really, really going to hurt.
IF we love Him and want truth above all, **THEN** we'll keep asking anyway.

The Tripartite Axioms

(excerpted from “Rain Right NOW, Lord!”)

Tripartite simply means “three part” and an axiom is just a logic progression to prove a point. I could write a whole 200 page paperback about this by telling lots of stories and fluffing it up, but there's a war between good and evil and we're kind of losing, so it's probably better if we just cut out all the fluff and get right to the point.

God is tripartite – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
IF we were made in God's image,
THEN we are tripartite – Soul, Body and Spirit.

When God heals us, it affects all three.
When God asks for obedience, it means from all three.
When God asks for worship, it means from all three.

When we sin, it affects all three – Soul, Body and Spirit.
When we disobey, it affects all three – Soul, Body and Spirit.
When we set ourselves above God, it affects all three – Soul, Body and Spirit.

When we are commanded to bear each other's burdens, it means all three.
When we are commanded to lift the yokes of oppression, it means all three.
When we are commanded to feed the hungry, it means all three.

When we give food to the hungry we are feeding their Body.
When we give Godly instruction to the hungry we are feeding their mind and Soul.
When we give blessings and prayers to the hungry we are feeding their Spirit.

When we give drink to the thirsty we are satiating their Body.
When we give pure truth to the thirsty, we are feeding their mind and Soul.
When we pour out on them the Living Water in us, we are feeding their Spirit.

We are vessels of honor, committed to the service of God.
We contain all kinds of things that can be used for His purposes.
We hold strength, money, time, knowledge, experience, wisdom, faith, love, joy, peace, patience.
Some are physical, some are mental, some are spiritual. All are to be shared.

The easiest to understand and do is the Body.
Even the world is good at disaster relief and feeding the hungry.
Even the wicked love their children and feed them good things.

The sneaky one is the Soul and the Mind.
Satan always wants us to spend all our energies on that one.
Teach them, train them, argue about philosophies, speculate about hypotheticals.
That is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.
The world is really good at writing books and speaking many words. Of that there is no end.

The rarest one, the realest one, the most impactful one is the Spirit.
Our battle is NOT against flesh and blood – or the mind – it's against spiritual rulers.
Spiritual rulers that try to steal, kill and destroy.
You can starve the Spirit by overfeeding the Body and Soul.
All you have to do is take all the emphasis away from the Spirit and put it on the Mind.

God instituted the five-fold Ministry (or four, whatever) for a reason. Each has their unique role.
Pastors are for feeding the Body. Caring for widows and orphans.
Teachers are for feeding the Mind. Train them up in the way they should go.
Evangelists are for igniting the Spirit in man and turning it over to God.
Prophets identify the failings in the process individually or corporately and point them out loudly.
Apostles train them all up and set them into place and send them out - and are themselves sent out.
All should be fully pouring themselves out on behalf of those in need – Body, Soul and Spirit.

Do we know how to pour out the Spirit on someone in need?
Do we know how to make sure our own cup is full?
Is anybody teaching that anymore?

Isn't it obvious that the Church in America's Body is well fed?
How many thousands of tons of potato salad do we serve at fellowship suppers every year?
How much do we weigh per capita? We have plenty of food. Who could argue?
In fact, too much in some places and not enough in others, but that's just a distribution problem.

Isn't it obvious that the Church in America's Mind is well fed?
Could we have any more books and tapes and conferences and satellite training meetings?
Could our soulish nature be any more gratified? Do we not have enough input?
We are more obese and overfed in the Mind than we are in the Body.

*“Repent of your sins, accept Jesus into your heart.
There now. We're done with your Spirit.
We'll focus on your Body and your Mind from now on.”*

Is that really working?

Isn't it obvious that the Church in America is poor in Spirit and starving to death?
We don't look like Jesus, because we don't have nearly enough of Him living in us.
Our spiritual cups are too small.
We don't love like Jesus, because we don't know how to share what we do have.
Our spiritual cups are stagnant and lukewarm.
We don't act like Jesus, because we're leaving out the most important part of the battle.
We're fighting on the wrong fronts.

We are raising up very large people with very large brains.
We are not raising up people with faith like a child that will stride out with five stones against Goliath.
We are not raising up people that know how to walk in the Spirit and in the Power of God.
We are not fulfilling the Great Commission holistically – Body, Soul and Spirit.
We are not fulfilling Isaiah 58 holistically – Body, Soul and Spirit.

We don't know how to fight in the spirit.
We don't know how to pray anymore.
Not really. Not all night with travailing and crying out for God.
Not pulling down strongholds and lifting yokes of oppression over our town, our church or our sheep.
We are spiritual warfare pygmies.
Whose idea could that have been?
Who is glorified most by overweight, brainy, spiritually weak Christians? When are we going to start feeding their spirits?
When are we going to start pouring ourselves out?

When is the rain going to start falling on the Church?
When is God going to pour out His Spirit on all flesh?

I think He's waiting on US.

If I'm right, then these Axioms are a devastating indictment of the state of things. I have no idea how to turn this whole ride around. There is only one Biblical prescription – Repent. When the locusts have come and devoured everything, the first thing is to realize that they came because you were not obeying God like you should have. The locusts – drought, enemy armies, whatever – never come against the children of God unless they are outside of His will. He promises to lift you up above all nations and make you the head and not the tail and prosper you if you will carefully obey (Deut. 28). If the opposite is happening, then it's because you have NOT carefully obeyed God. And He is perfectly willing to crush you to teach you to knock it off. He is a jealous God and He chastens those He loves. If you're not being chastened, then you may be an illegitimate child and not actually a son.

When the locusts come and there is no green grass left and the sheep and cattle mill around looking for something to eat and can't find anything (as good a picture of the church in America as I can find), what do you do? Declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly and repent and weep and mourn before the altar. And maybe He will turn. Maybe.

Father God, please show us how far off track we really are. Please build containment systems that will keep our nature in check. Please write Your law on our hearts. Please help us not to be fat, brainy, spiritually weak Christians. Make us tougher and faster and more obedient and more loving and more like Jesus. Even if it hurts. Please forgive us for this mess and thinking that our little ideas were helping You out and improving on Your design for things. We are flawed at the core. Please redeem us and find a way to make us useful for Your Kingdom. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Please, Lord, please just fix it. We're sorry we broke it. In the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.



Chapter 7 – Dials

(excerpted from “Rain Right NOW, Lord!” - with additions)

We don't have enough Fear of the Lord or we would have a better sense of how intensely complicated this is! We always seek to simplify and compartmentalize God so that we can get our heads around Him.

The idea of the Dials has application across a whole bunch of spectrums, but let's just talk about it first in terms of Gifts of the Spirit for illustration. OK? (Like you have a choice.)

People seem to think the Gifts of the Spirit are on/off switches that you either have or you don't. People actually preach that you may only have one or two gifts, but nobody has ALL of them. And whatever the Holy Spirit gives you, that's what you get and you should be content with it. But I think that's just not at all scriptural on a whole number of levels.

First, they're clearly NOT on/off switches, they're Dials. There's no other way to explain how someone could have an anointing to heal a headache, but another can raise the dead. Some have a prophecy gift that just comes as a “dèjà vu” sort of vague sense of familiarity when something happens and some others see hyper-accurate dreams and visions of the future all the time. Some have just barely enough Gift of Faith to endure a couple weeks without a paycheck and some can endure shipwrecks and torture and jail and total dependence on God for everything. It has to be a spectrum, not a fixed quantity. **I Corinthians 12:11 says that the “Holy Spirit gives them to each one, just as He determines.”** That may mean that He gives the Gift itself to those He determines, but it also surely means that He gives it in the quantity that He determines. Sometimes a person gets “dialed up” just long enough for a crisis situation or an immediate need for healing or evangelism or whatever and then may never see that gift again like that. The Holy Spirit's management of each of our Gift's' Inventory is a lot more fluid and complicated than we give Him credit for. (I hope that the result of this chapter, too, is more Fear of the Lord.)

Second, Paul specifically instructs us to desire spiritual gifts, especially the big ones that have the biggest impact. He says:

1 Corinthians 12:31 But covet earnestly the best (kraitton) gifts (charisma):

Remember, Paul is talking to people (the Church in Corinth) that already have SOME spiritual gifts. He encourages them at least twice in this letter to seek more and bigger weapons, especially prophecy.

Best – kraitton {krite'-tohn} – (Strong's 2909)

- 1) more useful, more serviceable, more advantageous
- 2) more excellent

Translated as “better” 11 times and only once as “best”. Better implies degrees of usefulness. A plurality of possible usefulnesses from among which you should seek the highest possible choice in any given situation.

Gifts – charisma {khar'-is-mah} – (Strong's 5486)

- 1) a favour with which one receives without any merit of his own
- 2) the gift of divine grace
- 3) the gift of faith, knowledge, holiness, virtue
- 4) the economy of divine grace, by which the pardon of sin and eternal salvation is appointed to sinners in consideration of the merits of Christ laid hold of by faith

- 5) grace or gifts denoting extraordinary powers, distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the church of Christ, the reception of which is due to the power of divine grace operating on their souls by the Holy Spirit

If the Father is willing to give us gifts, then we should seek them and be good stewards of them. Jesus doesn't say to wait for the Lord to do everything and never ask. Jesus is clear that we should petition the Father in the name of Jesus for ANYTHING. He tells two different parables about pestering someone until they give in! (Luke 11:5-10 & Luke 18:1-8)

Luke 11:5-10 – Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’ Then the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man’s boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs. So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone that asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.”

Can it be any more clear that if you don't have, it's because you don't ask? If you have a sincere heart and you just want more of the Holy Spirit, He's not going to give you a demon! He can't. He's a good Dad. You CANNOT get a demon in you by asking God for Spiritual Gifts with a pure heart. If you ask for bread, He's not going to give you a stone. But if you go down the aisle and ask for whatever THAT guy has, there's no telling what you might get!

OK, back to the point here. There are LOTS of different kinds of gifts, a lot more than people realize, and nearly endless variants and interactivities between them. It's not nearly as cut and dried as people think. I hope that when you get a little glimpse of it this way, you will marvel even more at God's love for you and the complexity of all that the Holy Spirit does inside of you every day, just to manage all this stuff!

2 Peter 1:3 – According as his divine power (dunamis) [1411](#) hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

Hebrews 2:4 – God also bearing [them] witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers (poikilos) miracles (dunamis) [1411](#), and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.

Poikilos is translated here “divers” but defined by Strong's (4164) as:

- 1) a various colours, variegated
- 2) of various sorts

It is translated eight times as “divers” and twice as “manifold”.

1 Corinthians 12:4 – Now there are diversities (diairesis) of gifts [5486](#), but the same Spirit.

1 Corinthians 7:7 – For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift (charisma)[5486](#) of God, one after this manner, and another after that.

1 Corin. 1:7 – So that ye come behind in no gift [5486](#), waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

So He has given us all things pertaining unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us to glory and virtue. Did you know you were called to glory and virtue? Isn't that cool?! Great, so how do we do it? By the dunamis of God. There's no other way.

The Hebrews 2:4 verse also indicates that the miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost are poikilos – that is, if you seek and find, what you'll probably get is variegated, diverse dunamis – lots of flavors, colors, frequencies, wavelengths! Wow! Not only is the Holy Spirit living inside you, He has to keep track of all this stuff on the fly for your benefit and for the Father's glory.

How complicated could it be? There are only a few Gifts of the Spirit, right?

Yeah, you'd think it would be easy wouldn't you? I've seen Spiritual Gift Inventory tests with 20 to 100 questions that help you narrow in on what you're good at. We have those so that we can identify tendencies or behaviors that are ALREADY in place, but not potentialities and future giftings or callings. Basically, we don't really have anointed apostles and prophets and people operating in discernment of spirits in any big enough quantity to just SEE who has what gifts and we (as a whole) don't hear God well enough to just ask Him ourselves. So we have to have psychological and behavioral inventories. It's really very sad.

OK, here is the generally agreed upon list:

The Gifts and Callings of the Holy Spirit			
I Corinthians 12:4-14	I Corinthians 12:27-30	Romans 12:6-8	Ephesians 4:11
Word of Wisdom Word of Knowledge Faith Healings Working of Miracles Prophecy Discernment of spirits Speaking in Tongues Interpretation of Tongues	Apostles Prophets Teachers Miracles Healings Helps Administrations Variety of Tongues	Prophecy Ministry Teaching Exhortation Giving Leading Showing Mercy	Apostles Prophets Evangelists Pastors and Teachers*

Note: * Some “authorities” distinguish between Pastors and Teachers in the list contained in Ephesians. That's how they get a “Five-fold” instead of a “Four-fold” ministry. Personally, I don't care to argue about it.

There are some others that are a little less clearly stated and some folks disagree with them being added to the list above. They include; hospitality, celibacy, voluntary poverty and exorcism/deliverance (although that is generally classified within the healing gift or discernment of spirits).

Gifts of the Spirit are not the same as the “fruit of the spirit” (Galatians 5:22). Since the “sign gifts” or manifestation gifts can sometimes be faked or come from evil sources (Matt. 24:24, 7:22-23), the true and better test is of the specific fruit listed here.

Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance.

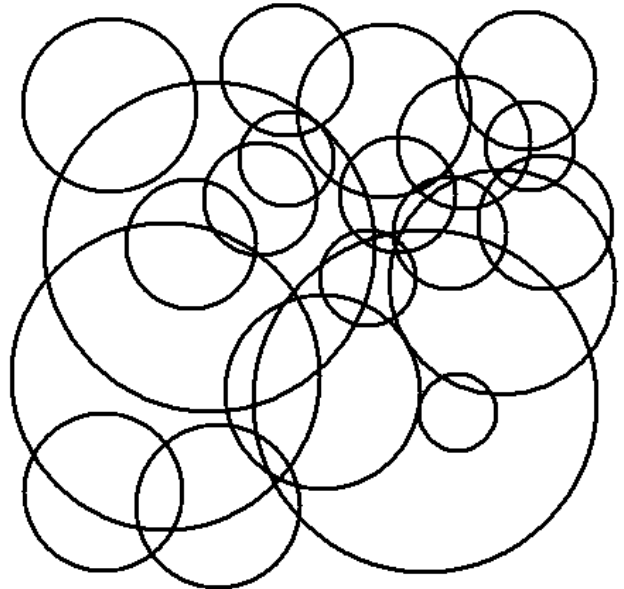
Please note the things that CANNOT be used to determine spiritual fruit. There are some obvious things missing from this list. Things like; size of ministry, eloquence of speech, new book deal, longevity in office, number of advanced degrees, physical attractiveness or magnetism, material wealth, number of people that agree with them, quantity or size of their miracles, likability by the “world”, etc. If you have been judging someone based on anything OTHER than the Biblical Fruit, you might want to say you're sorry and rethink to whom you've been listening. Jesus said that the more you were like Him, the more you would be hated and persecuted, so someone with lots of the TRUE Fruit is most likely going to be

surrounded by a big cloud of controversy and lies. Don't let that automatically scare you off.

Basically, you can't dial up the Fruit of the Spirit. You can impart them to someone – you can share your Peace or Joy or Self-Control, but they have to walk it out before it becomes Fruit. You can pour it (sow it) into them all you want, but it's dead seed until it sprouts and produces a harvest – THEN it's Fruit. Basically, the bigger their “cup” gets, the more they are filled with Jesus, the more these Fruits will manifest because it is Christ in them that lives and there's not very much of their own selfish, sinful nature to get in the way anymore.

Some of these overlap substantially. You CAN dial up Peace, Joy, Patience because they are things you're “full of” in addition to being Fruits. Also, you can be full of Mercy and that would drive a bunch of the Fruits (Kindness, Generosity, Patience, Gentleness, Faithfulness). Wisdom would drive others (Patience, Modesty, Self-Control, Chastity, Generosity, etc.) Basically, you can take any one of these and replace it with “Jesus” and it retains the same meaning. So more Jesus means more Fruits and more Gifts. Some say there is just ONE Fruit divided in 9 parts. Same difference, the more you look like Jesus, the more this stuff all shows up. But it's important for you to get a sense of how intensely complicated this is. My goal is for you to get so mentally exhausted that you'll stop trying to control or manipulate what God wants and just lay it all at His feet and pour out whatever He tells you, when He tells you. If you try to fiddle with the dials yourself, you'll just make a mess.

Maybe some pictures will help. Imagine that each of these circles is a Spiritual Gift “dial”. They interlock and mesh together and overlap in ways we can't even possibly understand. My goal in this book is not to explain exactly how it all works, I don't think any human can. My goal is to motivate people to lovingly share with each as they have a need and to teach AWE and the bigness and complexity of what God is doing in ALL of us.



Can you see that even through the course of a single day, we all are tested and tried and we either pass or fail? We may also meet with people that pray for us, and the Holy Spirit intercedes for us directly with the Father, and maybe we spend time in the Bible and receive some spiritual blessing. Throughout the day, this graphic is in constant motion. Like raindrops in a puddle, constantly flowing and rippling and expanding and contracting. Do you really think you can design a Spiritual Gifts inventory that will be accurate a week from now? Only if it is so basic as to be practically useless! (Or you are completely stagnant.)

Do they really overlap like that? Well, I've read about people with a massive gift of healing – people like Smith Wigglesworth, William Branham, James Dunn, Kathryn Kuhlman, Maria Woodworth-Etter, John G. Lake, A. A. Allen and others. (Go look them up online.) They all have their Faith dial up really high – that seems to control most everything. But the ones that seem to keep their head on straight and not start thinking they're Elijah usually also have their Wisdom and Discernment of Spirits dial up really high as well. You can see where someone goes terribly, horribly wrong in the “charismania” side of the Body and they nearly always have a serious shortage of Wisdom (Fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of Wisdom) and an excess of some manifestation gift. Maybe their Prophecy dial is up really high, but they don't know when to keep their mouth shut and not cast pearls before swine. Maybe their Healing dial is up really high but they started making it about THEM instead of giving God the glory. On the other side of the Body we have folks who also don't have enough Fear of the Lord because they think their doctrines are able to perfectly explain God and so they put Him in a box.

Romans 11:29 says that “God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.” That means the Gifts are permanent. He'll pour Himself into you, but if you let some of it leak out, you're going to not be balanced as you should be. You'll probably guard carefully the Gift that makes you someone famous, but you'll let leak out the sub-components that made it work within His purposes and bring Him all the glory – like the wisdom and the discernment and the self-control and the modesty and the humility. You'll keep the flashy stuff and let go of the harder ones that require more maintenance. You can't keep humility and fear of the Lord and self-control if you're not on your knees all the time, keeping your cup full of Jesus daily/hourly. But you might keep the dreams and visions or healing – but now it's going to be used against you by the enemy because you stopped maintaining the self-control and patience and humility and Fear of the Lord necessary to keep from making it about YOU.

Some big evangelists that end up in scandal or prison or excess had great big cups and they were all the way full, then they stopped praying and keeping them full and the enemy got in and started messing with them. If you have a cup the size of an oil tanker, just the daily evaporation rate could be tens of thousands of gallons! That much volume filled with sin would shatter the normal person instantly. You better keep your cup full ALL the time! Proverbs 25:26 – “Like a muddied spring or a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way to the wicked.” (A well is a really big 'cup'.)

Said again (for emphasis), if you have a candle and you go stand out in the backyard on a summer night, a couple of bugs will come see what's going on. But if God has dialed you up really bright and you're like the halogen arrays on top of a professional football stadium, every bug for MILES is going to come try to smother you! The badness will SWARM on the great big cups and try to crush them any way possible. If you have no openings, they will go for any soft target around you – like your spouse and kids and ministry partners.

There are people all over the world right now raising the dead and delivering demons and healing all kinds of terminal illnesses. More of that is coming as soon as the Body starts fully walking in our inheritance and sharing with each other from the abundance of what we've been given. Do you want to see God pour out His Spirit on all flesh? Go find someone and dump out on them all of the Spirit of God that is in you!

You have an endless spring of living water flowing from inside of you, so go point it at somebody and open the faucet all the way! If you have a cup like a shot glass, they may not notice that anything happened. But if you have a cup like an oil tanker and you point a big, fat fire hose at them and crank it on real fast, it will probably knock them down. But PLEASE don't go trying to knock them down for fun, that's just showing off. (And don't put your hand on them and PUSH them down either, that's just witchcraft and manipulation of the worst sort. Please tell God you're sorry for trying to force your will on people and look “cool” – and pray for more Fear of the Lord while you're at it.)

Are you getting this yet?

Let's try another picture.

Know what that is? If you go to church in America, you probably do. Just in case you don't, it's a mixing board for a sound system. All the different dials and buttons and slides control the microphones and sound effects and lighting and all the different things that might be plugged into it. If you don't know what you're doing, you just



should NOT be allowed to play with something like this! This is a very valuable piece of equipment and should not be toyed around with! This particular board is a professional model used in recording studios and costs many thousands of dollars. Like my cell phone, it has a great long list of cool features, most of which I may never figure out how to use. But they're there just in case, just a couple of buttons away.

Every person that you know has a "mixing board" far bigger, far more complicated **and far more valuable** than this one. ONLY the Holy Spirit can manage it. Only God knows what its true potential and maximum possible range might be. We are like the little kid that peeks into the control room of a nuclear power plant and is awed by the walls of dials and gauges and switches. But you want to be sure not to let a little kid mess with anything in the control center of a nuclear power plant! See the picture. Would YOU want to be in charge of that? If I'm right about this, shouldn't we be putting a WHOLE lot more value on the individuals under our care? Shouldn't we be more careful with their potential?



The variables in play in even a single life are staggeringly massive. Since God sees the end from the beginning, He also knows **all at once** what came before and what is and what is coming. He knows how many souls that kid in your youth group COULD bring into the Kingdom, but some (or all) of them will depend on YOU being obedient and speaking the right word at the right time to that kid. You can't possibly understand the value God places on that kid and the critical importance that you not try to do God's job for Him! You're just going to blow something up.

How can we keep from having more blood on our heads? We are already swimming in guilt and responsibility for all the missed opportunities, disobedience, refusal to share with and care for and love on brethren in need. Not to mention the darkness in the world that's because we didn't take our light out there in sufficient measure. We can't possibly even imagine how many are already going to hell because of the times we didn't do all that we could have. Is that legalism? No, Jesus wants obedience. Why? Because He's the ONLY ONE that can direct our paths so that we don't make things worse and worse all the time. He doesn't want to boss us around and make us miserable! He wants to gently walk us out of the giant bonfire we're standing in the middle of – that we started ourselves! He's the only one that knows the safest possible route out of the fire. It might take a little longer, it might twist and turn and look like we're losing ground, but He knows it's not quite as hot as the direct route that looked good to us but would have killed us instantly.

You see, if a person comes to you and asks for advice about whether to take Job A or Job B and you use all your reason and experience and knowledge and weigh the pros and cons and help them to decide to take Job B – but that's not what God wanted for them and it wrecks their life – well, that's on your head. It's their fault for listening to you, but it's your fault (especially if you're in a leadership role) for not making sure they were following God and not Man. It could be that you should have just prayed and sought God together and He would have said to turn down both jobs and wait a week because BOTH are decoys from the enemy and Job C is coming and that's the really BIG payoff that was His Perfect Will all along for that person. (Unless you don't think God talks to people, in which case all you've got left is to lean on your own understanding. How's that working for you?)

How many earth-shaking evangelists never launched because we didn't raise them up? How many prophets and apostles and teachers are lost because we had pizza parties and ski trips instead of preaching the power of the Cross? How many people have we filled with the wisdom of man and the ways of the world instead of filling them with Jesus and Faith and Godly Wisdom and Fear of the Lord?

Colossians 2:8 – See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

Paul boasted that the blood of no man was on his head. Wow!! How did he do that?! He wrote letters, he traveled all over – he preached until people fell out of windows and died! (But Paul raised him from the dead. Acts 20:7-12) How did he never steer anyone wrong? How did he never make it about him?

Because he always just pointed them toward Jesus. He didn't draw men unto himself, he got behind them and shoved them toward Jesus. He taught relationship and hearing God's voice and obedience to the Spirit in you. He didn't teach obedience to legalism or to systems and structures of man. He didn't seek obedience to Paul, he sought that they obey God alone. He didn't have them grow up into Paul in their head, he urged them to grow up into CHRIST. He didn't get them under his "cover" - he told them to run into the Strong Tower.

I don't want you to even remember me. I just want you to get cleaned out, get a big cup of Jesus, get more Fear of the Lord, hear Him really well and then HE will direct your paths. If you let ME direct your paths, you're toast. Don't do it!! Take everything here to the Lord and have Him explain it to you and confirm it to you and write it on your heart. Don't take my word for anything.

Ok, sorry. Little detour.

None of the Spiritual Gifts assessments that I have seen take into account all the possible variables. Also, I've never seen one that assumes that everybody has ALL of the Gifts. I'm just sure that if you have ANY Jesus in you, then ALL the Gifts are present. That is, when you get Jesus, all the dials move off of ZERO. Some may never move any higher, but it's there if you need it. That is, I know people that get saved and start hearing God better right away. At first it starts as conviction of sin, but also some zeal and a desire to evangelize. They have more urge to pray and intercede and pray for people that are sick and lost. Some of those prayers get answered. To the degree that they have faith, God continues to pour more into them and dial them up as they are obedient and continue to walk it out and be good stewards of what they have been given. Some people have a big anointing right away for evangelism or prophecy or something, some sneak up on it over time. God can do whatever He wants with your dials. If you don't have, it's because you don't ask – or you got it and didn't use it and it got rusty.

How else can you explain someone that has exceptional wisdom, but only in a given situation. Or someone that can pray healing or miraculous provision down, but only in an emergency. Or people that can heal anything and raise the dead, but only on the mission field? There are times when we "spike" because we're available and willing or we're in the right place at the right time. And times when it dials down dramatically because we're not on our own "land" – we're trying to operate outside of the sphere of authority God has assigned to us.

If you don't have a gift, it's because you don't ask. How many times in charismatic congregations does someone come down the aisle seeking the Baptism in the Holy Spirit just so they can speak in tongues? But that's at the BOTTOM of the list of gifts! Paul says to seek the ones at the TOP. I say, seek them ALL! What if you went down the aisle expecting to get them all, begging God to get them all, offering to lay down anything that was in the way so that you could have them all and use them effectively for the Kingdom? Do you think you might get a head start on the person that came down seeking tongues because they just wanted to fit in with everybody else in the youth group?

If you don't have, it's because you don't ask. This is a war between good and evil and we're getting creamed. Why? Because people aren't asking for the really dangerous stuff. The things that really push back the darkness. Particularly wisdom, prophecy, discernment of spirits and interpretation of tongues. In

all of my travels around dozens and dozens of congregations (sometimes visiting three or four on one Sunday), I have only RARELY met anyone that had interpretation of tongues and even more rarely people that can see demons. Sadly also, few people that clearly hear the voice of God – and that's not even a Gift of the Spirit! That's just an automatic for ALL believers! What kind of a war are we fighting here?! Where are the people bristling with weapons and wisdom and love and authority? Why are our congregations full of spiritual pygmies that are blind and deaf and weak – but are sure they're fine? Maybe the enemy is a lot sneakier than we thought. Maybe we don't have to worry about some future "falling away" – I think we're fully fallen already. Read Ezekiel 9. I think our temples are already full of dead bodies. Because we're not weeping and mourning about the sad state of our cities, our nation, our own hearts, our congregations, the Bride. Everybody that's not crying is going to be, or already is, a dead body piled in the temple. (Oops. I started preaching again. Sorry.)

At any moment, God can dial you all the way up and you can do anything that any other brother or sister has ever done. You're just one instant (and a dead body) away from seeing someone raised from the dead. Jesus in you can do anything, all you have to do is get out of the way and let Him do it through you. You need to get all cleaned out, get your Faith dial turned up really high and know that it's your birthright. Pray to see His glory fill you, do it for the sake of Love and then you'll see the dead raised.

The Master Dials that drive them all are Faith, Hope and Love. But the greatest is Love. All the other dials are limited by how high the master Love dial is turned up. Everything else is just feedback and nasty, useless noise if the Love dial isn't turned up. Want more prophecy? Want more wisdom? Want more effectiveness for the Kingdom? Want to be more dangerous to the enemy of our souls? Get more Love. And not fluffy, man-made love. Godly love includes turning over the tables and speaking truth. God can wield a bullwhip and still do it in Love. His ways are NOT our ways!! Learn it. Seek it.



Father God, please dial us up ALL the way! Strengthen our weak places and help us to use all that you've given us to further Your Kingdom. We know that persecution will probably increase, but we trust that You will protect us and get us through. If there is anything in the way preventing us from receiving the increase, please reveal it so that we can repent. Please fill us to overflowing, give us a bigger cup when we can be trusted and teach us to walk in the overflow. We love You and we bless Your Holy Name. Amen.



Chapter 8 – Trees

In the Garden of Eden there were two trees. There was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve were told not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil or they would die. But the snake tried to convince them that God didn't really mean that. He meant you'd be like Him. The snake played to Eve's curiosity and desire and pride and greed. And death was the result. When we chose him over God, the snake put his seed in us. And the taste for that tree permeated Eve and Adam and their offspring ever since. God was not kidding. They did die.

Adam and Eve were walking with God, in the very presence of God. He walked in the Garden. He called them Friends. He said they could have anything they wanted except the fruit from that one tree. Why that one tree? It didn't really matter what tree. I don't think there was anything supernatural or special about that tree itself. The point was to set a limit and see if they would obey. In order to raise up big, strong brothers and sisters for Jesus who would really appreciate grace and mercy, there had to be a fall. Did the snake get in the garden by accident? Did it sneak past God? Did it's fallen nature escape His view? Was He unaware of the tempting of Eve? That can't be true and still have an omniscient, omnipotent God. Nope, God knew full well what was going to happen.

The fruit of that tree wouldn't kill them physically at that instant, but their disobedience to God would corrupt them and would separate them from God. He could not commune with them directly once their spiritual nature was fallen because of their rebellion. The snake recruited them onto his team. The result was not instant physical death – the result was spiritual blindness and a hyper awareness of the “natural” world. They had been naked before, but they didn't notice because they walked in the spirit, not in the natural. Eating from that tree didn't make them fully aware of the true battle going on in the universe, it reduced their focus to only that part of the battle happening in the natural world. It narrowed their focus and killed their spiritual awareness of the true realities that are out there. It dumbed them down and severed them spiritually from the True Source of all good things.

Let's try this a different way. Did you know that there isn't really a battle between “Good” and “Evil”? Nope. There is a battle between “Good and Evil” and “Perfect”. But the snake convinced us to eat from the “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” and by so doing we lost the ability to see in the upper ranges of the big picture of what is really going on. We died spiritually and became slaves to the natural laws. We got blinders.

Now we constantly fight amongst ourselves about what is “good” and what is “evil”. Don't drink, don't smoke, don't play cards, wear long skirts, don't play the drums in church, etc. But these are all simply the natural manifestations of something much greater. (And they're all LAW.) We don't understand that we have been taught to settle for “good” – when PERFECT is available!! And we focus on those things around us which seem “evil” - child molestation, murder, hate crimes, war, drugs, prostitution, abortion, etc. But we can't get our heads around the real enormity of perfect evil either.

There is no redeeming thing in satan. He is completely fallen. But this is not a Yin/Yang thing either! These are not opposing poles of a spectrum. I'm describing it that way for simplicity, but do NOT hear me say that they are equal but opposite – or two heads of the same coin! God is the creator and He created satan and knew that he would fall. The enemy is simply a tool in the hand of God. Nothing happens that didn't cross God's desk for authorization. Not a single leaf falls that He doesn't know about. You can't possibly get your head around how really big and complex and majestic and mighty He is. And He is vastly and thoroughly in charge. The enemy has never “surprised” Him or pulled one over on Him. It just can't possibly work that way.

But because our “range” of vision has been so dramatically reduced, we also can't get our head around

how truly evil and sneaky and pervasive and powerful and awful our enemy is. We can't get our head around how beautiful and lovely and pure and just and righteous our Father is either. We were dumbed down. But Jesus came to restore us so that we might be able to see into the spiritual again. By cleaning us out, purging our fallen nature and putting His Spirit in us, we can reach the Tree of Life again. But again, it's not an On/Off switch – it's a Dial. We are in an ongoing process of laying down and crucifying all the little bits of ourselves so that Christ might live in us in that bit. And our dial – our range of vision – increases just a little bit more.

By getting us to disobey God, the snake killed our ability to discern the deeper spiritual things. He is the Prince of the Earth and by severing our connection to God, we became trapped in the realm where the snake has authority. By the way, the ONLY realm where he has authority.

Adam and Eve's bodies were naked before, but they never noticed because they were looking through spiritual eyes. There was no consciousness of the natural because in the spirit, what you are wearing is irrelevant. You see the essence, not the shell. Because that was severed, Adam and Eve became hyper aware at that instant of the natural and their nakedness. They didn't just become aware of evil. It wasn't evil that they were naked. They realized they were spiritually naked in that instant before a just God who would not be happy with them. They knew that they had just hung up the phone on God. They had severed the connection.

The range of their vision and ability to walk in the spirit was dramatically reduced. They and their offspring get more and more focused on the 'natural' world. It's like Adam and Eve could now only see from -1 to 1 on the scale of all that was really going on. Previously they may not have known true evil – maybe they were living and walking somewhere between 0 and 100,000. But now they knew sin and murder and depravity and guilt and pain – but only the very tiniest sliver of it. What we can experience in this life is NOTHING compared to what's out there. THIS is not “reality” - this is not our home. We are spiritual beings trapped in a natural world.

When we are reborn and our spirit is renewed by Christ in us, then we can begin to seek the deep things of God and see more and more of what is out there. Our range begins to expand to -2 to 2. It works the same for the enemy's team as well. They can expand their mind and the spirits that possess them can explain more of the badness that's out there. Witches and warlocks may see from -10 to 0. But the enemy is never going to want to show them the positive stuff, nor can he. He will put a good spin on his own counterfeits, but they will never be anything like the Truth of God and Peace and Joy and Victory that comes from eating from the Tree of Life!

Lord God Almighty, please free us from the shackles of this world and open our eyes to what is really going on. Increase our spiritual awareness and our ability to understand, process and act upon what You show us. We want the Tree of Life, Truth, Light, Love, Healing, You. Help us to be a part of Your healing of the nations that You would be above all. Amen.





Chapter 9 – Bible

People have asked my take on this, so I want to be on the record explaining this. The Bible does not say, “*In the beginning was the King James Version and the King James Version was with God and the King James Version was God.*” (John 1:1) No. It is clear that “Word of God” is a title for Jesus Christ Himself.

People very often repeat the phrase “Word of God” when what they are talking about is the Bible. Now, I understand that it’s hard to tell when you’re talking if you’re capitalizing a word or not, but I think this is important and people need to be clear. Do you mean “word of God” or “Word of God”?

It has somehow become a part of the vernacular despite the Bible never using the capitalized phrase that way and clearly using it as a title of honor for Jesus Christ. We would NEVER think to call the Bible the “Prince of Peace” or the “Lily of the Valley” or “Emmanuel” or “Lord of Lords”! Can you imagine, “Good morning! Open with me to day in your Lord of Lords to Isaiah chapter 34.” People would FLIP OUT! And yet, how are we not being just as disrespectful to our Messiah?

How about this one?

*And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.
(Revelation 19:13)*

Seems like a pretty open and shut case, doesn't it? How much more clear could you be? Even when the Bible talks about the lower-case “word of God,” in a whole bunch of cases, you could say that the Greek word there is “*logos*” which means the written word, so the Bible does call itself the “word of God.” Except that the Bible didn't exist at that point – and in John 1:1 when it's clearly referring to Jesus Christ Himself, it's also the Greek word “*logos*” being used.

What about Ephesians 6 where it talks about our spiritual armor and how the “sword of the spirit” is the “word of God.” Surely it's talking about the Bible there, right? Well, in that case, the word “word” in Greek is “*rhema*” which means the breathed, spoken, imparted word. So even our understanding of that verse as the “sword of the spirit” being the Bible is twisted if what is truly meant is that you engage your sword of the spirit when you SPEAK (or obey) the application-specific, revealed, God-breathed, *rhema* word of God at a situation. Could that be something out of the Bible? Sure. It could be. But it might be something else that God puts into your mouth and is the Word Himself speaking through you at your circumstance.

People say that the Bible is the “Living Word.” OK, that one might get a pass, but Jesus Christ is “THE Living Word” and the Bible is a living word. Or better yet, the Bible is full of living words. They are God-breathed and they don't expire and they shine like diamonds in the sun and whichever way you turn them you see new facets and colors and frequencies. The Bible is a remarkable, unique, inspired, amazing book that has survived all attempts to wipe it out. It is beautiful. If you break it down into math, as the Panin Numerical Bible does, it gets even more amazing. If you consider the structure of it; written by over forty authors, throughout 1600 years, with a beautiful, consistent arc all pointing the same direction (Jesus), and filled with specific prophecies that are still being fulfilled even now. It is the best-selling, most printed book in history for a reason.

There are people that worship the Holy Spirit. It's all about manifestations and gold dust and feathers and laughing and barking like a dog and all kinds of stuff. They are obsessed with the Holy Spirit. And they miss the whole point of the Cross and they miss the whole point of the Big Throne where the Father sits and they just chase the Holy Spirit. And people look in from outside and say, “Those people are nuts! That's just nutty. They're missing the whole point.”

Then there are people that worship the Bible. I grew up as one of those. We had “Sword Drills” where kids would line up and they would call out a verse to see who could find it the fastest. I was REAL good at that! You say a verse and BAM! I’m right there! And we put all the value on knowledge, on knowing the Bible because that’s how Jesus speaks to us now. He doesn’t talk to us anymore. Satan cut Jesus’ tongue out at the Cross somehow or about a hundred years after Pentecost God forgot how to talk to people.

I’ve written a book called “Who Neutered the Holy Spirit?!” That’s exactly what you’re doing when you’re saying that miracles, healing, tongues, gifts, word of knowledge – none of that happens anymore. You just took the Holy Spirit and sliced off all the really important parts. All the reproductive parts. The Gospel message has spread most effectively throughout church history by two things – miracles and martyrs.

And who benefits most from a theology that says that God doesn’t talk to His people anymore? His sheep know His voice (John 10) but they can’t hear Him anymore. Or He doesn’t speak. Or we’re not His sheep. But it can’t be OUR fault. It must be that God doesn’t speak anymore. It can’t be that we have the television on and are looking at porn and are filling our head with doctrines and theologies of men. That can’t be it. It has to be that God changed.

There are people that worship the Bible. They believe the Bible is The Word of God. And they don’t understand that it’s heresy. I use heresy there with a lower-case “h” so as to not be too insulting because I understand how man does this. But if you’re going to come to me and say, “We’ve got to agree on the primary issues.” And then you say, “We’ve got to worship the Bible. The Bible is the Word of God.” Ah... you know... I just can’t go there with you, bud. The Bible did not get on a cross and die for me. It is not the blood of the Bible that was shed for me. I do not rebuke demons in the name of the Bible.

Now, people are going to take this wrong, as they always do because they don’t listen, and then say, “Doug hates the Bible! Doug is telling you not to read the Bible!” I’m NOT telling you not to read the Bible. Whatever you hear has to line up with the Bible. Now it may not always line up the way you think or were taught by Man. It may be deep things that God has to unravel and explain through multiple passages and seeing the spirals and explain over the course of time. You’re just not going to find, “Put the popcorn in the microwave for three minutes” in the Bible. If He tells you to buy a car, if He tells you to be an engineer, if He calls you to be a missionary – you’re not going to find that in the Bible. It doesn’t say, “Bob should go to Cambodia and be a missionary” in the Bible. It doesn’t even say Cambodia.

That doesn’t mean that it isn’t true and right and God can’t explain it to you.

There are those that worship Jesus. They even think that Jesus IS the Father, is the Son, is the Holy Spirit. But Jesus said that He came to be the bridge to connect us to the Father, to reconcile us, to bring all glory and honor to the Father – not that He IS the Father.

You can worship your new car. You can worship your girlfriend. You can worship your steeple house. You can worship your denomination. And you can worship your Bible. And it’s a mistake. Because you’re supposed to be led by the Holy Spirit.

God still speaks. I’m evidence of it. I have LOTS of testimony. Lots of stories. Dead-on accurate words of knowledge about strangers, bought people the exact groceries they needed, gave people money to the penny of what they needed for their electric bill ... LOTS of stories. Those of you that think that God doesn’t speak anymore because now we have the Bible are dead wrong.

But, you say, all scripture is good for reproof and correction... yeah, I’m not arguing that. You don’t get to put “President of the Company” on your business card if you’re the janitor. You don’t get to put

“President” if you're the Vice-President. It better reflect who you really are in the scheme of things. And if you give me a business card that says, “Bible, The Word of God.” I'm going to have to say, “Dude, that's not what the Bible says anywhere.” I wish that all these ministers would stop calling it that. Now, I understand the habits build up and how hard it is to change something this ingrained, but it's just flat a lie – and disrespectful to Jesus (our Messiah, Savior and King). Sometimes it will even pop out of my mouth because I have YEARS of calling it the “Word of God” because everybody around me called it that. But I'm trying to change my language too so that I can be consistent with the Bible and who/what the Bible says that it is.

Lord God Almighty, please help us to not give your glory to another. Jesus, You are the Living Word of God and we know that your voice matters most. Help us to not forget about You and Your ability to direct us. Teach how to accurately confirm the things You tell us with what is written in the Bible. Help us to love Your words – all of them, no matter where they come from – and to know that it's You. We pray to the Father, in the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen.





Chapter 10 – Voices

Refuse To Hear God's Voice? Bad Idea.

(excerpted from “Do It Yourself City Church Restoration”)

In essence, going your own way will get you under a Red Dragon curse from God (see our book “The Red Dragon: the horrifying truth about why the ‘church’ cannot seem to change.” Free on our site.) and He will send strong delusion on you that is meant for your destruction and you won't even know it. You have made up your own religion and you're going your own way. And He'll turn you over to it and you might not even notice! (See my book; “The Red Dragon; the horrifying truth about why the ‘church’ cannot seem to change.” Free on our website.)

Probably the worst deception of all, the most dangerous to your soul and the most beneficial to the enemy, is the lie that God doesn't talk to us anymore. It denies relationship, it neuters the Holy Spirit, and it keeps us from really being able to have Him write His law on our hearts so that He can explain everything to us on the fly and show its personal application to our daily walk with Him. And it's really impolite to talk AT Him all the time and never expect Him to say anything back – or ignore Him if He tries. That's no way to treat your Dad. What kind of relationship do you expect to have like that?

There is no factual or observational reason I can discern that we needed to stop hearing from Him just because the Bible was completed. The fact that there are abuses and fakers and liars, doesn't mean the real thing isn't out there. God offered Man a whole bunch of chances to hear His voice, but we keep refusing to hear from Him and instead preferring to listen to Man – or satan. And every time we do listen to somebody else instead of Him, there are bad consequences. Here are some examples:

Genesis 3:13, 16 (KJV)

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. ... 16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Eve listened to the snake instead of the voice of God. And she got cursed.

Genesis 3:17-19 (KJV)

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; 18 Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; 19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Adam listened to Eve instead of the voice of God. And he got cursed.

Genesis 16:2 (KJV)

And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

God told Abram to wait and Sarai would have a child. But Abram listened to Sarai instead and got Hagar pregnant and had Ishmael. And Ishmael is the father of all the Arabs and has been no end of trouble for

Israel ever since.

Hebrews 3:12-19 (KJV)

*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. 13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; 15 While it is said, **To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts**, as in the provocation. 16 For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. 17 But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? 19 **So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.***

Here they hardened their hearts, refused to listen to His voice and they all died in the desert.

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (KJV)

*18 If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: 19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place; 20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. 21 **And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.***

God obeys His own rules. And His rule here says that if a son refuses to obey the voice of his father, then he's to be taken out and stoned. Better to have no son at all than a rebellious, drunkard, disgraceful, disobedient son. Jesus was the opposite of that. So what are you? You may not get stoned in the "natural" - but if you refuse to listen to God, you'll get pelted with rocks spiritually until you repent or die. He'll do it Himself. Evidently fear is not such a bad thing. God talks about the need for us to fear Him a lot! It is supposed to make us VERY attentive and obedient! Unfortunately we have a really serious "Fear of the Lord" shortage in America. What are you doing to turn that around?

Jeremiah 7:21-28 (KJV)

*21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. 22 For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: 23 But this thing commanded I them, saying, **Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.** 24 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. 25 **Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them:** 26 Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. 27 **Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee.** 28 But thou shalt say unto them, **This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.***

That's a pretty depressing commissioning service for Jeremiah isn't it? "Go and speak this, but I can tell you ahead of time that they're going to completely ignore you." (And throw you in prison.) Fun. God's cool. Not only are they not going to listen to God, they're not going to listen to anybody He sends to try to get through to them either. They're not listening to the Commandments or the written Law – or to the prophets sent to speak Truth to them and call them back the Lord.

And why exactly do we not need prophets to do that anymore? Are we not a thousand times more rebellious and selfish and murderous than Israel? Oh yeah! I forgot – “that which is perfect has come” and Bible is complete now so we don’t need prophets. That’s what Israel said, too. “We have the Torah, go away and leave us alone.” God would not send prophets to speak if the people were actually obeying the written word! It’s the same today. If we were obeying the Bible, we wouldn’t need God to send prophets to tell us to repent. But since we’re totally blaspheming the Holy Spirit and full of dissension, factions, selfish ambition, envy, lust, pride, greed and so many other things, how can it be said we’re even obeying the written word? (Gal. 5:19-21) Are we not quarreling? Are we not taking the names of men and dividing up into factions? Are we not turning our back on our own flesh and blood? Are we not sold out to the world? Why would He give us meat when we are puking up the milk we already have?! We’re not loving each other. We’re not sacrificing. We’re not being One Body. Of course, we still need prophets and apostles! We’re not on the right foundation at all! We’re worshiping another Jesus and have been for generations! Somebody has to speak Truth no matter the consequences because we’re so stubborn and stiff-necked that we can explain away and justify even the written words in front of our own face!

We need prophets who will hear the voice of God and speak hard truth because we refuse to hear His voice ourselves or He might actually write His law on our hearts and keep us from sinning – and we desperately don’t want that to happen because we like our sin too much. (And the enemy REALLY doesn’t want us to change!)

Here it is, right here. The people have been getting chances to hear His voice all the way back to the Garden, but we keep insisting we’d rather listen to ANYTHING other than His voice. Eve listened to the snake, Adam listened to Eve. Here the children of Israel want to listen to Moses instead of God.

Exodus 20:18-21 (KJV)

*18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19 And they said unto Moses, **Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.** 20 And Moses said unto the people, **Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.** 21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.*

Deuteronomy 5:22 (ASV)

*22 These words Jehovah spake unto **all your assembly** in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and **he added no more.** And he wrote them upon two tables of stone, and gave them unto me.*

You see? He spoke to ALL of them. It wasn’t just Moses alone up on the mountain like in the movies. They ALL heard His voice and heard the Ten Commandments. And it freaked them out!

Deuteronomy 5:23-25 (ASV)

*23 And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; 24 and ye said, Behold, Jehovah our God hath showed us his glory and his greatness, and **we have heard his voice** out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that **God doth speak with man**, and he liveth. 25 Now therefore **why should we die?** for this great fire **will consume us: if we hear the voice of Jehovah our God any more, then we shall die.***

And they begged and pleaded not to have to hear Him anymore. This is satan logic here. They’re definitely hearing other voices because this makes absolutely no sense at all. God wanted to talk to them all the time. He only gave them those Ten Commandments – and then His voice with them all individually all the time would keep them from sinning. The fear of the Lord would be in the people

because His constant presence would write the laws on their heart and show them the application of all the Big Ten to the whole rest of their circumstances. They acknowledge they just heard God and aren't dead. But they don't want to hear Him anymore or they will die. (Something in them will die, that's for sure – their rulers and the “self” that likes the sin!) They don't believe any man can hear God and live, but they admit they just did. See the logic problems here? It gets worse.

Deuteronomy 5:26 (ASV)

26 For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

Well, that's a stupid question. THEY just heard Him and are still standing, but they're just sure that if you hear Him you'll die. Huh?

Deuteronomy 5:27 (ASV)

*27 Go thou near, and hear all that Jehovah our God shall say: and **speak thou unto us all that Jehovah our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.***

So what do they do because they're so sure no flesh can hear God and live? They send Moses up to see what He wants! Isn't that a suicide mission? Is he not flesh? What kind of self-sacrifice and brotherly kindness and love is this?! They just shoved him up into the fire because they're too scared to get that close to God! They want Moses to go get instructions from God and they promise they'll obey Moses. They just exchanged the voice of God AGAIN for the voice of a man. And they never do really obey Moses! He can't individually and personally write it on their hearts and explain all the personal applications of those Ten Commandments to them on the fly as their day is going on. It's a whole lot easier to blow off the words of a man than when God is speaking to you directly and personally! (Believe me.) Satan knows that, and that's why he always wants us to NOT hear the voice of God for ourselves. And see what happens next?

Deuteronomy 5:28-33 (ASV)

*28 And Jehovah heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and Jehovah said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. 29 **Oh that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!** 30 Go say to them, Return ye to your tents. 31 But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee **all the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it.** 32 Ye shall observe to do therefore as Jehovah your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. 33 Ye shall walk in **all the way which Jehovah your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.***

The Lord gives the people ten little rules and lets them know He will write them on their hearts and keep them from sinning. All other rules, statutes and ordinances fit inside those ten. He would have walked beside them personally and individually and kept them in line with those ten commandments, but they refused to personally hear His voice. They preferred – as we still do today – to send someone else up the mountain so we don't have to hear Him for ourselves. But the man who tells us what God wants for us can never really keep us from sinning. Because they refused to hear His voice, instead of just the ten, Moses had to go up the mountain and get like 609 more rules and statutes and procedural instructions and dietary laws. How to handle property, what happens if your bull gets loose, what to do if someone has leprosy, how to properly wash things. It goes on and on and on! If they're not going to listen to God, then God is going to have to give it all in one dump to Moses and leave it to him to communicate it to the people and make sure they obey – which they never really do.

And worse still, Moses ends up cursed because now it's MOSES' job to teach it to them. God was willing

to teach them and walk with them and explain it all individually and KEEP them from sinning through that relationship with each one of them. But they refused, so now ALL the pressure is on Moses. They picked a man to lead them and then overloaded and stressed him out by their constant refusal to listen to him.

The result is that even Moses gets exasperated and ends up disobeying God and can't go into the Promised Land. It's not just what we've done to the people by saying God doesn't speak, it's what we've done to the poor shepherds by putting all the pressure on THEM!

Are you getting this? It could have been so much more simple!! We could have just had the Big Ten and God explaining it to us on the fly, but we would have rather listened to a Man than the Living God because it was too scary and we might have to give up some stuff we like. So God suggests another solution to get this done.

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (KJV)

*15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; 16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, **Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.** 17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. 18 **I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.** 19 **And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.***

God gets that maybe He's too big and scary for them to handle directly – but they're still not listening to Moses, so He agrees to raise up a prophet to whom maybe they will listen. He agrees to send His Son to come in the flesh as one of our own brethren and talk to us personally. And when He did, we crucified Him as fast as we could. But God is still serious about you having to listen to Him, so even though Jesus isn't among us in the flesh anymore, He sent His Spirit back to talk to us and explain everything.

John 16:7-15 (KJV)

*7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9 Of sin, because they believe not on me; 10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; 11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, **he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.** 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, **that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.***

Hebrews 8:8-13 (KJV)

*8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: 9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; **I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: 11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.** 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. 13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Also Hebrews 10:15-18)*

See? That's what He wanted to do all the way back in Exodus 20 at Sinai, but they refused. So He sent Jesus and we killed Him. Then He sent the Holy Spirit and we're still trying to deny that even He can talk to us – despite it being right there in writing in the scripture! Meanwhile we have great huge chunks of the Church who do NOT have His law written on their hearts and so He has not washed away their sin and iniquities. We're still denying Christ (and His Spirit) before men, so He's denying us before the Father. (Matt. 10:33) All because we refuse to listen to His voice. No matter what form it comes in. We're such stupid, stubborn sheep. We deserve whatever we get for this mess.

I don't want to argue about whether God talks to people today or not, it should just be obvious that if you do not have His laws written on your heart and mind enough to keep you from sinning, then you are probably refusing to listen to Him and/or have decided He can't talk to people and/or don't think He can actually keep you from sinning. We have pews full of sinners who are members of “churches” and think they are just fine. Somebody is lying to them – and it ain't God.

We have leaders who ferociously and fervently assert that God doesn't talk to people anymore. Why are they saying that? Well, partly because if nobody is going to have to teach their neighbor anymore because they “will all know God from the least to the greatest,” then we don't really need those guys up on stage anymore, do we? That's a real job security problem. What were all those years in seminary for if anybody can hear God and He will tell them what to do? What exactly do we need expository sermons for? Can the pastor really write God's law on your heart? Is that working across the spectrum of Christianity? If so, then why are we so full of wickedness and look so much like the world? I think, despite God showing up and talking, Jesus showing up and talking, and the Holy Spirit showing up and talking – we're still absolutely committed to only listening to MEN tell us what to do. (Or satan – either way – anything but God.)

Deuteronomy 8:19-20 (KJV)

*19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. 20 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; **because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.***

Deuteronomy 28:62 (KJV) - *And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude; **because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.***

Psalms 81:8-16 (KJV)

*8 Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me; 9 There shall no strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god. 10 I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. 11 **But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me.** 12 So I gave them up unto **their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.** 13 Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! 14 I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. 15 The haters of the LORD should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever. 16 He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.*

Psalms 106:21-27 (KJV)

*They forgot God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt; 22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea. 23 Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them. 24 **Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word: 25 But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.** 26 Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness: 27 To overthrow their seed also among the nations, and to scatter them in the lands.*

Want some more. How about this? Kind of hard line here, isn't it? I'm not suggesting we do this literally,

but I do believe God follows His own rules and He's already done it in the spirit to us. He has executed judgement on many. We already have ruined and abandoned cities all over America. When the Lord showed me the "Vision that Started This Crazy Ride" in 2004, there wasn't a single true city church – a single Lampstand – in America. Total darkness. Don't take my word for it, double check with God (if you can hear His voice). (To see the video of that vision search on YouTube; "FOTM1 vision that started this crazy ride.")

Deuteronomy 13:1-18 (God's Word translation)

1 One of your people, claiming to be a prophet or to have prophetic dreams, may predict a miraculous sign or an amazing thing. 2 What he predicts may even take place. But don't listen to that prophet or dreamer if he says, "Let's worship and serve other gods." (Those gods may be gods you've never heard of.) 3 **The LORD your God is testing you to find out if you really love him with all your heart and with all your soul.** 4 Worship the LORD your God, **fear him, obey his commands, listen to what he says, serve him, and be loyal to him.** 5 That prophet or dreamer must be put to death because he **preached rebellion** against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and freed you from slavery. He was trying to lead you **away from following the directions** the LORD your God gave you. You must get rid of this evil.

6 Your own brother, son, or daughter, the wife you love, or your best friend may secretly tempt you, saying, "Let's go worship other gods." (Those gods may be gods that you and your ancestors never knew.) 7 **They may be the gods of the people around you, who live near or far, from one end of the land to the other.** 8 Don't be influenced by any of these people or **listen** to them. Have no pity on them. Don't feel sorry for them or protect them. 9 You must put them to death. You must start the execution. Then all the other people will join you in putting them to death. 10 Stone them to death because they were trying to **lead you away** from the LORD your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. 11 **All Israel will hear about it and be afraid. Then no one among you will ever do such a wicked thing again.**

12 You may hear that the residents in one of the cities which the LORD your God is giving you to live in 13 have been led away from the LORD your God by worthless people. You may hear that these people have been saying, "Let's worship other gods." (Those gods may be gods you've never heard of.) 14 Then make a thorough investigation. If it is true, and you can prove that this disgusting thing has been done among you, 15 you must kill the residents of that city with swords and destroy that city and everyone in it, including the animals, because they are claimed by God. 16 Gather their goods into the middle of the city square. **Then burn their city and all their goods as a burnt offering to the LORD your God. It must remain a mound of ruins and never be rebuilt.** 17 Don't ever take any of the things claimed for destruction. Then the LORD will stop being angry and will show you mercy. In his mercy he will make your population increase, as he swore to your ancestors. 18 The LORD your God will do this if you listen to him, obey all the commands that I'm giving you today, and do what he considers right.

Are we doing anything even closely resembling that? Are we even holding ANYBODY accountable for whatever stupid thing they feel like saying about God? What about this command?

1 Timothy 5:19-21 (KJV)

19 *Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*

When was the last time you saw an elder rebuked publicly? More likely somebody said something stupid like, "Touch not God's anointed," to keep you from even thinking about doing it! The Bible clearly commands us to publicly rebuke elders who are sinning. And preaching another Jesus definitely qualifies! What kind of other Jesus? Well, there's Emergency-Only-Jesus, Not-Quite-As-Good-As-The-Virgin-Mary-Jesus, Once-Saved-Always-Saved-Lifeguard-Jesus, All-Nice-People-Go-To-Heaven-Jesus, Manifestation-Jesus, Can't-Talk-Or-Heal-People-Jesus, Prosperity-Jesus, Purpose-Driven-Jesus,

Seeker-Friendly-Jesus and thousands of others. Some folks just skip Jesus and worship the Holy Spirit!

Jeremiah 2:28-29 (NIV)

*“Where then are the gods you made for yourselves? Let them come if they can save you when you are in trouble! **For you have as many gods as you have towns**, O Judah. Why do you bring charges against me? You have **all** rebelled against me,” declares the Lord.*

The number of our gods has exceeded the number of our towns – and none of these gods are getting the job done because mostly we made them all up. We have tens of thousands of municipal governments in America and we have 45,000 to 50,000 denominations that call themselves “Christian”. Most of them won't talk to the other ones. We're in big trouble. I hope you can see that. And how did it get this bad? Because we said stuff like this and totally didn't mean it at all.

Joshua 24:19-24 (God's Word)

*19 But Joshua answered the people, “Since the LORD is a holy God, you can't possibly serve him. He is a God who does not tolerate rivals. He will not forgive your rebellious acts and sins. 20 If you abandon the LORD and serve foreign gods, he will turn and bring disaster on you. He will destroy you, although he has been so good to you.” 21 The people answered Joshua, “**No! We will {only} serve the LORD!**” 22 Joshua said to the people, “You have testified that you have chosen to serve the LORD.” They answered, “**Yes, we have!**” 23 “Get rid of the foreign gods that are among you. Turn yourselves entirely over to the LORD God of Israel.” 24 The people replied to Joshua, “**We will serve the LORD our God and obey him.**”*

They lived at peace with God only until Joshua died and nobody was watching, then they all turned back to their idols. They said all the right things, but they didn't really mean it. They turned their children over to the world around them.

I'm tired. You're probably tired, too. I don't want to keep pounding this note. If you haven't gotten it by now, there's probably nothing else I can say to you. Here's the upside – there are those coming who WILL listen and obey and they will be fierce and mighty because they will not look like the world and they will be under His command ALL the time. And when they come, they'll be bringing a consuming fire to test all that has been built by Man.

Joel 2:11 (KJV) - *And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?*

You're supposed to be hearing Him. You're supposed to obey. Please ask Him what's clogging you up so that you can hear His voice better. Please? You're no good for this war if you can't hear commands from Headquarters.

Mark 9:7 (KJV) - *And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.*

Luke 9:35 (KJV) - *And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.*

John 10:27 (KJV) - *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*

Isaiah 6:8 (KJV) - *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.*



Communications – Hotline to Headquarters

(excerpted from “Rain Right NOW, Lord!”)

Why do we need to do this? Because you need to hear REALLY clearly from Headquarters before we start passing out new weapons you don't know what to do with! The last thing we need is more friendly fire accidents when you go firing off stuff like Prophecy or Tongues without having been trained. You could do some serious damage – trust me. It's really important that we get your pipeline all cleaned out so that you know what to give, what to ask for, and what to do with it. If there is stuff in the way, we need to get it out so your motives will be right and He can call the shots.

OK, so we got the Sin out, we're getting more Self out, we learned how to get more Jesus in our cup, now what? Well, now it's time to get your filters unclogged so you can hear God really well and HE can direct ALL your paths. This works better as a question and answer thing. Ready?

First, what exactly are we talking about? Does God really speak to people today?

Yes. In a whole bunch of ways from a gentle nudge, to instruction through the Scripture, to using other people and circumstances to speak to you, to sending dreams and visions (or angels) – and/or even conversing directly with you.

You can hear God and converse with Him?! You're kidding, right?

Not kidding. You can absolutely talk to God and He'll talk back. There are millions of people all over the world that rely on God for constant daily instruction on all sorts of things. But, there's a difference between hearing God audibly (with your natural ears, outside of your own head) and hearing the inner “still, small voice”. It's pretty rare for God to speak to people audibly (like thunder), but there are plenty of folks out there that say they've heard Him – and the evidence is that once they did, it changed them forever!

Many of the house churches in China are under such persecution that they can't set a regular time for meeting or even tell each other when the meeting will be – they all just pray independently and God Himself sets the time and place and tells each to be there. I've experienced that kind of coordination myself and hear Him speak to me all the time. This is totally for real and the birthright of every believer! He's your Dad and He wants to talk to you.

Wait ... people hear the God of the Universe tell them stuff? Like what tie to wear and whether to turn left or right? What job to take? What to have for dinner? Not just big stuff?

Sure. The Bible says, “In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.” (Prov. 3:5-6) What do you think “ALL your ways” means? And how is He going to direct you if you can't hear Him?

But my pastor said God doesn't talk to people like that!

Hmmm. Well, God used to talk to people all the time in the Bible. Wonder when He stopped? Did He say He was going to stop? Isn't He the same yesterday, today and forever? If anything, once the Holy Spirit came in Acts 2, there were LOTS MORE people talking to God directly! Never mind the MILLIONS of people all over the world who you have to conclude are thoroughly and certifiably nuts – including many of the most effective leaders of the church. In order to sustain that argument you have all kinds of logic problems. (Oh, and ask your pastor who “called” him into the ministry if God doesn't talk to people anymore.)

Consider this;

IF God used to talk to people but doesn't now, **THEN** we must not need to hear from Him anymore. Can that be? By all measures we're worse off than ever. If there is a war between Good and Evil, we're losing pretty badly right now and really desperately need to be getting commands directly from Headquarters, not from flawed man-made sources and tradition-soaked interpretations of Scripture!

IF there is a battle between Good and Evil, **THEN** who would benefit most if the people on the “Good” side were told they couldn’t ACTUALLY talk to their Commander in Chief? Now, you know the “Evil” side is absolutely clear to EVERYONE that if you try to talk to THEIR leadership you WILL get an answer REAL fast! Even Christians are afraid to mess with Ouija boards and call on the names of demons because somewhere inside they believe something VERY real will show up almost instantly. But at the same time, the forces of darkness want us to buy that OUR God is mute! Doesn’t that sound like something the snake would say in the Garden? Despite hundreds of examples in the Bible that He is available and accessible all the time, we have bought the lie that God is unwilling or unable to actually talk to His children. It’s a lie from the pit and we’ve bought into it for too long.

IF we receive the Holy Spirit when we are saved, **THEN** 1/3 of the Godhead is living INSIDE of us all the time! (1 John 4:13-17) But He doesn’t have anything to say?! He’s not interested in our daily activities? God’s not big enough to know what we should have for lunch? He knows the hairs on our head and monitors our every coming and going, but has no opinion about it or desire to give us advice? What kind of Father is that?! **IF** we’re dead and it’s Christ in us that lives, **THEN** shouldn’t HE be running the show? (Romans 7:4-6, Proverbs 3:5-6)

The most common argument I hear is that when the Bible was compiled then “that which was perfect has come and that which was in part was done away” (1 Corin. 13:10) so we don’t need to talk to God anymore. The argument is that 1 Corinthians 12 talks about tongues and prophecy and then chapter 13 tells about the way it SHOULD be when the perfect is come so you should do away with all that. But they don’t seem to notice that then chapter 14 starts with Paul urging them to seek the gift of prophecy! Said another way, I think “when that which is perfect is come” refers to Jesus returning, NOT the Bible being completed.

IF the Bible is what’s being referred to there, **THEN** why hasn’t knowledge ceased? **IF** it’s the “perfect” thing mentioned there, **THEN** nothing could stand against it. **IF** the Bible is perfect, **THEN** could somebody tell me which version is flawless? And **IF** none of them are because we don’t have the original manuscripts anymore, **THEN** something DID stand against it! **IF** the perfect is come, **THEN** why do we have 50,000+ denominations and we seem to be losing the battle with the darkness? There are just big giant logic problems with that argument – not to mention the personal experience of millions of reasonable, Jesus-lovers all over the world.

But my pastor says even HE doesn’t hear God conversationally like that!

Ok, well, you see, Matthew 18:18 says that, “what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and what you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” It goes on to say that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by the Father in heaven. (v. 19) So, could it be that we have whole groups of Christians that have agreed that God doesn’t talk to people? And if they were convinced of that, don’t those verses say that God will honor it? So maybe the problem is that if you’re convinced God WON’T talk to you that way, He probably won’t. And who would you blame? The pastor? Probably not – in fairness, we gotta lay it at the feet of the snake and the generations of tradition that have been built up to keep us from being truly “Spirit-led”.

There could also be other problems that would keep a person from hearing God. One possibility is that you’re on the wrong team - even if you think you’re not. You know it’s possible to make up your own “Jesus” and you’ll get a response from that one about as good as if you were praying to a stick of wood. Another is that you have unrepented sin that stands between you and God – and God has convicted you of it so many times that He’s just given up trying to talk to you about it.

Oh, and by the way, you’re going to have to get over that thing about the pastor being more “holy” than you. This is a one-on-one relationship with Jesus you’re supposed to have. You can’t do it by proxy through the guy that gets paid to hear God (especially if he admits that he’s NOT hearing God!). We are ALL the Church. We are EACH temples that hold God’s Spirit. Any one of us that are adopted sons of

God have the ability to petition the Throne directly and seek His face. God loves each – in fact, He’s especially fond of those that come to Him with faith like little children. Sometimes pastors have a hard time with that. (I don’t think there are “Faith like a Child” classes in any seminary.)

This is just crazy! How could this be true and I never knew it before? Wouldn’t somebody have told me?

Well, I think you underestimate the damage the enemy has done and how long he’s been plotting this. The vast majority of the church in the West doesn’t live the “normal” Christian life. That is, Biblically speaking, we’re to be full of power and might, we’re to be free of the bondage of sin, we’re to NOT conform to the world, we’re to be dead to ourselves, we’re to be ONE Body and loving and serving each other with all our heart. That’s just a few. Can you see how far away from that we actually are as a “church”? We’re not even CLOSE! There MUST be something missing. Somebody left something out! It has to be this – God Himself is supposed to be directing you and you’re supposed to be listening and OBEYING. Now ... who would benefit most from us leaving that little piece out? Yep, the guy in the black hat.

Now, what do you think a close encounter conversationally with the God of the Universe might do to a person? Trust me, it would change everything. It would show them the power of the relationship they have as adopted sons, they would lose all fear, they would sacrifice anything to keep hearing Him, they would obey and walk in HIS ways, they would know (really KNOW) that God Himself lives IN them and they would want more of Him, they would do the things on HIS heart – like feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, reaching the lost. They would be in awe of His holiness and seek to please Him out of reverence and honor, not out of legalism or church requirements.

So, **IF** this is a war between Good and Evil, **THEN** wouldn’t our most immediate and urgent need be to get people to where they can hear clear, timely, reliable commands from Headquarters? If you have a guy in Basic Training that refuses to listen to the Drill Sergeant and does his own thing, wouldn’t you want to leave him at home? He’s just going to get himself killed when the enemy starts shooting and leadership says ‘DUCK!’ – but he can’t or won’t hear them! He’s no good to anybody. Maybe he could be a supply clerk – but he really shouldn’t be on the front lines. He should stay home and work – and send his money to the folks on the front lines that hear God really well and obey ALL the time, no matter what the cost.

But we have the Bible. God’s word is what we are to use to direct our paths!

Ok, sure. Not gonna say anything bad about the Bible! Everything God tells us to do will line up with Scripture. But no matter how well you know the Bible, it can’t accommodate for every possible situation and what you should do. There’s lots of stuff not covered in there – like which of these two jobs God wants me to take. And there’s stuff in there that men have been arguing about for centuries without ever getting agreement. Lots of wasted time trying to figure out how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. (By the way, which side benefits most when God’s people fight over stupid stuff? Are you getting the hang of this yet?)

Think of it like this. You’re in the Army and they give you a Manual. All kinds of stuff is covered in there – what to wear, how to salute, how the weapons work, how to survive in a battle, what to eat in the forest, how the chain of command works, even what the enemy is like and how to resist them – there’s even stuff in there about what the enemy WILL DO one day, whether they like it or not! It’s a REALLY good Manual – in fact, it’s inspired by God! It covers an amazing array of stuff and could probably handle most any situation. So would the Drill Sergeant ask you to read it, maybe even memorize it – and then send you into battle with nothing BUT that? Are you going to be able to know what to do when the bullets start flying? What about group strategy and deployment of forces and anticipating enemy movements? Is the Manual going to accommodate for every possible scenario on a rapidly changing battlefield? Are you sure you’re interpreting it right? Is there time in the foxhole to be arguing with other soldiers that are reading it differently? What if some idiot published like TWENTY different translations and paraphrases

of the Manual?! Then what?! Are you REALLY sure you have the right version? Isn't there a chain of command? Isn't there somebody in charge calling the shots that's supposed to tell you what to do next? Aren't you supposed to be listening and OBEYING? Want to go into battle without the Manual? No. Want to rely on it alone when you have other resources available? No. Want to take an order from somebody that goes against the Manual? No. When the bullets start flying, do you want to hear personally and directly from Headquarters so that you can know that help is coming and know what to do? You betcha!

We need a radio to headquarters that works really good, with no static on the line and no enemy transmissions sneaking in. If you insist that you don't want to hear God, I still love you, but I'm not going to the front lines with you. Stay home – and send bullets.

I don't know. This is kind of scary. What if I hear wrong? What if it's the enemy messing with me? Maybe this is all in your mind.

Wow! That's a whole mess of stuff. Let's try this one at a time.

Maybe it's all in your mind.

Well, it's not just me. There's hundreds of millions like me that hear God. In fact, most of the growth in the Church worldwide is because of those people. The "mainline" denominations are shrinking. It's the Spirit-led revolutionaries that are exploding into new territories and pushing back the darkness. The growth in this arm of the Church went from about ZERO in 1900 to about 500 MILLION people in 2000. God is pouring out His Spirit and people are listening.

Ok, let's try it from the opposite direction. It all sunk in for me one day when it struck me that satan never creates anything – he just makes weak copies of whatever God is doing. He's a liar and a deceiver and a fake. So ... while it may seem far-fetched, most folks (even Christians) will admit that evil is a real force in the world and the supernatural is real. (The Bible verifies repeatedly that witches and mediums and sorcery are real, by the way ... and that you're headed for hell if you mess with them. – Deut 18:10-12, Gal. 5:20) The enemy has psychics and mediums and astral-projection and Ouija boards and demons and zombies and spells and curses.

So where's OUR stuff?! If this is a war, why does only one side get cool weapons? Was my church leaving out important stuff that I needed for warfare? Because in the first century they had amazing weapons and defenses available to them. They had the Holy Spirit telling them stuff they wouldn't have known (Acts 5:1-11), they had people hearing from God (Acts 13:2), they had people writing stuff as God dictated (Revelation), they were caught up in the Spirit to heaven (2 Corin. 12:2-4), they had dreams and visions (Acts 10:9-23), they saw angels (Acts 12), they saw Jesus Himself (Acts 9:1-22), they cast out demons (Acts 16:16-18), they were bitten by deadly snakes and didn't die (Acts 28:1-10), they spoke in other languages of men and of angels (Acts 2, 1 Corin. 12 & more), they healed people (Acts 5:15), they prayed and miracles happened (Acts 5:12, Acts 12) – even teleportation (or as I prefer "theoportation" - Acts 8:39) and they raised the dead (Acts 9:32-42)! They even had people who were against them drop dead (Acts 5:1-11) or go blind (Acts 13:6-12) – on command! And that's just ONE reference for each! There are lots more!

Now, the argument is that all that ended when the Bible was done being written (or compiled) – but it didn't end for the other team, so how come just all OUR cool stuff got taken away? Wouldn't it have really benefited the enemy a LOT to spread that story that we were powerless around for a couple thousand years? Do you see? This is no kind of way to fight a war! There MUST be stuff we've been leaving out! The enemy has us twisted up into a thousand pieces (50,000+ denominations to be specific) and we can't STAND because we're not ONE Body. Because of all the arguing over stupid stuff – which we would NEVER have done if we had all been hearing the voice of God personally and reliably and walking in the Gifts!

This is kind of scary.

No kidding! It's the biggest thing ever in your life! That the God of the Universe wants to be intimately involved in everything you do and say and eat and wear and think. That's massively scary! And yet, we can never have peace and joy and victory until we have relationship with Jesus and are led by His Holy Spirit. You see, under our own power, we just screw everything up. There has never been any strategy of Man that has led to anything good in the long run. Oh, it might work for a little while, but you get enough sinful people involved in it, add money, mix in a little satan – and it's toast. Or worse, you get Communism or Fascism or something and millions of people die. There are just two options – if it's of Man it will fail and if it's of God nothing can stand against it. (Acts 5:38-39) Since the "church" in America is failing, somebody other than God must be in charge. See a logic problem there? (Or God is mad at us, intent on our destruction – or refining, hopefully.)

Anyway, yes, it's scary. But what a payoff!! To walk in holiness because God Himself is fighting off the temptations and snares of the enemy, to hear Him all the time and get direction on anything and everything, to know that He is completely and totally in charge at all times in every situation. How are you going to find peace WITHOUT hearing from God? How is what you have NOW working for you?

And hearing His voice is not even a GIFT of the Spirit! It's just an automatic for every believer! We haven't even talked about prophecy and discernment of spirits and knowledge and wisdom and tongues and healing and all the other gifts God gives His children! Trust me, the payoff is amazing, but it's going to cost you everything – but everything you THINK you have isn't yours anyway, so who cares!?

What if I hear wrong? What if the enemy is messing with me?

Well sure, that can happen. He's certainly going to try to confuse and frustrate you. We are specifically instructed, "do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God (1 John 4:1). That MUST mean that other spirits are potentially messing with us, and since there is no indication that THIS ended when the Bible was completed, then there must still be demons putting thoughts into our heads. And if there are still demons putting thoughts into our heads, then we must still have a need to test and see if maybe some of the thoughts are from God. And if they're NOT from God, then we resist them and they flee. But it must also mean that ONE of the possibilities is that the spirit we're hearing IS from God! (Again, proving the point that God still speaks to us despite I Corin. 13:10.)

You see 1 John 4 goes on in verses 2 and 3 to lay out how you can know what it is that is talking to you and from where it comes, "*This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*"

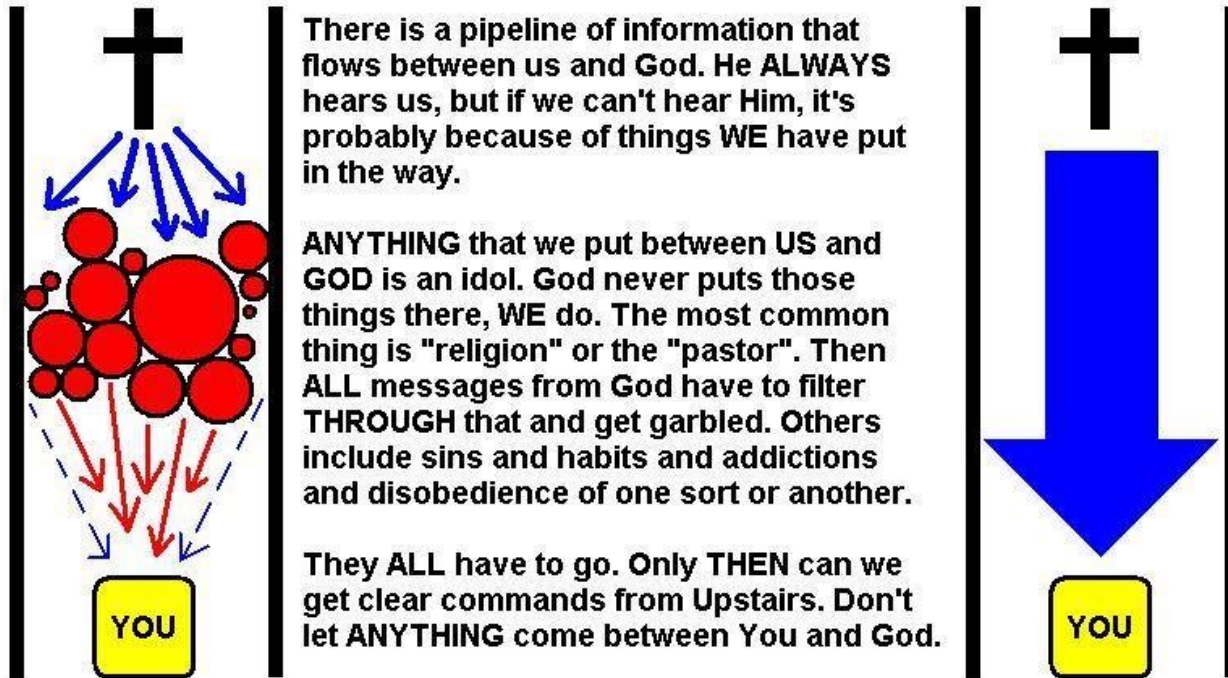
When we get a thought in our head we have to figure out who it is. There are only three choices: You, God or the enemy. Sometimes other people tell us stuff, but they're still playing to one of the three. We're to bring every thought into obedience with Christ (and the Bible). That means our own thoughts that are out of line AND the ones inserted by the enemy. I find that, sadly, the enemy and I sound a lot alike. The bad guys and your soulish stuff aren't really that different after all. I apply this filter to everything, "If I follow through with this thought that just came into my head, who is glorified most – God, satan or me?" If it's anything other than God, even if it's me, I rebuke in the Name of Jesus. And if it WAS me, I ask the Lord to hunt down whatever in me wanted to suggest something that wouldn't glorify Him – and kill it.

Could you screw it up? Sure. Particularly if the voices are VERY sneaky. Which they will be because demons are smarter than us and know the human condition very well after all these years of torturing and twisting us. Without God fighting for you, you haven't got a chance. You have to be constantly on guard, constantly armored-up and expecting anything from any direction. But His arm is long and His shields are mighty. He will always get you through if you are sincerely seeking Him and trying to walk in holiness.

OK. I'm getting that it's possible, but I'm going to have to hear Him for myself. I'm willing to try. What do we do?

Great! Yeah, don't take my word for it, seek Him yourself. Well the first thing is to ask the Lord to show you anything that stands in the way between you and Him.

It's like this:



The point of the church coming together should be so that we can crucify pieces of ourselves so that Christ in us can live. Said another way, it's to help each other identify the things that stand between us and Jesus – and pluck them out.

The most common thing we put in the way is our belief that God won't talk to us. That's got to go! If you don't think He's a Living God and active and able to speak and desiring relationship with you, then you're going to have to lay that down.

One of the other possibilities is that you're worshipping the WRONG Jesus. Paul said that would happen, that someone would come preaching another Jesus and people would accept it. It's very simple; if you make up your own Jesus, don't expect an answer when you pray! Prosperity-Jesus, Emergency-Only-Jesus, Not-Quite-As-Good-As-The-Virgin-Mary-Jesus, and a zillion others are all MADE UP. If you make your own god from scratch, expect about as much response as if you were praying to a stick. (Or worse! SOMETHING will inhabit your praise and answer you, but it's NOT Him.) Those are NOT Bible Jesus - who doesn't like to be toyed with and put in a box.

Other things in the way are a reliance on someone else for your holiness or connection to God (Pastor, wife, mother, etc.). That's got to stop. This is a ONE-on-ONE relationship with Jesus. Nobody is going to do it for you. Other pipeline blockages include addiction, pride, selfishness, bitterness, anger, laziness, fear, your hobby, your new car, your career and so many others that keep us from experiencing the fullness that is IN Christ.

Ask the Lord to show you what is in the way and He is faithful to ALWAYS do that if you'll listen. Ask some other folks to pray with you if possible and just pray in agreement that the Lord will make Himself

very clear to you about what to do next.

Just pray and believe. He'll come and help unclog you. Believe that He wants to talk to you and start conversing with Him. Find someone to be accountable with that knows God really well and make sure you don't act on anything that sounds fishy without verifying it with Scripture. Now, not with doctrine of Man, mind you – with the Bible.

If you like, pray something like this:

Lord, I'm sorry I ever put you in a box. I'm sorry I limited You in any way. I'm sorry that I haven't been hearing you as well as I should and I acknowledge that I clogged up my pipeline with stuff. Please, Lord, whatever it takes, scrub it all out of there with the Blood of Jesus. I just want You, Jesus. You direct my paths and organize my days. You tell me what You want and I'll do it. Help me hear You better. Help make me dangerous to the enemy. Increase the Jesus in me, even if it hurts. I love you, Lord. You be in charge now. Amen.

Does God Still Speak to People Today?

***Posted by EttyB on the F.O.T.M. online discussion board in 2005.
(Excerpted from "The Open Letter of Apology to the World" book.)***

Some years ago, I had awakened before my family, and I was in the kitchen when I heard the voice of the Lord say, "Roast a chicken." I had heard His voice before, so I said, "I'll be glad to, Lord, if You will tell me who to give it to." While I was speaking, I was pulling a chicken from my freezer and preparing to thaw it.

"I want you to take it to Mrs. Ming." He said.

I didn't know Mrs. Ming. I knew of her, though. I knew that she was an elderly woman in our church who was the wife of a retired minister. I knew that she had cancer and that her elderly husband was caring for her. I didn't know what she looked like, had never spoken to her, and didn't know where they lived.

But, the Lord had spoken, so I thawed the chicken and prepared it for roasting, then put it in the oven. As I prepared it, I thought of other things I might fix to make a complete meal. Fluffy fruit salad...mashed potatoes and gravy, corn. It sounded good, even to me!

It was just a few minutes before noon when the meal was ready and I decided that I would call our church office and see if anyone knew the address of the Mings. It was Saturday and I knew the office was closed, but I called anyway. Someone answered the phone and gave me the address of the elderly couple. Bless them!

I got a large box, armed with the address, and headed out to a nearby town that I was not familiar with. Within two minutes of driving into the town I was at their house!

Still, I felt rather foolish pulling into the driveway of complete strangers, holding a big cardboard box and saying, "Hey, I'm here with a chicken dinner that God told me to bring to you!" That was out of my comfort zone!

But...I got the box out of the back of my car and did just that. A little man with a dear face opened the door and looked at me questioningly. "Yes?" he said.

"God told me to bring you a chicken dinner for lunch, so here I am. Have you already eaten?"

He opened the door and stepped aside, motioning me to set the box on the kitchen counter. I lifted the hot dishes out of the box and took the covers off.

Not only had they not eaten. The kitchen was dark and nothing had even been started in the way of a meal. The little man looked jolly as he said they hadn't had a bite.

He lovingly prepared a plate for his sick wife and took it in to her darkened room. "This lady has brought us a roasted chicken for lunch," he told her. I was still in the kitchen when he came back and said, "My wife would like to talk to you."

I walked into the room of a woman who was in the last stages of cancer. She reached a frail hand out to me and in a soft voice she said, "This morning, I was so hungry for chicken I thought I couldn't stand it! So, I said, 'Jesus, I don't know how You can do it or if You even think it's important enough, but if You could get me some roasted chicken, I would be SO happy!'" She looked at me with the sweetest expression and said, "He used you!"

That dear lady went home to be with Jesus before the next week was out and the Lord let me be His hand reaching out in love to her! What a privilege!

Later I was telling the little incident to one of my young daughter's friends and she said, "Oh, that was my grandma! She didn't have any appetite at all for weeks before she died. How nice that the Lord gave her such a blessing right before she went Home!" I thought then that if I'd failed to respond to God's voice, refused to move out of my comfort zone, that the Lord would probably have found someone else who would be faithful. But what a blessing I would have missed!

EttyB – 4/4/05

Lord God Almighty, it's hard for us to believe that you could have a daily conversational relationship with us, but we want to believe. Please help our unbelief. It seems so likely that we would mess it up. Help us to KNOW that it's your voice, to take captive every thought and bring it into obedience with Christ, to stand in faith on what we know to be You and act on it. Please remove any filter or lens or paradigm that we've put up in defiance of You. Please help us not lean on our own understanding or direct ANY of our paths. Please hold our hand and drag us where you need us to go. We'll try not to shake loose and run off. We're just stupid kids, we need YOU to help us across the road so the cars don't hit us. Please, Abba, please tell us You love us and hold our hand. Amen.



Chapter 11 – Imaginations



One of the things that people have said over and over is that imaginations are bad, that the imagination is bad, that visualization or whatever is New Age. That those things are evil and we need to not do that – and that God casts down imaginations.

I've talked to people before and asked them to see out in front of them the sin or the unforgiveness or whatever and take their sword of the Spirit and hack it up into a thousand pieces and ask the Lord to wash it all away in the Blood of Jesus. People come at me with, "Well, that's imagination and that's bad and that's wrong and that's visualization and whatever." Okay, I want to give you some Scripture on that first of all and point out to you how ridiculously man-made (and demonically inspired) that particular bit of doctrine is.

Here's the verse that they always point to:

2 Corinthians 10:5 "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

Okay, that's what we're supposed to be doing, casting down imaginations and every other high thing (imaginations being one of the high things), if it exalts itself against the knowledge of God. So, their argument is that we're supposed to cast down imaginations, which (A) is totally dopey and impossible, and (b) isn't Scriptural.

How about this one? Here is an example in 1 Chronicles 29:18 – this is David giving thanksgiving and praying to God, "*Oh LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee:*" He is saying, this thing that You have done, keep it ever in their imagination so that they can re-live and re-experience this event, this thing that You've done for us.

In 1 Chronicles 28:9, David exhorts the people to fear God: "*And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever.*" He's not telling him to not have any imagination, or to not imagine anything; he's telling him to make sure that the thoughts and the imaginations of his mind are pure, because the LORD searches those things.

Proverbs 6:18 is one of the references of some of the things that God hates: "*An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief.*" Now this isn't a heart that devises imaginations; this is a heart that devises wicked imaginations. Do you understand the difference? He tests our hearts, he knows the intention of our hearts and the meditations of our mind—that doesn't mean we're to have no meditations of our mind; that means that we're to have pure meditations of our mind and that we're to think on good things, not that we're to not think at all.

Romans 1:21 says, "*Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*" The problem was not that they had imaginations; the problem was that their imaginations became vain. It became all about themselves and what they were going to do and what they wanted, and their hearts were darkened—when their imaginations became vain—not when they simply had imaginations.

Jeremiah 7:24 says, *“But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward.”* Okay, again there are lots of these in Jeremiah, just do a search on www.BlueLetterBible.com on ‘imagination’ and ‘imaginations’.

Understand that sometimes what He is talking about is the mind, just the thoughts. It talks in Jeremiah a lot about how they walked in the counsel and the imagination of their evil heart. See? The problem is not that they imagined or visualized, the problem is that they walked in the imagination of their evil heart.

What you need to understand is that our imagination, what we think, is the gateway to reach God. Imagination is a faculty of the mind through which faith operates. If you believe – if you can see it in your mind, because you can feel it, because you can visualize it, because you understand that Jesus died on a cross, went to the grave, rose again and died for you – you have imagined and you have believed that it is true. That’s where faith comes from, because it’s the evidence of things not seen, which means it’s internal. (Hebrews 11:1)

Jesus said that He came to fulfill the law. It used to be that if you committed adultery with somebody, then that was a violation of the Big Ten. Jesus said that He came to make it even harder, to fulfill, to spiritualize what was a natural law, making it even bigger and broader, because now it’s also spiritual. So now, if you have sex with a woman, you’re guilty of adultery (if she’s not your wife) AND if you have sex with her in your head, if you even think of having sex with her, you’re guilty of adultery also.

Because in the spiritual realms, you really did just do whatever it was that you imagined. You had sex with that pinup or that centerfold or your neighbor’s wife or whatever in the spiritual realms, and Jesus had to watch while you had sex with someone who wasn’t your wife, even though it was only in your head. But it happened in the imagination! Those are the wicked, vain imaginations of our foolish hearts that He’s talking about.

Now, if you believe that demons are real, and that they’re big and you’re little, and that they’re going to crush you and that you’re defenseless against them, you will be. You will be little and they will be big and they will crush you, because if you bind it on earth, it will be bound in heaven. If you believe that every morning you visualize putting on your Ephesians 6 armor—a breastplate of righteousness, a helmet of salvation, sword of truth, shield of faith, all of that—if you go through that process of putting on your armor every morning, it will defend you and it will protect you. The same people that say we’re not to visualize, that we’re not to imagine anything, probably are also telling you that you need to get your armor on. Okay, well that armor is spiritual. That armor happens because of faith inside your head—in the spiritual realms you believe that it happens, and it does. (I had mine welded on! Why would you EVER take it off at night?!)

If you believe that you can rebuke demons in the name of Jesus and that they will go, then they will go. I heard about a pastor once who was rebuking a demon off of somebody, shaking his Bible at him, and the demon said, “You can’t get me to leave with that Bible, that’s an NIV!” So the pastor changed the whole church to the King James Bible because the demon told him that the NIV didn’t count. Okay, now demons lie! You don’t create doctrine based on what demons tell you! But if you believe that an NIV is not going to work if you shake it at a demon, then it’s not going to work. If you believe that you have to call Him “Yeshua” or “Yahshua” or whatever, instead of “Jesus” – then you better do that. That’s what you have faith for.

I don’t think that I need a King James or an NIV to shake at a demon; I believe that Jesus said “Go!” and they went and that’s all it should take. You shouldn’t have to sprinkle them or blow at them or whatever; you shouldn’t have to shake people until they leave—you say “Go!” and they go.

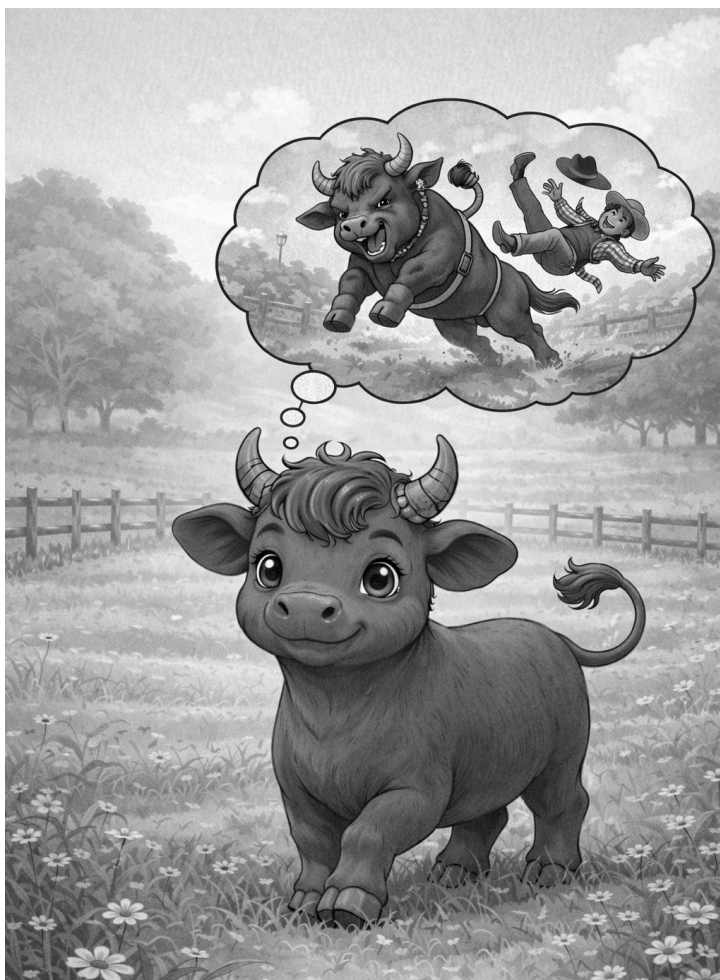
If you don’t have enough authority to cause them to go when you say “Go, in the Name of Jesus!” then

you probably have open doors that need to get closed. The point is, like the video about seeing your cup, understanding what is in your cup, asking the Lord to show you what's in your cup—if you insist that imagination is bad and wrong and you try to disconnect entirely from that, then you're not going to be able to connect to Him in the spiritual realms, because you're shutting down the way that He accesses us, which is by faith, which happens in our mind. We believe that He is real because we stand in faith and we know that we can close our eyes and see Jesus, because we know that He's there and we know that He is real.

Philippians 4:8 (ESV) - *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."*

Fill your head with the good stuff. Believe that you're a giant, demon-crushing, heavily-armored, weaponed-up warrior for God – and you will be.

Lord God Almighty, Father, King, Commander, please control our minds and help us to focus on You, on Your word, on what is true and right and pure. Crush anything of us or of the enemy that would raise up against You. Control our minds and help us to lend our faith only to YOU, to fill our minds and hearts with what is holy, lovely, pure and worthy of praise. Please let the sacrifices of our mind be acceptable to you, Lord.



Chapter 12 – Baptisms

From the video - “Baptism of Fire: You Need All Three!”

Lord, thank You. I ask for Your words, Lord, that You would speak, that You would open ears, that You would open hearts, that anything that is not of You would fall harmless to the ground. Please Lord, prepare Your people to hear Your word, please speak and crush anything of me that gets in the way, and anything of the enemy that gets in the way. Let Your Spirit flow like a mighty river. Please Lord, we just want Truth, we want Your Truth and nothing but. Please Lord, in the Name of Jesus. Amen.

I’ve read the collective works of John G. Lake. I think he was way, way ahead of his time. God-wise he was right where the Lord wanted him, but he was definitely special and definitely important to the Kingdom, and definitely an amazing man of God. He was also one of the ones that I respect because he never started wearing silk robes, calling himself Elijah and spinning out of control or whatever. He was very thoughtful—it wasn’t enough that something happened when he prayed, he wanted to know how it happened. But he still was never a part of any denomination and the name of the ministry that he started in Spokane, Washington was called “The Church of Spokane.”

This was over a hundred years ago, and I can’t find any evidence that he ever read Watchman Nee or anything else, but the Lord had revealed to him very clearly that the Body of Christ in Spokane needed to come together and was the proper Biblical model. He spoke regularly about the stained-glass mausoleums and he refused to build one of those, saying that they would just meet in rented spaces. He called it “The Church of Spokane and amazingly, or not so amazingly, the Lord had been speaking the same thing to us about “The Church of Liberty” and the “Church of Kansas City” — that’s the only thing in the Bible: one church body per city.

Anyway, one of the things that I was reading on John G. Lake where I disagree with him is that he talked about the triune baptism, that people needed to be baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that that was the instruction of Jesus. Now the Oneness Pentecostals will get on to me because they will say that all of the Apostles baptized in “the name of Jesus.” And yet the Great Commission command at the end of Matthew shows Jesus (red letters) saying to, “Go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” But despite the Great Commission, there’s no example of someone being baptized in water with that formula. It was always just one dunk in “the Name of Jesus.”

Ok, so you have to decide that this was added by the Trinitarian Roman Catholics later on and it wasn’t in the original manuscripts, which I don’t believe is true; OR you are left with that as an aberration and that in actual practice they only baptized in water in the Name of Jesus. The word, *baptizo* right there, implies a repeated baptism. One of the points that John G. Lake makes is that John baptized once. Jesus baptized in the name of the Father and the name of Jesus (except that we don’t have any evidence of Jesus Himself ever baptizing anyone), and that after the Holy Spirit came, He instructed them to baptize in three names because the Holy Spirit had come, or was about to come at Pentecost. And that it was by three immersions—once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son, and once in the name of the Holy Spirit. So Lake practiced this triple-immersion, three-name baptism.

Now, I do believe that the command of Jesus at the end of Matthew in the Great Commission is plural: you need to go into all the world, making them disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. I don’t believe those are all titles for Jesus and that Jesus is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, like United Pentecostals and other Oneness Pentecostals believe. I’m not one of them, and I don’t believe that.

The Lord's been very clear with me. I've heard all three of Them talk to me and They all sound different, They're not the same person, and yet They're one. Chew on that! I am my body, I am my spirit, and I am my soul, but my body can't say that it's my spirit, my soul can't say that it's my body, yet they can all say that they're "Doug." I don't think that the Trinity is that complicated. He is a three-part Being: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; we're three-part beings: body, soul, and spirit, and each part of us needs to be dunked in the appropriate part of Him.

Jesus is the body. The water baptism is in the name of Jesus. I've asked the Lord, how do you want me to water baptize people? He told me, baptize them in the name of Jesus. I asked Him, "Does that mean the Oneness Pentecostals are right, that the UPC and them are right?" He said, "No. They're totally whacked with the whole 'Jesus is the Father' thing, but I want you to baptize in the name of Jesus. That's the way the disciples did it." "Then Lord, why did Jesus say to baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?" Well, since then, I've received some revelation from the Lord on this, and I can see where John G. Lake did see that it needed to be a triple immersion. Now, John G. Lake sensed that the triple immersion needed to be in water, that you need to be dunked three times in water.

But the disciples baptized in water in the name of Jesus, and then they were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Everyone knows John 3:16, but Luke 3:16 you had better commit to memory, too—John the Baptist says, "*I baptize with water, but there is One coming after me who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and with fire.*" Okay, so there are three baptisms: He is a three-part Being, you are a three-part being— each part of you needs to be dunked in the appropriate part of Him. Now, when the disciples were baptizing in water, they baptized them in the name of Jesus, because the water baptism is for the body. Jesus is the body portion of the Trinity. Then there is the spirit, and the soul is the Father. He is the heart of it all. Jesus came to bring all glory and honor to the Father. He sent His Spirit to bring all glory and honor to the Father. They are one and They are three. Now, when you have water baptism in the name of Jesus, that's because you are the body and your body is getting dunked in water. Your spirit gets baptized in the Holy Spirit, and your soul gets baptized in the fire of the Father.

There is the outer court of the temple where you accept Jesus, you acknowledge Him as Lord, and you come onto the temple grounds. Then, you get baptized into the Holy Spirit and you come into the temple. But if you want to go into the Holy of Holies, where the Shekinah glory of God is, you had better be washed real clean, which is necessary by the Holy Spirit empowering you to walk a holy life; you need to be washed off, holy and clean, because if you go through that curtain dirty, the fire of God will kill you dead and they will have to drag you out by the rope tied around your ankle. According to tradition, the High Priest would go into the Holy of Holies, and if he had forgotten to repent for something or had held back something, he would drop dead; so they tied a rope around his ankle so that if he stopped moving around in there, they could pull his dead body out and find a new High Priest.

The baptism in water is first (usually), then the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to grow you and stretch you and sanctify you so that you can go into the fire—holy, pleasing, and acceptable; this is your spiritual act of worship. (Romans 12:1-2) So that you can be transformed by the renewing of your mind. The early Pentecostals and early holiness people and other groups through history talked about sanctification or holiness; some of them called it, "The Second Blessing." There was salvation, then there was the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, and then there was The Second Blessing.

That place was talked about by the Wesleyans and the early Methodists and others—the place where sin has no purchase, no grip on you anymore, and the love of God just fills your heart. Now I believe what they were talking about is the baptism of fire. The three-part baptism that John the Baptist describes—in the Great Commission (this is in my opinion—you take it to the Lord and see what He tells you) what Jesus is not saying is that you baptize them in water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. He's saying baptize them in the name of the Son in water, in the name of the Holy Spirit in the spirit, and baptize them in the name of the Father in the fire that purges out their self and their soulish nature.

At what point are you really saved? Are you saved at the point when you accept Jesus as your personal savior? Is that even in the Bible? Are you saved when you are told you are by the Lord and He writes it on your heart that you're saved? (That's safer.) Are you saved when you are water baptized? Are you saved when you're Holy Spirit baptized? Are you saved when you're fire baptized?

See, I believe that on Pentecost, they were in the Upper Room and they were praying, and the Holy Spirit fell on them and tongues of fire. Now, they started speaking in tongues, but that wasn't the only thing. They also had a whole bunch of their self purged. They got a way bigger cup, they got a burst of Jesus, and I believe the fire also burned out whole big chunks of them, because they're selling their land, they're laying the money at the feet of the Apostles, to share with each as they had a need—they were loving like no one had ever seen before. You had all kinds of languages. They're all just living together and loving each other. It's just freaky! The whole world is freaked out by this.

Jesus in John 17 says that this is the greatest evangelism method ever: "when they are one, like I and the Father are one, the world will know that You sent Me." The world will know, they can't deny that there must be something about Jesus; it must be true, because these people should not get along like this, it's supernatural. That's what's lacking. The Church is not convincing the world of our oneness and it is not convincing them that Jesus came in the flesh and that He's real because we aren't being one.

If you were satan, don't you think that it would be in your best interest to convince people not to seek the fire? Not to seek sanctification? Because if you can keep them sinning, if you can keep them addicted, if you can keep them lusty, lonely, hateful, bitter, unforgiving, whatever, then you've got them right where you want them. Because they're gonna be on the outs with God; they're gonna be clogged up, they're not going to be able to hear well, they're going to be fleshy, they're gonna be carnal, and they're gonna be immature.

So, any group that starts teaching the fire baptism—the really big one that gets you into the Holy of Holies—the Moravians, the Waldensians, the early Methodists, the Quakers, the Holiness Pentecostals; all through history any of them that started preaching the fire (or some version of it); as soon as you can, you calm them down, cool them down, get them lukewarm, turn them into a denomination and get them to stop preaching that. It is rare—I have yet to meet a Methodist who in the tradition of John Wesley, really preaches the fire, really preaches sanctification. The biggest United Methodist church here in town, the pastor told me that, "Yeah, there is something like that, that some of the saints, when they are really old and mature, get the love of God in them and get sanctification, but I've never seen it and I haven't experienced it myself." I'm like, "Dude?! What if somebody did? Why do you have to be so old? Why can't you just seek it with all your heart and believe? If we were getting people there in their 20s, wouldn't you want to know how we did it?"

The fire is real – and you need it. And I'm telling you that you need to start praying for it. And the only way to get there is for the Holy Spirit baptism to cleanse you, sanctify you, give you the weapons, give you the armor, give you everything that can stretch you and grow you and thicken the walls on your cup and make you big and strong, so that you can contain eventually the nuclear reaction, the singularity of pure energy, the supernova that IS a tear of Jesus, a drop of the Morning Star, a pinprick of pure Love with light that just emanates everywhere and destroys everything not of Him. If you try to get there before your cup is big enough, thick enough and tough enough, the enemy is going to munch you up – and quick.

In the Upper Room, they didn't just get speaking in tongues and the gifts of the Spirit—they got the fire, and big chunks of self got burned off. In Acts 2, the place was shaking and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. In Acts 4 they come back; this guy Peter, who had denied Christ three times because a barmaid verbally confronts him, is now in front of the Sanhedrin getting whipped, praising God all the way home for getting a chance to suffer, not backing down, and speaking such wisdom that nobody knows what to

say or how to explain it, except to say that he must have been with Jesus. Not only that, but Jesus is in him; it's Jesus speaking through him and nobody can argue with it, so all they know how to do is to whip him and send him home. And he comes back and in Acts 4 the whole place is shaking again and they're filled with the Holy Spirit again. It's not a one-time thing—you are to be 'being filled', you're to be being baptized, you're to overflow so that the Spirit flows out of you and gets given to everyone around you and splashes everyone around you. As you are stretched and you grow and get bigger and stronger, at some point, the Lord says you're ready and the fire comes.

One proof of this to me is that the Church of Jerusalem was sacrificial, was loving, was wise, was mature, and there was no wind-up. There was no Church of Jerusalem, and then the Holy Spirit fell and there was a Church of Jerusalem. Look it up; all of a sudden the Church of Jerusalem was just there, where they weren't before. Now, the Church of Corinth is speaking in tongues, but they're fleshy, they're selfish, they're all kinds of stuff, they're not sharing with each as they should, there's all kinds of sin in their midst, and they don't seem to have the maturity and depth that Jerusalem did.

Why? I believe because they got the Holy Spirit, but they did not get the fire. They didn't know to seek it. These are brand new people, just trying to get their head around what just happened to them. "What do we do now? Are we supposed to take in the Gentiles? Oh yeah, Peter had a vision and they got filled with the Holy Spirit, too. Now we've got to start liking the Gentiles who we've been taught our whole life to hate? Who can deny the Gentiles got this Holy Spirit too, so they have to be baptized." So they dunk them in water, but they had already been baptized with the Holy Spirit before they were baptized in water. It's not as linear as people think. How? How were they speaking in tongues before they got baptized in water, if the baptism in water is necessary for the remission of sin for you to be saved?! Or were they saved because they believed, even if they hadn't repeated a statement off a card to anyone? How were they speaking in tongues? Was it all out of order as a one-time thing just to prove to Peter that he should accept the Gentiles? No, I think God moved on them and part of what I want you to see is the reality that water baptism is not enough.

And there is not a dissonance between the model of the disciples when they were baptizing in water in the name of Jesus, and the command of Jesus to baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. That's three baptisms. Those are not titles of Jesus—He is not the Father, He is the Son—and He came to bring all glory and honor to the Father. And yet they're one. Just as my body and my soul and my spirit are all Doug. My body cannot say that it is my soul. My body cannot say that it is my spirit. And yet they can all say that they're Doug. It's not so complicated; they are all three God, but Jesus came to bring all glory and honor to the Father, and if you miss the point and you worship Jesus, you're missing the Father, which is the big point of the whole thing. The Father is the heart and soul of the Godhead.

You do a great disservice to yourself, and you will NOT walk in the fullness of what He has for you, when you stop at the Son and you don't reach to the Father. Because Jesus is Jacob's Ladder—He is the one who came to help us reach the Father. Now, why is Jesus necessary? Because we need to get right and be cleansed, and then we need Him to go and ascend to the Father so that He can send the Holy Spirit to us so that we can grow and be stretched and be cleansed and our spirit can grow, so that we can be a container, a vessel big enough to hold the fire from the Father that comes and changes our polarity and turns darkness to light and burns in us, lights the way, changes everything, transforms us by the renewing of our mind, keeps us from conforming to the world, and teaches us to love one another. That stuff in Matthew 12, I don't think you can do it with just the water baptism. I'm not sure you can do it with just the Holy Spirit baptism. It seems completely unachievable without sanctification, without the fire of God burning away all of your flesh.

"Once Saved, Always Saved" is a lie. I grew up Baptist, I believed it, and I know now that it's a lie. You cannot say a little prayer, live like hell the rest of your life, and think you're going to Heaven, that you're right with God. You can't. You can't – all liars, fornicators, idolaters, etc. will burn in the Lake of Fire. It

doesn't say, "Except those that said a prayer in 8th grade at church camp: they're okay." You need to obey. You need to be perfect as He is perfect, and you can't be perfect without the Holy Spirit empowering you, transforming you, changing you, and without the fire burning off your own self, your own soulish nature, your nasty yellow stuff that's inside your cup that is inviting in all the sin all the time. Your heart has to change. It has to be an act of God.

The old Pentecostals would go and tarry down at the altar and they would pray all night long and would grab ahold of the cross and beg and plead and just lay down everything and repent and beg for sanctification, and some of them would think they got there and they really hadn't. But some of them did, and they were different, and they stayed different. Sin had no grip anymore—that's the fire. (My Grandfather was a Baptist deacon and served people all his life. He never spoke in tongues. But I know he is with Jesus. Don't hear me say that you're going to hell if you don't speak in tongues, I'm not saying that. But you're walking the hard way without a lot of weapons and help that could make your walk more effective for the Kingdom.)

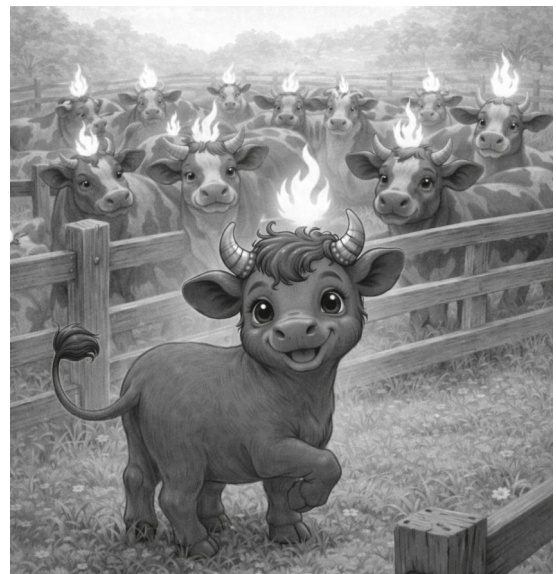
If you've never been water baptized, I'm encouraging you to do that, in obedience to the Lord's model, for the remission of sins, to wash clean your body, to be a new creation in that aspect of who you are. But then you need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, and your spirit needs to be dunked, immersed, washed, and cleansed in the Holy Spirit. And when you've walked that out, when the Lord says it's time, when you beg and plead enough, whatever, then your soulish nature, your flesh, your self, that stuff in you that's anti-Christ, needs to be burned away, purged in the fire of the Father. You need to get past a constant focus on Jesus – Jesus is the way *to the Father*; don't stop halfway up the ladder.

The Baptists and the Calvinists that I grew up with preached 'once saved, always saved.' It's a lie. The Charismatics say 'once filled, always filled, I speak in tongues, I'm saved.' It's a lie! There are a whole bunch of people who will say, "We prophesied in Your name, we spoke in tongues, we healed, we delivered demons..." And He will say, "I never knew you; get away from me." Who says that to them? Jesus, the Word. Where they were selling all that they had, giving it all to the poor, caring for those around them, and loving in such a way that the world thought that they were freaks. That requires the fire. You can cast out demons, you can speak in tongues with the second baptism, but it requires the third baptism to really, really not conform to the world. I want to urge you to seek the fire.

Pray the nuclear prayer:

Lord, rip it, tear it, crush it, burn it, kill it, shred it, take a flame thrower to me, burn off anything that gets in the way, fill me with Your Spirit so full that nothing else can fit, get me into the Holy of Holies where I can see the Ark and your Shekinah glory, and get me there clean so that I don't drop dead when I get there. Amen!

That's a good prayer and it will wreck everything. Count the cost.



Chapter 13 – Sonship



from the video “Hit Me Again, Lord! Adoption and Scar Tissue”

Let's start with prayer.

Lord, I thank you so much for this time. I ask that You would guard it and protect it and be fully in charge in every way, that Your Word would be spoken, that those listening would be able to hear You and hear Your voice, and that You would explain to each of them the application of what it is that You have to say in this time. Thank You Lord. Please bind up anything of the enemy or anything in us that would get in Your way. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

There's a story that I tell a lot of times in ministry situations, so some of you that have been able to get some time with me on the phone or in person may have heard this. Anytime a person gets revelation about the Lord, who He is, what He's like, why He does things—it says don't boast that demons are afraid of you, boast that you know Me. (Luke 10:20) That you know My ways, that you know what I'm like, that you've heard My voice, stuff like that.

I believe that this was definitely a time that I heard Him, and what He said was vastly different than what I've heard so many pastoral-type people, evangelists, and others say. I'm just sure it's consistent with the Scripture and with the Word of God, with the intent and everything else. But as always, you take it to the Lord and see if you can see where the hole in this is.

I want to do this justice. A lot of people call me and say, “I'm at the end of my rope, I'm exhausted, I'm financially wiped out, physically got all kind of illnesses that the Lord says He's going to heal me from but He hasn't done it yet, or that He already has healed, but it just hasn't manifested yet, I've got demons oppressing me, I've got lamps floating around the room, I've got all kinds of stuff: addictions and guilt and unforgiveness and whatever.”

Anyway, all kinds of things that they're dealing with and trying to get cleaned out from: horrible lives. Why was my family okay until I was born, and then my dad started raping everybody and everything went crazy? Why do we have so many people chasing us and afflicting us and trying to hurt us for no reason, it seems like we're cursed or something? Why can't we ever get ahead?

Well, what you need to understand is that the economy of Heaven runs on tears and scar tissue. That the most beautiful sight to the Father in all creation was His Son on the Cross, whipped, beaten, shredded, mocked, scorned, spit on, naked, loving like no human, unrecognizable as a man because of His love. We're commanded to forgive others and that's hard enough, but He went beyond that. He said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” He interceded for them—it wasn't even a matter of Him forgiving them—He was asking the Father to forgive them; that's way above and beyond, that's unrecognizable as a man in that situation.

Now, physically He was unrecognizable as a man. Does that mean that His face was messed up and they couldn't tell who He was? I think that would mean unrecognizable as Jesus. Unrecognizable as a man could mean that His entire face was shredded. It says that He could count every bone in the prophecy in Psalm 22. The other thing is that there's never been any movie that's really done that any justice. “The Passion of the Christ” didn't really do justice to how badly He was hurt, and that's about the most graphic one that I know of, but still He had a loincloth on, and they would NOT have had one. This is about humiliating people—the crucifixion process is about humiliating them in the worst possible ways, so that people would walk along streets and see these guys hanging on crosses right along the street,

sometimes for miles coming into or out of the city there would be people crucified.

There's no dignity, there's no effort to save their dignity—they would have been whipped, they would have carried their cross through the town naked, they would have hung there naked. It says that everything that we've been through, that Jesus was familiar with all of the things that are common to man. Well, some of what is common to man is rape, molestation, and all kinds of disgusting sexual things. And we leave out a lot—that He was naked and that He hung there, and that He was unrecognizable as a man might mean that all His parts were ripped off.

And yet, all these people say that the Father turned His back at that moment, that He couldn't look on the horror of the bloodiness of His Son. I just think that's goofy. For one thing, how does an omniscient God turn His back on anything? For another thing, you've got to understand that this is His kid, and this is His instrument and His recital—if you have a kid who plays an instrument and he has his big recital that he's been building up for his whole life, you're going to be right there on the front row watching him play his solo!

Well, Jesus' instrument is love. This is His big recital, this is the big moment when He takes on the sins of the world and fulfills what He came for, and He wins victory and all of history changes, and even the calendar changes—this is the big moment. This is not a moment that a proud father turns his back. He came with a Camcorder! The most beautiful moment in all of creation to the Father is His Son on the Cross, whipped, beaten, shredded, taking on the sins of the world, loving like nobody ever could, expressing His holiness in a permanent way, in a legacy that's going to last forever and ever and ever. He does not turn His back.

And it's not a matter of forsaking; I'm not even convinced that's the proper translation of what Jesus actually said. He was quoting Isaiah to show that He was fulfilling prophecy, not because He felt abandoned. I can't imagine what He was feeling in that moment, and what He was going through – and the weight, the burden of my own sin is crushing. The burden of taking on the sins of other people is crushing.

Taking on the sins of the whole world – every demon in the world was probably in Jerusalem that week; satan would have called in every reinforcement he could have, and it worked the people into a frenzy and it made the disciples cowards, and Jesus said, "Put it on Me. I'll take it, put it all on Me." I think the Maya stopped having human sacrifices during that week from Palm Sunday to Passover, and they were passing out flowers and stuff instead of cutting the hearts out of living people and putting them in glass boxes. All the demons were in Jerusalem that week and everything was going great in South/Central America.

I just have tried sometimes to get a sense of the blackness over Jerusalem that week, the scheming and the lying, and satan planning and the demons lying—the weight of it all; in the Garden of Gethsemane, the weight of it all. Anyway, you've got to understand that the Father is really, REALLY proud of His Son. And that Jesus was an only child, and he didn't have anybody to play with, and so a part of this whole ride, the whole point of creation is to raise up big, strong brothers and sisters to play with Jesus, to be joint-heirs.

Well, I know that the Lord had me go through some things to teach me, because I prayed to see through the eyes of Jesus to get to know Him better. One of the things He put me through is that, my wife, Rachael, and I had a biological daughter, and the pregnancy was very, very hard and we knew we didn't want to do that again. Even when we were dating, we had always talked about having one and adopting one. A little before Emily was three and a half, we started looking at adoption. We started the process and the Lord led us to Lily in China and we adopted Lily.

The Lord totally paid for it all – the Lord said she was a gift and we didn't have to borrow money, the

family didn't have to give us money, we didn't spend anything out of our own pocket – the Lord provided mostly from strangers on the Internet. It was amazing!

But anyway, we adopted Lily from China. On the paperwork it said that she was “naughty” on her medical report. We asked the adoption agency, “What does that mean on her medical report that she is naughty?” And they said, “That’s Chinese for mischievous, it means that she’s inquisitive and likes to get into things, and such.” She was three and a half years old at the time.

Well, no, just for the record, “naughty” doesn’t mean that she’s mischievous: “naughty” means she’s autistic and breaks things and runs in front of cars and won’t hold your hand and screams like Rainman if you touch her. So, Rachael shows up in China to get Lily and realizes you can’t pick her up, you can’t hold her, you can’t carry her, you can’t touch her—she’s a three and a half year old large, wolverine! And unless you’ve got a cookie to wave at her, you can’t get her to do anything.

She and Rachael sat in a hotel room in opposite corners staring at each other for three days, waiting for the paperwork to get finished. Rachael called me, “I can’t touch her, I can’t hold her hand, I can’t do anything with her. You have to come!” But she was to leave in twenty-four hours and it would take twenty-eight for me to fly over – and I had to watch the other kid.

The foster home, when they would go on a field trip with her, would have to have one “auntie” assigned solely to Lily, just to keep her from causing a wreck in traffic or something. She had a heart defect (VSD) and was given up for adoption when she was one and a half because of this heart defect – she wasn’t breathing and turning blue or else crying all the time. So I honestly say that her parents did not give her up because she was a girl and they don’t like girls—they tried to keep her, but she had a health problem they couldn’t handle, so they left her in a police station and they immediately rushed her to the Beijing Children’s Hospital and operated and put her in a Christian foster home, where she waited for us to come get her.

God had said that this was home and she’d be fine when she got here. And as soon as we got her here, I started praying deliverance on her, breaking generational curses and pulling stuff off of her and helping get her cup full. And she was a completely different kid. Within an hour, we’re wrestling on the floor and I’m blowing strawberries on tummies and wrestling with her and Emily, and she gets to meet the dogs and that’s great, and an hour later she’s asleep in bed with her new sister.

The next day we get her dressed and go to church and dedicate her to God and it’s really beautiful. But I went through this whole process where she had open heart surgery, she had blood transfusions, she could have Hepatitis-C, she could have HIV. You don’t know what you’re bringing home to put in bed with your biological kid, your biological daughter who you’ve spent time with and you love. And you’re going to love the adopted kid, but what risk are you bringing into your house? But you do it anyway. She could’ve been murderous, she could’ve been all kinds of stuff—she was a handful anyway.

But I learned about when the Lord talks about adoption, in Romans 7 and other places that we’re adopted sons, we’re joint-heirs with Christ, that we’re grafted in – we were a wild branch but we were grafted in to the natural branch – and we flourish and He tends us and prunes us and cares for us; I didn’t understand the fulness of that until I adopted a kid. I then understood what it means to commit to love her just the same as your biological daughter, as your own flesh and blood.

Now this is who we are in Christ: joint-heirs with Jesus, having access to the armory of the Lord, everything that He has, we have. One time, I was out in the park and I was just walking along, and I usually just kinda talk to the Lord and I ask questions, “Hey Lord, what about this, or what about that...” and whichever of the three of Them that wants to answer me can answer me. The Holy Spirit tends to be sort of a push or a nudge or a picture. Jesus tends to be really affirming and loving and sweet and gentle. And the Father tends to be really firm and strong and no-nonsense, but can also be really sweet. And I

know the difference between the three of Them, but I generally just say “Lord” and let Whoever wants to answer something to do so.

Anyway, we were doing an event in the park (I don’t even remember now what my exact question was) and I said, “Lord, do you want us to do this or that?” And Jesus answered me and He said, “I can’t help you with that, you’re going to have to ask our Dad.” And it just freaked me out! I just stopped dead in my tracks. I know what the Bible says about adoption and adopted sons and joint-heirs and all that stuff, but I heard Jesus say, “Our Dad” and it just stopped me!

And I was like, “Oh wow, oh God, His Dad, our Dad, my Dad, His Dad, our Dad, my Dad, oh my God, oh Lord, Lord...” I don’t even remember what I asked Him, and maybe it was just to get me to hear that, because I don’t even remember asking the Father whatever it was that I was asking Him, it just stopped me dead in my tracks. The reality, the truth, when you hear Jesus Himself say, “Our Dad...”

Well, it messed me up, it just totally messed me up; and it was so beautiful and totally unforgettable to understand the reality of what it means to be a joint-heir. As a father myself, understanding the risk, the sacrifice, the cost, the chances that you take adopting a kid that you have no idea what they’re coming with, what they could do, how much trouble they’re going to be, how much they’re going to cost you in the long run, who knows...but you do it anyway.

Now as this relates to suffering, there are a lot of people preaching a prosperity gospel that God wants everybody rich, that God wants to bless you—and yes, He does want to bless you, but they misunderstand His currency. They think that God wants to bless you financially or that God wants to bless you with health. Andrew Womack and those guys who say that God would never want you sick, that any sickness is of the devil, that it’s evil, it’s wrong, and you need to rebuke it instantly and not receive it. Well, that’s a complete misunderstanding of the nature of suffering and treasure in Heaven on so many levels – it’s essentially a physical, body-related prosperity gospel. Now, give it to them for not talking about how God wants you to have a Mercedes and a jet plane, but all they’ve done is convert that currency into a medicinal health, physical body-oriented currency, and say God wants to bless you that way, which is still carnal.

The reality is that God wants to bless you with treasure in Heaven, but treasure in Heaven is directly related to the amount of tears and scar tissue that brought it about. Let me put it this way. I’m about as white as they come. There’s no way of mistaking me for anything other than straight up Caucasian! Rachael is pretty much the same and Emily is a blonde-headed, white kid, no question about it. And then there’s Lily – darker-skinned, Chinese, black hair, no mistake about it whatsoever.

Well, when we’d go to the mall, it was really clear: one of these things doesn’t go with the others. And there’s no, “Oh, you look just like your sister...” No, you’re Chinese and she’s not. Whatever stigma that Lily would have to deal with her whole life when someone would see her, “That’s your mom?? ... Oh, you’re adopted.” Or worse, “Oh, you’re one of those whose family didn’t love them and sold them to the rich, white Americans.” Who knows what might be said or thought, but there’s no getting out of it, there’s no escaping it, and no making it end.

If I had the money of Michael Jackson and we could bleach her skin and get her plastic surgery and make her fit in, so it looked like she belonged in the family, maybe she could escape some of that. But that’s not realistic, and it’s beyond my power to relieve her of the stigma of adoption, of the stigma of being a foreigner, of not fitting in with the family, of whatever. She doesn’t look like the family, and as much as I can love her and say she’s my daughter and show her love and give her everything, there’s always going to be that, “You don’t really belong here.”

As a dad, I desperately don’t want Lily to feel that way, and I hate knowing that somebody is going to whisper that to her, that some voice is going to whisper that in her ear. I desperately want people to walk

up to her like they did to me and say, “Oh, you’re Perry’s kid, you just look like Bob, I can tell.” Especially as I’ve gotten older and have a beard, around here people can just walk up and look at me and tell I’m a Perry. Well, nobody is going to do that with Lily. They’re not going to say, “You look just like a Perry” or “You look just like your mom (or dad or sister).”

We talked about adopting a kid from Ukraine or maybe a kid in the States who wouldn’t have to deal with that. Not for our benefit or because we were concerned about showing up at the mall with a Chinese kid or a Black kid or whatever, but because the kid is going to be affected by this. For the rest of their life, to whatever degree that we’re around, people are going to see, “Here’s the dad, here’s the kid...nope, they’re definitely adopted...Oh, what a great dad for adopting her...” No, I don’t want any of that! And yet there’s no way for me to make it stop.

But, praise God, that He’s way bigger than any of us are. You need to understand that the most beautiful sight to the Father in all of creation is His Son on the Cross; the defining moment of Jesus is not raising Lazarus from the dead, it’s not the wedding in Cana where He turns water into wine; no, the defining moment of Jesus is when He accumulates wound on top of wound on top of wound, and operates in love anyway and sacrificially takes it on and asks the Father to forgive them; no bitterness, no unforgiveness, nothing but pure, raw, naked love, in the midst of humongous suffering. THAT defines Jesus.

And the Father, in His wisdom and His power and His glory and His love, He wants me to look like the family. He wants me to fit in. When there’s a big family picnic in Heaven and everybody’s there, He wants people to walk up to me and go, “Oh hey, you’re Jesus’ brother! I can tell because you look just like Him. Your skin’s all falling off and you’re all covered in scar tissue. I can see the light of Christ in you and I can tell that you’re Jesus’ brother!” How? How am I going to look like Him without scars? Now they may be because a person has cut all up their arm for years, it may be because of needle tracks, it may be the scar tissue on ovaries and other girl parts from the abortions you had. They may be emotional scars, they may be relational scars, they may be financial scars, things that you endured and He used those things to make you look more and more like Jesus.

That’s what people don’t understand. He talks about the wedding feast and the guy sends out invitations and the rich say, “Oh I can’t come. I have to go check on the cows I bought.” Or inspect the piece of land or whatever, and nobody comes. So He sends the servant and says, “Go grab whoever. Go to the highways and the byways.” And they go and just snatch people off the street, humble people, people who normally wouldn’t have been invited to a big wedding feast.

And it’s still not full, so He tells them to go to the hedgerows and get the robbers and the highwaymen and bring them. And they come, but the rich won’t. They’re not appreciative, they’re not hungry, they’re not desperate. They’ve got their own little party going and they think they’re fine. But the people with the scar tissue, the people who are hungry, the people who are hurting, they come and they appreciate it.

Most of my best friends now are ex-drug dealers, ex-junkies, ex-meth lab cooks, ex-prostitutes, ex-jewel thieves, or ex-something or others. Ex-witches who found Jesus and they are never going back—they’re appreciative and they’re really grateful. And those are the kind of people that He’s going to use. Why? Because they have scar tissue, because they’ve been crying, because they’ve been hurting, because the heart of God reaches out to those, especially when they’ve laid down the bitterness and the unforgiveness and the hurt. Then that scar tissue gets turned into something useful and it looks like Jesus. And it can bring Him glory.

So I want you to understand, whatever you’re going through, whatever you’ve been through, whatever you’re going to go through, whatever’s coming and however much it’s going to hurt—if you thank Him for the scar tissue, if you give Him the glory for it and you see the Big Picture and that He’s just trying to conform you to the image of Christ, you’ll see that He’s just trying to bless you so that you have one more scar and you’ll look that much more like Jesus.

I've got these spots on my hands that didn't used to be there. My grandma had them, but she was 70. I just turned 42 (at the time of this video) and I've got all these scars and spots on my hands that I got after I received second-degree burns from a sunburn that I got when I was out on the sidewalk in the summer of 2006. The Lord said, "I want you out on the sidewalk, right in the middle of town, weeping and repenting and mourning for the city, for you, for the business, for all kinds of stuff, for mistakes that were made and for the church, and you're fasting without food or water or suntan lotion until further notice."

And I was never alone; people just showed up! God told people, "Something's happening in Liberty, go see Doug." And people would drive up or ride up on their motorcycle, in perfect synchronization: one would leave, then another would pull up. And for two days, I'm out on the sidewalk out in the sun, in July, crying. Nine pastors showed up from Liberty. One to just love me and hug me and say we're here for you. One to just drive by and sneer. One to come by and say, "Get off your knees, you're acting like an animal and you're embarrassing all of the Christians in town." One to come and say, "Your dream is over, your furniture store is closed, you were wrong all along, knock this off." And three or four to just come out and see what was going on.

But after the sunburn faded, these spots showed up and they're a reminder to me all the time of the scar tissue. These are trophies of my obedience – not to be prideful, not for my sake, not for me – I just did what He told me to do and it hurt really bad, but I did it. The sunburn didn't hurt, even humbling myself in public didn't hurt. It seemed like a crazy idea, but I can see all kinds of fruit from it. Pastors who had never even met each other in this town, but were there at the same time checking on me were like, "What are you doing?" And I was like, "Trying to get you guys to talk. See, it's working!" And they prayed together with me and it was beautiful.

If I hit my thumb with a hammer, if I stub my toe in the middle of the night, if I cut my finger, my instant reaction now is, "Oh, thank you Lord, that's so wonderful for letting me share in Jesus' suffering, that's great! Thanks Lord!" And it stops hurting. I mean 99% of the time. Once in a while, He wants me to suffer for something and that's fine. But 99% of the time...I don't care what it is, headache, toothache, whatever, I thank Him for it, I appreciate Him for it, I put it in the proper perspective, I put it in the slot where it's supposed to go – praise and worship, I appreciate it, You're conforming me to the image of Christ, that's another scar I'm going to have, that's another boo boo on my hand, that's another whatever. Thank you Lord, thank you!

And it stops, because it did its job. Because the choice was either to get my eyes off of the Cross and focus on my own pain and my own need and my own tendency to wallow and whine, or it was to get me to realize that what He did for me in contrast to this little boo boo is nothing, and to thank Him for it – that He didn't give me more than I could handle, that it's just a little paper cut, that it's a little blister, that it's a little whatever, and I'm not going to let it get me off track. I'm not going to let it take my eyes off of the Cross; I'm going to thank Him. That what He bore for me was so much beyond that.

And it wasn't just the 12 or 18 hours of being beaten and having His beard ripped out and being whipped and whatever. There's so much more that He bore besides that, and He's bearing even now as we slice His body up into little pieces – as we the Church, the Body of Christ, hack it up – and a barn full of toes over here is unwilling to communicate with the hands and the eyes and the whatever, because they use instruments and we don't, because they speak in tongues and we don't; and His body is shredded still, to this day, for us. And He is crying and He is weeping and He is before the Father saying, "Please make them stop, this hurts. I'll deal with it, I'll put up with it, on their behalf I'll take it, but please make it stop."

And as we bear that burden with Him, as we share in His sufferings, as we have a burden for souls, as we have a burden for unity, as we have a burden for love, it takes a little bit of the pressure off of Him and things start to change. That's one more person, one more city that He doesn't have to intercede for before the Father, that He's not getting whipped about, and taking our whippings for us.

So I want to encourage you, whatever you're going through, whatever is happening in your life right now, whatever scar tissue you're accumulating, just rejoice. Rejoice! Great is your reward in Heaven. So suffered the prophets that went before you. Blessed are the meek, blessed are the humble, blessed are those who weep and mourn, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Read Matthew 5 until it sinks in and you really get it down deep inside, and you understand that scar tissue makes you beautiful. It doesn't matter whether it's spiritual or physical—you may be the elephant man, you may be deformed eight different ways, you may be hunched over with goiters and tumors – praise God! If you give it to Him, if you put it on the altar, then He will use it and it will be beautiful. If you let it munch you up, if you let it twist you into a pretzel of anger and fear and unforgiveness, then there's no treasure in that.

Whatever it is, just put it on the altar and ask Him to make it beautiful and He will. And you will be beautiful. I know the difference. When you pray to see through the eyes of Jesus, it changes everything. I was sitting one Sunday night and some little girl got up to sing some special music, she was about 11 or 12, and she's not even close to a key. She's made up her own key and it just sounds horrible and everything in my ears is going "oh ouch, owwww!" But she's singing with all her heart, and I'm like, "Lord, this is horrible" and He said, "I think it's the most beautiful thing ever. Ask Me to hear it the way I hear it." So I said, "Ok, Lord let me hear it the way You hear it." And instantly, INSTANTLY, I can feel the love of God and His rejoicing and Him dancing to her singing, because she's giving it her all (as ugly as it sounds), she's throwing everything into it and it's the love of Jesus that's motivating her to stand up there, even if she knows that maybe she doesn't sing well, but she's giving it everything and He just thinks it's the most beautiful thing ever.

I was sitting in another congregation behind a lady, she was 30 years old and very low functioning – autistic or Down Syndrome or whatever—and probably couldn't read, probably needed help wiping. But we're singing and she's just singing with everything in her, letting it all out in the key of "K." I know that according to man's way of thinking, she's special needs, she's stunted, she's not normal, she's not right. But she's singing so pretty and I can feel that Christ is in her and moving through her, and I said, "Lord, do you want me to pray for her to be healed?" And He said, "YOU LEAVE HER ALONE!! SHE'S EXACTLY THE WAY I WANT HER TO BE!! DON'T YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT TOUCHING HER!!!" I'm like, "But, but, but ..." and He's says, "Yeah, you leave your little Special Olympics boxes at home, buddy, I made her special this way." Okay, sorry Lord! Thanks Lord!

There's a brother here in town who writes pretty, beautiful, powerful, sweet songs about Jesus, with faith like a child and a funny little voice like Gomer Pyle (Google it, kid), but then he sings and something else comes out that sounds beautiful, so I invited him once to the furniture store to sing for us and I didn't know what was going to happen. Then this just amazing anointing comes out of him. And he used to be a rebel and a drunk and cause nothing but trouble, but then he had a car wreck and it fried half of his brain. Now he's just as simple as can be and he loves Jesus and these little songs come out and it's so beautiful, but he can't balance his checkbook and he drives, but he probably shouldn't, and he gets all kinds of persecution and suffers in all kinds of ways.

So I asked the Lord one time, "Should we pray for his brain? For him to be healed, Lord?" And the Lord replied, "Do you know what I had to do to get this kind of music out of him?! Don't you even think about it!! It had to go this way to get him to where I want him to be. Leave him alone!" Okay Lord!!

Whatever your scar tissue, whatever your suffering, offer it up to God as a sacrifice, as an offering; thank Him for it, bless Him for it, see the big picture, see the treasure in Heaven that accumulates the more that we look like Jesus on the Cross. We should be crucified daily. Why? What does that mean that we crucify our flesh? By giving up what we want, whether it's a fast – I'm going to eat what You want me to

eat, or I'm not going to eat at all, or I'm going to fast from TV, or I'm going to fast from what I want, or whatever—all of those, when we go out in front of people and we use the name of Jesus and we're ridiculed or mocked or scorned or lose our job or we're hated, and persecuted, and raped, and thrown in prison, and beheaded and whatever; all that's happening is that they're helping us accumulate more scar tissue so that we can look more like Jesus on the Cross and the Father can proudly say, "That's My kid! Look, look! Do you see?! He looks just like my Son. That's my kid!"

Those people fit in, they look like the rest of the family, they bear the marks of Jesus. (Galatians 6:17) And it's such a blessing – and yet so many people want to be soft and comfy and not hurt at all, or pretend that there's no pain and preach soft and fluffy, no sacrifice, no nothing – how are you gonna look like Jesus?!?! How are you going to learn long-suffering? How are you going to move in the Fruits of the Spirit like patience and long-suffering? How are you going to exercise those when nothing is going wrong around you and you don't have any hard people to deal with? (Romans 5:3-5)



Invite the junkies into your house! Invite the guy under the bridge into your house! Go to the pastor of the mega-church in town and tell him to give you the names of the last five people he threw out of church – because they're probably exactly the kind of people that I want to be hanging around with!

See God's economy, understand God's economy and everything changes. The prosperity gospel will not get you through what's coming! When economic hard times come, nobody is going to buy that anymore. You're going to have to explain to them why God is cursing a whole country, when God supposedly wants you rich and happy. It doesn't fly in Nigeria, it doesn't fly in Mozambique, it doesn't fly in Bali, and it doesn't fly here. Except for stupid, deluded people that want to hear that God wants them comfy and soft and fat. And He doesn't. He wants you looking like Jesus on the Cross and you need to get about it.

Pray this: **“Lord, do whatever You want with me. I trust You to get me through, whatever it takes, make me look like Jesus, so that I fit in, so that at the family picnic everybody thinks that I'm a biological kid and not an adopted kid, because I look so much like Jesus. Do whatever You gotta do to me.”**

If you pray that, be ready – count the cost and then hold His hand and trust Him and don't back down no matter what happens. He'll answer that prayer and it'll be beautiful. We've got some folks like that here, layers and layers and layers of scar tissue; and it makes them tough and hardened.

Who are you scared of, if you look across the battle lines and there's a brand new private, just got off the plane to Vietnam, just got off the helicopter, pressed new uniform, brand new haircut, not a scar on him; OR you look across from you at that sergeant with one eye and a knife scar all down his face and he's snarled up and has medals on his chest and blood on his knife—you go, “Uh oh, THAT guy is serious. If I'm going to go to war, let me fight the private. But don't put me across the line from THAT guy, he's for real!”

I want scar tissue on top of scar tissue. I want my back whipped so much that it looks like the shell of a turtle, that it's just one big, giant callous, so that satan has no grip on me anymore and nobody can hurt me and I can be useful for the Lord's Kingdom and accomplish His purposes. Why don't I fight back against the people on YouTube saying all kinds of vile things, making up all kinds of lies, using slander and whatever? Because I'm getting more scar tissue, because I'm learning patience and long-suffering and brotherly kindness, and I'm getting to watch God be my defender, and I rack up more treasure in Heaven. In the Name of Jesus. Amen.

Try to understand God's economy and everything will change.

(Adoption Verses: John 1:12-13, John 3:1-2, Romans 8:14-17, Romans 8:23, Galatians 3:26, 29, Galatians 4:4-7, Ephesians 1:4-5, 13-14, Ephesians 3:6, Colossians 1:12, 1 Peter 1:3-4, Titus 3:7.)

Chapter 14 – Intentions



The Secret Danger of Walking in God's Perfect Will

January 2, 2007 – from Doug Perry, servant of God

With the words of our mouth we can change things. Words have power. The tongue is a dangerous sword that, like the tiny rudder on a ship, can direct much. It was that tiny rudder that could have steered the Titanic away from an iceberg, but didn't.

God hears our words, so does the enemy. As joint heirs with Christ, we have spiritual authority far beyond anything we can really understand. If you look in the mirror every morning and say, "I'm fat. I'm ugly. Nobody likes me." It should be clear that eventually you WILL be fat and ugly and nobody will like you. If you speak things over someone that are not in God's will and they receive them, that's witchcraft. If, by the power of our soul force or our position or our money or our charisma, we try to influence people to obey us instead of obeying Christ, we are doing witchcraft. If we are acting fully in line with the Spirit of God and speaking the Rhema and the Logos word of God, then we are His agents and it's pure. But if there is a mixture or if we are operating on our own power or under the influence of traditions or doctrine or dogma of Man, then we are operating in the soulish realm and doing witchcraft.

Why is rebellion as the sin of witchcraft? (1 Samuel 15:23) Because rebellion doesn't wait on God to do according to His will, but instead takes matters into its own hands and tries to change things according to its own vision of how things should be. If you don't like the way your husband is behaving, you should wait on the Lord and ask Him to do His will with your husband. If you try to force your husband to behave the way you want by bribery or by nagging or by legal force or by any other means, then you have taken God's work into your own hands and are not waiting on Him to do and to will according to His good pleasure. And that's witchcraft.

In the churches we are FILLED with witchcraft. We are full to the brim with controls and manipulations and programs and structures and doctrines designed to force people into the mold we think God wants for them. We preach the "priesthood of the believer" but we're always inserting priests between the people and God so we can tell them how it's done. We don't really believe that the Holy Spirit is our teacher because we've taken far too much of the responsibility into our own hands and ignored or marginalized or outright dismissed the ability of the Holy Spirit to even speak to people. We have elevated clergy into the position of Oracles of God and rely on them to tell us what God wants us to do. And it has gone to their heads. And it has grieved God.

But the really sneaky, really hidden, really dangerous one is that God judges even the intentions of our heart. He loves His children and He wants to please them. The Psalmist says, "*May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my mind be acceptable unto you, O Lord.*" (Psalm 19:14) We know that words have power, but God judges even the intentions of our heart! He says that if you even THINK about having sex with a woman, you've already committed adultery. If you hate your brother in your heart, you've committed murder. The Lord answers our prayers and there are some things that we are praying that we don't even know we're praying.

There are some things in our hearts that may be very subtle and very hidden, but the Father sees them and may answer them – even if it's really bad for us.

You have to understand that the whole point of this walk is to build up big strong brothers and sisters for Jesus. The Father wants spiritual musclemen, not couch potatoes. And there is no way to build muscle without resistance training, so we have to break muscle down to build it. We learn more from failures than from successes. So sometimes the Father allows us to touch a hot stove so that we learn what it's like to be burned and know not to ever do it again.

I just learned this weekend how horribly, devastatingly bad this is. The Lord illustrated this clearly and wrote it on my heart and I wept until I couldn't weep anymore, and fell into bed exhausted and slept for nearly a whole day. If there is something, ANYTHING, deep in our heart that is unyielded to God, He may just let it come to pass so that we can see how badly things go when we direct our own paths. If we depend on anyone or want anything that isn't Jesus, He might just give it to us!

I found that I had bound some people around me into helping with my quest, when they had their own quest they should be on. I just wanted to hang out with them, it wasn't malicious or anything. I have a huge burden on my heart and they had sort of bought into it as well and liked being with me too. And I thought I was dead and fully submitted to Christ because I always prayed His will with my mouth. But there were things inside of me that were seeking something other than His perfect will – and I didn't even know it. But when the Lord started letting those things manifest in squirrely ways so as to get our attention, we started to press in and the Lord showed me how horrifyingly disgusting and dangerous this is.

I realized that the Lord loves me so much that He has frequently adjusted His perfect will to accommodate the intentions of my heart, maybe even things I didn't know were there! Well, that's just no good!! I don't want His perfect will adjusted to ME, I want ME adjusted to His perfect will!! If I'm traveling around the country and I'm lonely and He makes somebody stop whatever they're doing and whatever their quest is so that they can ride around with me – I'm sure God will use it for His glory and grow everyone, but I have no idea what opportunities might be missed for that person because he's out on the road with me! Do you understand? Do you get how dangerous this is? I was praying that nothing would come out of my mouth that wasn't His perfect will, but I didn't count on Him answering hidden prayers of my heart!!

The Bible says that the prayer of a righteous man availeth much. What exactly is a prayer in God's eyes? Just when we bow our head and say Amen at the end? Sometimes I just think a prayer and don't speak out loud. Sometimes I pray in the Spirit. Evidently, God reserves the right to even consider some hidden desires of our heart as prayers! If a pastor has some secret desire in his heart to have sex with his secretary, God might just answer that! If you have a desire in your heart for a big, famous, TV ministry, God might just answer that, even though what HE wanted for you was vastly different – and more effective for the Kingdom.

This can be a really wonderful thing when the intentions of our heart are perfectly in line with His will. Sometimes the Lord blesses us in a way we never saw coming, but is exactly perfect for our needs and wants. Maybe your spouse is so perfect for you that it had to be God – and He was answering the prayers of your heart, even if you couldn't mentally get your head around what you needed in a spouse. But the danger is when our intentions or the meditations of our mind don't line up with His perfect will.

I know this – when I saw it and renounced it and asked the Lord to ignore EVERY intention of my heart (or word of my mouth) that wasn't in line with His perfect, best will and to reboot everything and put everybody back where they were supposed to be all along, everything in my life started shaking. It was three days of the biggest mind-bending, brain-pretzel headache you can imagine. I had no idea what was going to be left when the shaking stopped.

Like a virus on your computer, it may have only affected 1% of the files, but you have to reinstall the whole system and reboot it to get it cleaned out. I didn't know how much of my life and ministry and relationships were inside His perfect will and how many aren't. But I knew that at least SOME weren't. And that's too many. So I repented and wept and laid everything down (and really meant EVERYTHING) and begged Him to reset it all back to His perfect will. And right after, it was all I can do to get through the day. I'd never felt a weight that heavy and it hurt really bad. I came face to face with how much He loves me, even to the subversion of His best plan, His perfect will, to make me happy. And I came face to face with how disgusting and dirty it is for me to ask a holy, righteous God to do any such thing.

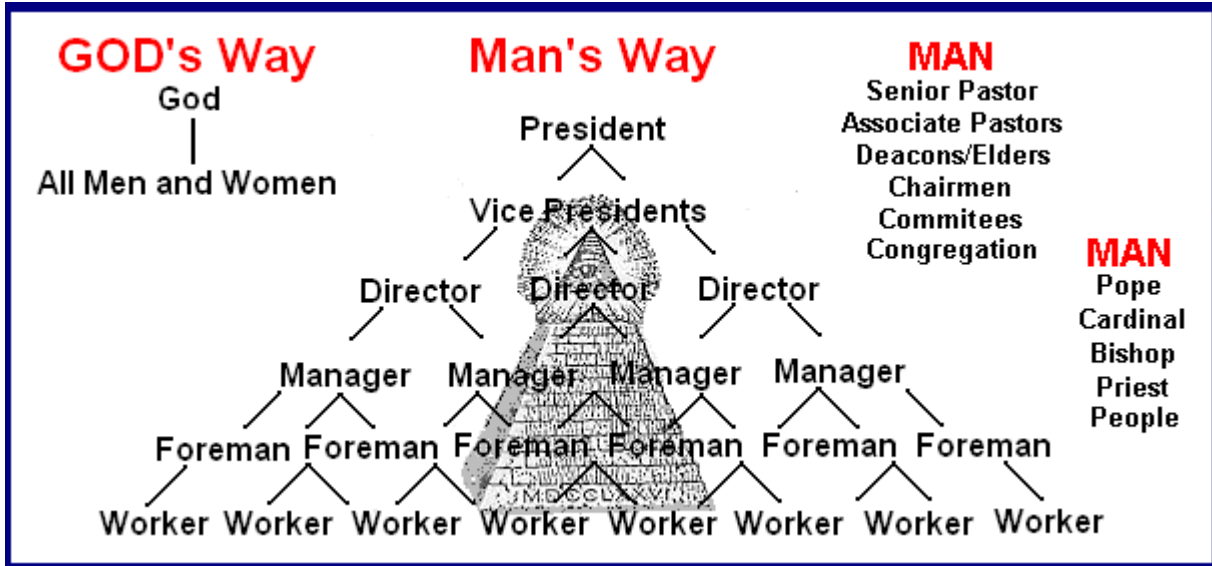
I begged for an anti-intentions-of-the-heart shield. Incoming and outgoing, I didn't want to affect anyone else and I didn't want anyone else to affect me by their intentions. I have to march shoulder to shoulder with the brethren, not behind them and them not behind me. We have to have HIM as our head, not any man and certainly not ourselves!

It's not at all what the church is teaching and it really doesn't conform to the world, but I'm sure it's Biblical, so I prayed this:

Lord, I'm really, really, really sorry that I've been wanting things in my heart that weren't Your best for me or those around me. Please forgive me. Please, Abba, in the Name of Jesus, please wash me clean. Please, Father, please ignore me completely from now on. Please disregard ANY prayer that I pray, out loud, in my head, or in my heart. Please completely dismiss anything that I say that isn't what YOU put in me to pray. If I pray something that is 80% You and 20% me, please let all the 'me' parts bounce. Please ignore anything coming from me that You didn't send. Please give me a shield of the Blood of Jesus that protects other people from my selfish intentions and please protect me from their intentions as well. Please, Abba, this is no way to live! I had no idea that You would do this, but I should have and I'm sorry I didn't understand it sooner. Thanks for loving me that much. I know that it is my birthright and no man can take it from me, but I lay it down willingly. I willingly submit what I want in favor of what You want. Have Your will and ignore me completely. Please, Abba? This is never going to work without this. Please show me how much of this was me and reboot it all to fit Your perfect will. Even if it hurts, even if everything I have relied on goes away. Even if all that I trust and have trusted in was sinking sand. I know that You are the only trustworthy thing. Show my life for what it is and fix me. I'm writing You a blank check. Whatever it takes, I mean it. YOU be my shield. You surround me all around. Clothe me in white and kill or ignore anything in me that isn't pure. Please, Father, in the name of Jesus! Amen.

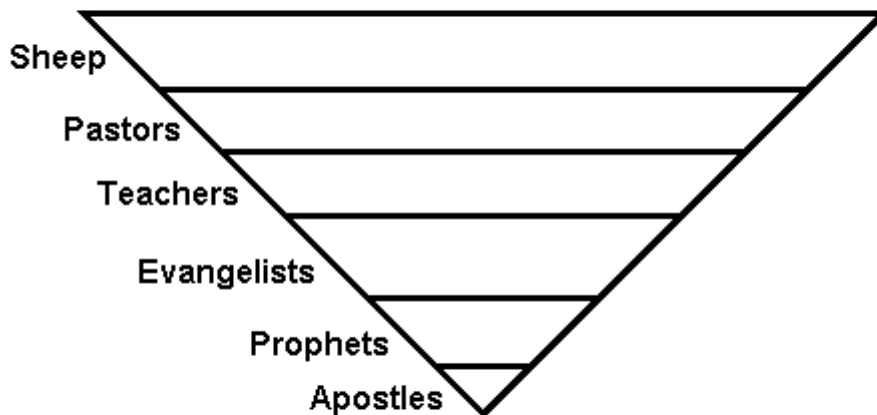


Chapter 15 – Church



The Way the TRUE Church Works

Leaders always lift people toward God.
 Not draw them unto themselves.



Shepherds care for the flock and support and feed.
 All submit to one another out of love.
 The Leaders lead because they're the best Servants.
 The blood of a lost Sheep flows downhill on all leaders.

(If you were a sheep, which would you rather be a part of?)

The longer I look at what we have built and compare it honestly to what the Scriptures actually describe, the less comfortable I am calling it a minor imperfection, because Jesus did not treat unity as a stylistic preference or an optional enhancement to our witness; He tied the credibility of His incarnation to it. In John 17, on the night before He went to the cross, when He could have prayed for protection, or power, or strategy, or influence, He prayed this instead:

“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**” (John 17:21)

He did not say the world would believe because of our apologetics, or our buildings, or our worship albums, or our conferences. He said the world would believe that the Father sent Him if we were one in the same way He and the Father are one. That is an almost unbearable standard, and if we are honest enough to invert it logically, it becomes even more terrifying, because if unity is the proof, then division is the counter-proof, and if we refuse to be one, we are not merely inefficient — we are actively participating in the world’s unbelief. We are providing evidence against the claim that He was sent.

Paul was not vague about this either. When the Corinthians began attaching themselves to leaders and forming camps, he did not compliment their passion. He said:

“For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?” (1 Corinthians 3:3–4)

Carnal. Fleshly. Acting like mere men instead of Spirit-indwelt sons. And then he presses it even harder:

“Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:13)

We would never say, “I am of Paul.” We are far too refined for that. But we say, “I’m Baptist,” or “I’m Reformed,” or “I’m Pentecostal,” or “I’m just of Christ,” as though that final phrase exempts us from the rebuke. Yet Paul includes that one too: “I am of Christ.” The problem is not merely the name; the problem is the division. The Body is not divisible property to be portioned out according to doctrinal emphasis or personality preference. It is His Body.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Not one invisible theoretical body while we operate as competing institutions, but one actual Body, and Paul pleads that we would be:

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit... One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all...” (Ephesians 4:3–6)

We are told to keep the unity, not manufacture it, because it already exists by virtue of the indwelling Spirit. The only division God ever sanctioned was geographical, because geography is the only unavoidable distinction. “The church of God which is at Corinth.” “The church in Ephesus.” “The church in Smyrna.” Never the church of the Baptists in Corinth and the church of the Charismatics in Corinth and the church of the Reformers in Corinth. One city, one church. Not narrower than a locality and not wider than a locality. Anything smaller is a sect. Anything larger but smaller than the universal Church is a federation.

And then we come to Revelation, where the Lord warns:

“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent... or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” (Revelation 2:5)

He does not threaten to remove their tax status. He threatens to remove their lampstand. What is a lampstand if not divine authority and testimony in a place? What does it mean for a town to lose its lampstand? It does not mean there are no believers left; it means they are no longer operating under His headship in a way that carries His approval and weight. Nobody is following the nuclear pillar of fire anymore, they’ve all wandered off and started their own little campfires. And if the fastest way to fracture the Body is division, and if division is carnality, then perhaps we should not be surprised that so many towns feel spiritually powerless.

Paul says in Romans:

“Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.” (Romans 14:4)

Another man’s servant — meaning God’s servant. They answer to Him. Not to you. Not to me. We are not the Head; we are members. And yet we behave as though doctrinal precision gives us veto power over fellowship, as though preference gives us authority to carve up the Body, as though hurt feelings justify amputation. We split over budgets, over building programs, over worship styles, over secondary doctrines, over personalities, over misunderstandings that could have been borne in love, and each time we tell ourselves it is necessary, righteous – even courageous.

But Jesus said the world would believe if we were one.

Which means every time we divide unnecessarily, we are not just hurting each other; we are wounding the testimony of Christ in that town. It is as though we are reenacting the crucifixion at a corporate level. The cross was one day. The fragmentation of His Body has been two thousand years. “That they may be one... that the world may believe.” That is not a gentle suggestion; that is the chosen proof. And if we refuse it, we should at least have the integrity to admit that we are choosing carnality over witness.

Joel gives us a picture of a devastated land:

“That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten...” (Joel 1:4)

And the remedy is not better organization. It is:

“Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders...” (Joel 1:14)

“Rend your heart, and not your garments...” (Joel 2:13)

Corporate repentance. Standing in the gap. Ezekiel says:

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land... but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30)

God was looking for one. He still is. One who will repent for a town’s division. One who will weep over the Body as though it were his own flesh — because it is. One who understands that unity is not sentimental cooperation, but spiritual alignment under the Head. One who is willing to endure the misunderstanding and the accusation and the

pushback that always come when you start talking about oneness in a culture built on fragmentation.

Because here is the indictment that will not go away: Jesus said the world would believe if we were one as He and the Father are one. If that is true — and it is — then our refusal to pursue that unity with everything in us is not neutral. It is disobedience. It is carnality. And it hurts Him.

And here is the part that almost no one talks about, because once you see it you cannot unsee it: the City Church model is not merely sentimental unity language — it is staggeringly wise. It is the only model that actually restrains power, limits heresy, enforces discipline, and prevents celebrity empires from swallowing the Bride whole.

When the church in Scripture is “the church in Corinth,” or “the church in Ephesus,” or “the church in Smyrna,” it is not because God likes tidy geography. It is because locality is the only natural boundary that cannot be manipulated by personality, doctrine, or ambition. A city is a real, shared life unit. People live there. They shop there. They bury their dead there. They raise their children there. You cannot redraw the borders of a city every time you get offended.

And because the boundary is fixed by geography, you cannot shrink the church down to your preferred subset, nor can you expand it into a federation large enough to become unaccountable. It is big enough to prevent clique control and small enough to prevent imperial control. It is compartmentalized without being fractured. It is independent without being isolated.

If a local elder goes off the rails, he is not protected by a distant denominational headquarters three states away. The believers in that city know him. They know his family. They see his life. If he becomes abusive, manipulative, or doctrinally unstable, he can be confronted, corrected, or removed. There is no vast institutional inertia shielding him. In the New Testament, elders were appointed “in every city” (Titus 1:5), not in every district or denomination. Authority was local, and therefore accountable.

And heresy? Heresy spreads fastest through centralized systems. When one vast organization absorbs multiple localities under a single doctrinal brand, an error at the top becomes error everywhere. But when churches are local and independent, error is naturally quarantined. It may wound one city, but it does not automatically infect a continent. The damage is contained. The Body protects itself.

And giant leaders? The City Church model is kryptonite to empire-building. There is no mechanism for a single charismatic personality to consolidate multiple cities under his personal authority, because the moment he attempts to exercise extra-local control, he has stepped outside the scriptural boundary. The churches are interdependent in life, but independent in government. Christ is the only Head. There is no pope possible in a system that refuses federation. There is no celebrity CEO if the elders in each locality answer directly to the Lord and to the people who live among them.

It is almost exactly like local civil government. You have one city government per city. You may not like the mayor. You may not like the school board. You may protest, lobby, vote, argue, persuade, or if you are completely miserable, you may move. What you do not get to do is start a second rebel city hall across the street and declare that you are now the true municipal authority, hold elections and start fixing the roads. That would not be called reform. It would be called chaos. Resources would split. Authority would blur. Citizens would not know whom to obey. Nothing coherent would ever be accomplished.

Yet that is precisely what we have normalized in the Church. We disagree, so we form another “church” in the same town. Then another. And another. And eventually the Body in that locality is so fractured that no unified discipline can function, no unified witness can stand, and no unified repentance can occur. We have divided the authority structure so thoroughly that it is almost impossible to correct error corporately, because everyone can

simply leave and join the congregation that already agrees with them.

Under the City Church model, you do not escape discipline by walking across the parking lot. You cannot shop for a version of Christianity that flatters you. You are part of the Body in that town. If you are rebuked, you are rebuked as a brother among brothers. If you are restored, you are restored in that same community. The gravity of belonging actually means something. That is not oppressive — it is stabilizing.

And in times of persecution, the wisdom becomes even more obvious. A centralized denomination can be decapitated with one legal strike. Freeze the accounts. Arrest the top tier. Shut down the headquarters. But a city-based network of independent local churches is far harder to extinguish. Leadership is redundant. Resources are distributed. Authority is not concentrated in a single node. It is compartmentalized, self-supporting, self-policing, and far more resilient under pressure. History shows this plainly — in the first century, in China, in Russia, in underground movements across the world. What thrives under persecution is almost always small, local, Spirit-led communities, not sprawling corporate structures.

And perhaps most convicting of all, the City Church model forces us into proximity. You cannot hide from believers who disagree with you. You must love them. You must forgive them. You must “endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3) You must learn to live under the Head together. The cross becomes practical, not theoretical.

Which may be exactly why we have avoided it. Church as we have it is messy. But City Church will test ALL your limits, push all your buttons and FORCE you to be around people that you have a hard time putting up with. As someone that has lived in community for decades, I can tell you that it teaches patience and longsuffering and love in ways that sitting in a pew could NEVER do! You have to be OK with people being wrong – even if it’s stuff you think is REALLY important (but not salvific). One on Christ and Him crucified and grace on the other stuff.

Fragmentation is far easier. Fragmentation allows preference without crucifixion. It allows us to find our tribe without dying to ourselves. It allows doctrinal alignment without relational endurance.

But it does not allow the world to believe because they are shocked at our love for one another.

If Jesus was serious — and He was — then the restoration of visible unity in each locality is not an optional revival accessory. It is central to His stated strategy for convincing the world that the Father sent Him. And if the City Church model is the only scriptural structure that actually guards that unity while restraining power, minimizing heresy, enforcing discipline, and preventing empires, then perhaps it is not radical innovation we need, but radical repentance and a return to what was there from the beginning.

If all of this still feels abstract, let me give you the word picture the Lord gave me, because sometimes truth lands harder when you can see it.

Imagine that in the beginning of every town, when the Gospel first arrived, the Lord Himself lit a bonfire in the center of that city. There was just one church there. Not one denomination — one Body. They were together. They were seeking Him only. The fire was refining and purifying and powerful. It pushed back darkness. It warmed the cold. It exposed what was false. It was visible from far off. When the angel of the city — the “star” of Revelation (Revelation 1:20) — blew on that fire, it blazed brighter still. The lampstand was in place. The testimony was intact.

And then, over time, little flames began to drift.

One flame decided he wanted to see what was beyond the communal bonfire. Maybe he was curious. Maybe he was offended. Maybe he was doctrinally convinced that he had discovered something purer. Maybe he got into a

quarrel with another flame and decided he didn't want to stand next to that one anymore. So he took his candle and wandered off. Perhaps he convinced a few others to go with him. Perhaps another group left because they preferred a different arrangement of logs. Perhaps another left because they did not like the tone of the preaching. Eventually, enough flames left that what had once been one localized blazing fire became scattered candles across the landscape.

Some of those candles gathered into respectable little campfires. Twenty here. A hundred there. Maybe ten thousand under a well-built shelter. And from a distance they looked impressive. But the star assigned to that city is not assigned to their private campfires. He was assigned to the bonfire the Lord originally lit. He stands over the original ash pile, waiting. And none of those scattered flames, no matter how organized, no matter how well funded, no matter how doctrinally articulate, can compare to the raw force of what existed when all the flames burned together in harmony.

It is simply easier for darkness to pick off scattered candles than a single bonfire. Which, of course, was the whole point of the siren song calling the little flames away from the place of safety.

“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body...” (Ephesians 4:3–4). Not many bodies in one town. One Body.

When the flames separate, some are extinguished alone. Some die in groups. Some turn into strange fire. Some burn fiercely for a while and then fade. But the bonfire — the one that could not be overcome — lies as a cold ash pile in the center of the city, not because God withdrew, but because we walked away.

And yet, the Lord says:

“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land...” (Ezekiel 22:30).

He is still looking for even one.

If even one flame goes back to that original ash pile, repents for the division, and sets his face like flint — “I will not move. I will not build another. I will not compete. I will not fracture the Body any further.” — then the star will blow on that flame. Help will come from places you did not expect. Resources will appear. Conviction will spread. Others will feel the pull. The lampstand can be relit.

“Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent... or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick...” (Revelation 2:5).

You do not get a fresh fire until you repent for blowing out the last one He gave you.

That is the part that is hardest to swallow. We keep asking God to send revival. We keep asking Him to light something new. But perhaps the necessary prayer is not, “Lord, send fire,” but “Lord, forgive us for scattering the fire You already sent.”

Because when the Body stands in repentance and unity and brokenness to accomplish what the Lord directs, nothing can stand against it. “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31). But when we insist on our own camps, our own brands, our own carefully curated doctrinal enclaves, we trade nuclear power for candles. We trade the one bonfire — where the pillar of fire once stood in the midst of the camp — for our own little electric lanterns with batteries that we have to recharge ourselves. We substitute what He sustained supernaturally with something we maintain mechanically. We forsook Him, the Fountain of living waters, and built for ourselves cisterns

— broken cisterns — that can hold no water.

“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” (Jeremiah 2:13)

And then we wonder why we are exhausted. We wonder why we have to constantly fundraise, constantly recruit, constantly defend our brand, constantly manufacture momentum. A bonfire does not need to be hyped. A pillar of fire does not need to be marketed. But lanterns need batteries. Cisterns need patching. Programs need maintenance. And the moment we step away from the place where He planted the fire and start maintaining our own system, the burden shifts from heaven to us.

The question is not whether there are many churches in your town. The question is whether there is one Church in your town.

Is the bonfire burning?

Or are we all carefully tending leaking cisterns and calling it revival?

And more personally — are you willing to go stand in that ash pile, repent for the fragmentation, and refuse to move, even if no one joins you at first?

Because Jesus tied the credibility of His mission to our oneness. Paul called division carnality. The lampstand can be removed. And the world is watching.

The bonfire was never the problem.

The wandering flames were.

Lord God Almighty, bring us back to the bonfire that You set. Bring us back to that place of unity where You breathed on the fire Yourself. Send help. Show us how. Help us wait there and love whoever comes – however long it takes. Please restore our lampstand. We pray all this to the Father in the mighty Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



Chapter 16 – Money



God's Economics

I want to talk a little bit about God's economics. God's economics are the only ones that matter. Who cares about man's economics? Why would we even want to talk about that?

God's way is not upside down. Ours is. He's right. We're wrong.

In man's economy everything runs on dollars. Everything is about storing up treasure here. But Jesus said plainly:

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth... But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...” (Matthew 6:19–20)

He had nowhere to lay His head (Matthew 8:20). He sent His disciples out with no gold, no silver, no extra provisions — just trust the Father (Matthew 10:9–10).

So what is treasure in Heaven? It's not currency. It's reward. Paul said he had “fought the good fight” and there was laid up for him a crown (2 Timothy 4:8). Salvation is not by works (Ephesians 2:8–9). But discipleship absolutely involves obedience. When you obey, He rewards — not always here, but certainly there.

Paul learned to be content in want and in abundance (Philippians 4:11–12). Shipwreck, hunger, persecution — it didn't change his joy because his eyes were not on the carnal system.

Now look at man's system.

It is always a pyramid.

Government. Corporations. Denominations. Armies. There are generals at the top, colonels below, captains below that, and the grunts at the bottom. Everyone wants to climb upward.

God flips it.

“Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant.” (Matthew 20:26)

In God's economy the servant is at the bottom lifting everyone else up toward Christ. If you want the highest place, you take the lowest one (Luke 14:7–11). If you honor the wealthy over the poor, James says your faith is corrupted (James 2:1–6).

If you want to sit at the right hand of God, you must be crucified. Mocked. Crowned with thorns. Take on sin you did not commit. That's how Jesus was exalted (Philippians 2:5–11).

The “you” in you wants man's economy. Recognition. Security. Influence. Satan will gladly help you pursue that system.

But the Jesus in you is wired for servant-hood. For last place. For obedience. As you are transformed by the renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2), you move out of carnality and into God's economy.

And Paul says plainly in 1 Corinthians 3 that if you are still dividing over leaders — “I am of Paul, I am of Apollos” — you are carnal (1 Corinthians 3:1–4). Milk. Not meat. Still thinking in worldly categories.

Now here's where it gets uncomfortable.

Because 1 Timothy 6 brings the hammer down.

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God

The Bottom Line

If you want to put your finger on what's wrong with the church in America today, just follow the money. Always follow the money.

God gave a businessman a successful business and much money. God gave him savvy, shrewdness, management skills. God taught him how to steward resources, assess risk, build something sustainable. God then placed him in a church where he could contribute those talents and skills.

And then... the businessman checked his brain at the door.

He handed over all his treasure to those least educated and trained in the management of money. They may have a seminary degree, but they have no experience with capital allocation, long-term sustainability, operational risk, or the dangers of unchecked expansion. So before you know it, they offer to let the businessman put his name on the new wing. They spend his money on whatever program looks exciting, whatever other pastors are doing, whatever seems to grow attendance the fastest. And if they play by the rules long enough, they get invited to go do the same thing at a church with twice as many businessmen.

Now who is God going to hold most responsible?

Yes, the pastor bears responsibility. If he misleads the sheep, if he feeds pride, if he builds empires instead of disciples, that's on him. But to some degree he is operating according to the system he was trained in.

The businessman, however, was given gifts — and he didn't use them.

He didn't ask the questions he would demand in his own business. He didn't ask about return on investment. He didn't examine efficiency. He didn't look for waste. He didn't insist on measurable fruit. Particularly if you claim to be Christ-like, shouldn't you care whether money is being spent according to Christ's model?

The largest waste of usable space in this country may be church buildings used a few hours a day, twice a week.

Businessmen didn't go to seminary, but they can read the Gospels. They can see Christ's model. They can prioritize urgent needs, solve problems, assess risk, act entrepreneurially. Instead, even as Chairmen of the Deacons or heads of Finance Committees — all worldly structures, by the way — many have simply checked their brains at the door for decades.

I suspect — consciously or subconsciously — the reason American Christians give only around two percent instead of a tithe is because they know what would happen if they gave five times as much. There would be gold-plated mega-churches on every corner. Every pastor would have a television show. There would be Jesus theme parks in every major city.

Everything except raw, effective evangelism and care for those most in need.

We have managed money horribly. Awfully. Horrifyingly badly. I am still trying to get my head around how bad it is.

It's no wonder the secular world despises us. We preach humility and build monuments. We preach sacrifice and live in excess. For what we could have been with our blessings, we have allowed millions of souls to perish unreached and countless brothers and sisters to suffer in poverty — while we installed padded pews and new carpet.

I know of one evangelical church that proclaims the imminent return of Christ and installed a chandelier that cost one million dollars. The pastor didn't pay for it out of his own pocket. Wealthy members did.

They will give an account.

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...” (2 Corinthians 5:10)

When they stand before Him as stewards of God's blessings, they may wish they could hide

underground.

I'm saying this plainly: the ones who enabled the worst damage must be crushed — not destroyed, but crushed. Broken. Humbled. Brought low under the weight of what they have financed and approved and applauded.

Because judgement begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17).

If the businessman does not repent, he will not surrender the building. He will not surrender the structure. He will not surrender the system. He will simply replace the pastor before he gives up the monument he funded. And nothing will change.

Until there is a crushing weight on the souls of those who controlled the capital, the money will never be liberated for the Kingdom. It will remain trapped in stained glass and LED screens and climate-controlled auditoriums while the unreached die and the widows starve and the orphans wait.

James does not whisper:

“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.” (James 5:1)

That is not metaphor. That is warning. Luke 12 does not end with applause for the man who built bigger barns.

“Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” (Luke 12:20)

Paul does not politely suggest:

“Command those who are rich in this present world...” (1 Timothy 6:17)

Command them. Because stewardship is not optional.

And when those who had the power to redirect billions instead chose comfort, expansion, branding, and self-protection, they participated in something far darker than bad budgeting. They reinforced a carnal pyramid under the name of Christ.

There will be accounting. There will be tears. There will be men who financed chandeliers wishing they had funded missionaries. Men who underwrote buildings wishing they had underwritten widows. Men who demanded vision statements wishing they had demanded repentance.

Crushing is mercy if it leads to repentance. Better to be crushed now than to stand uncrushed then.

Clear enough?

Lord, please help us get our eyes off of all the things of this world. Please help us consider how everything we say and do is affecting our “retirement account” in heaven. Please raise up Kingdom Brokers that can advise us and our churches and our ministries about what pleases you and what’s going to get the greatest return in treasure in heaven. Please raise up and lead us to the people that can be trusted to handle billions of dollars and invest it wisely in ways that will be directed by You and will further the Kingdom by leaps and bounds. If you put resources in our hands, we commit to do our best to redirect them into things that will further the Kingdom, not our little empires here. Please Father, please open our eyes. In the mighty Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.



Chapter 17 – Warfare



Rejoice! Or Else! No Other Way to Survive What's Coming

I forget sometimes what it was like when we had 60 mental patients in this little mental asylum and only one or two doctors. It's been pretty quiet for a while, but we had a little flare-up tonight with one of the guys who doesn't want to stop drinking, and he's about the last one left.

God's really been doing some awesome things. For those of you who are out there and maybe have been here, or have visited, or know some of the personalities involved, I'm rejoicing that Ron hasn't had anything to drink since Memorial Day. He seems to have kicked it. He is doing really well. He has money in his pocket, and he has been dead, cold sober since then. All of us really like sober Ron, and we really don't like drunk Ron.

I count it as a tremendous victory and glory to God that after three and a half years of begging and pleading and cajoling and mercy and grace—and crazy escapades that I don't know another pastor or ministry would have put up with—I'm sure that somebody out there that hears God loud enough would have maybe powered through—but it is a tremendous blessing to my soul, after everything that we have been through with Ron, to see him decide, evidently, to stop drinking.

And at that, about a few days before, I was just about out of patience. I mean, it was pretty well, "You're going to be back under a bridge..." But I don't believe that it was any coercion on my part, or even cajoling by anybody else. Something just snapped, and the Lord gave him the strength to just stop. I pray it sticks. I see a lot of beautiful heart in him that would really benefit the body of Christ if he was right and sober and done with it once and for all.

But that puts the other one, Roger, who now has no drinking buddy, under the gun and under the full force and pressure of God and country to stop drinking, and he's not doing very well. Some folks down the street called and said, "There's a guy passed out on the sidewalk, and he said to call you." Oh great.

Anyway, I uncharacteristically commanded him to go to his room like a little kid. If he's going to act like a little kid, then, "You're grounded, and don't get on Facebook and don't touch the computer, and go to your room." He hobbled down there, but he keeps coming back up and trying to argue with me. And I know the difference between the demons and him and everything else.

Anyway, the point of this video is the need to be obedient to the command to rejoice.

There are lots of verses. Go on www.BlueLetterBible.com and type in "rejoice" and see how many verses come up that look like a command to rejoice. Matthew chapter 5 is one of the easiest ones to remember and find. Jesus says, "As they did to the prophets before you, so they are going to do to you. Members of your own household are going to be your own enemy. Rejoice! Great is your reward in heaven." So they did it to Me, so they did it to the prophets before you, so they're going to do it to you. Rejoice.

In my video called "The Remnant Training Program," which I encourage everyone to go and watch—I know it's an hour and a half, but I've never heard any sermon like it anywhere. I've never found any revelation like it from any pastor, any theologian, any anybody who ever saw what I saw in the Psalms. I know the Lord revealed an ark in the Psalms, a training program, a screenplay, a whatever across 30–40 of the Psalms, describing exactly what we're going through and exactly what's coming.

When the remnant starts to encounter the real tribulation—not the refining that they've been going through, but the really big tribulation—it alternates back and forth between, "My enemies have laid a pit before me; they encircle me on every side," and "Yet I will praise You, O Lord." "They want to destroy me; they want to break all my bones," and "Yet I will praise You, O Lord." They just go back and forth between those, and that is the recipe for how to survive the Tribulation.

Nothing else is going to work.

Pouting, whining, looking for an easier way to do Christianity, trying not to offend the world, trying not to offend your neighbors, trying to make peace, trying to make friends with everybody—none of that is going to get you through tribulation. Buying lots of guns, storing up food, etc.—none of that is going to get you through tribulation.

The only way to survive what's coming—and I don't mean to keep breathing; you may well be martyred, that's part of the plan and there are all kinds of benefits to that—but the only way to survive with your soul intact, with your spirit alive and victorious, is to rejoice.

You're going to have to get real good at rejoicing in affliction.

I learned the power of that when I hit my thumb with a hammer accidentally. I found that if I focused on the pain all day and on the throbbing and whatever, then it had my full attention. If I don't allow it to have my full attention and I redirect it all toward Christ, that demon of pain—or whatever that's trying to distract me—loses all ground.

In the beginning, I was trying to be obedient to the command to rejoice, but I didn't really mean it. I'd accidentally stub my toe on the bed at night or hit my thumb with a hammer, and I'd say with gritted teeth, "Thank You, Lord, for letting me share in Your sufferings." But you know, it would stop hurting. I didn't focus on the pain. I didn't focus on my hurt finger or whatever. I focused on Christ, and what He suffered for me—not just on the Cross, but everything that goes along with what He did for us.

I rejoice that I get to get a little more scar tissue, that I get to look a little more like Him, that I get to... Thank You, Lord, thank You.

So you understand, it's one o'clock in the morning and people are still knocking on my door. And yet, I praise You, O Lord. We rejoice.

The kind of tests that I go through, the kind of trials — the Judas-best-friend-stabbing-you, family-members-turning-against-you, emotional, painful kind — I know people who, seemingly outwardly, have been through stuff: molested since they were four years old, prostitution, drugs, been with thousands of guys, hurt in ways that I can't even comprehend, and the scar tissue is just layer upon layer upon layer.

And even so, that could be used gloriously and beautifully and be a testimony to make a tremendous difference and be used to save the lost. There are some people out there with insane testimonies of what they have been through and what God delivered them from.

I don't know how I have a cause to complain. My parents were always together until I was twenty-six or something — my mom passed from cancer. I knew she was saved. I didn't cry at the funeral. I was glad she wasn't in pain. I was never molested. I've never been drunk. I never did a drug in my life. I've been in the hospital for one night because I fell out of a tree when I was six years old. I've had two stitches when I cut my thumb with a steak knife. I mean, yeah, I've had the regular amount of kids making fun of you in high school and elementary school and junk like that, but I've got no cause to complain.

I've got people here now that tried to kill themselves multiple times, that were cutters, that were anorexics, that were so demonized that there are whole blocks of years of their lives that they don't even remember. We've got kids whose mom was a crack addict who they never knew, never even knew who their dad was. People who have been addicted to all kinds of stuff.

We've got a couple here that lived under a bridge down in Kansas City for a couple of years. Now they've been clean and sober and working. Both of them have jobs. Both of them have money. Both of them got their own car and are working on getting their own apartment. And they would tell you that they would probably have frozen to death and be dead if they hadn't come here. No credit to me — it's whatever God wants.

Anyway, the point is that I don't know how I've got any right to complain about anything. Oh yeah, so I stubbed my toe. Oh yeah, I got a cold. Oh yeah, I got a sore throat. All of it is a flash in a pan. All of it is a fleeting, temporary thing.

My mom used to say, “Light and momentary afflictions.” It’s a quote from Paul when he’s in prison, and having gone through all of these terrible things that happened to him, he says that we have endured all of these light and momentary afflictions for the Lord and for the sake of His glory. He wasn’t talking about the mortgage being late or I lost my job and I don’t know what to do. His light and momentary afflictions were pretty severe — imprisonment, torture, horrible conditions, etc.

You have to be obedient to the command to rejoice. It’s not a request. It’s not a suggestion. It’s a command.

Rejoice.

It’s a command because it’s the only thing that will get you through.

And I know that it is completely counter-intuitive to lose your wife, have a kid die, have a baby stillborn, your teenage son die in a car crash. I know it’s completely counter-intuitive to rejoice. It goes against everything you’ve learned in the world, against everything that the world thinks — which is exactly the way God thinks: the opposite of the way the world thinks.

And if you believe that He has plans for you — plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope — if you believe that all things work together for good for them that love the Lord, then no matter what happens, in wealth or in want, in plenty or in hunger, day and night in the deep or in the nicest hotel, you rejoice. You rejoice. And you thank Him.

Because all things work to the good of them that love the Lord.

So if you love the Lord, whether you hit your thumb with a hammer or somebody walks up and gives you a million dollars, you rejoice. Because it’s all part of the plan. He knows what He is doing, and it’s for your good.

To not rejoice is to deny that He knows what He is doing. To deny that He knows what is best for you. To deny that He loves you and is working and weaving things together to grow you, to refine you, to scourge you sometimes, to chasten you, to make you look more like Christ.

To not rejoice is to deny that He knows what He is doing. It is to say that you know better, because if you were in charge, you wouldn’t suffer as much.

But how else are you going to look like Jesus?

I know there are times that I’ve faked it. I was trying to be obedient to the command to rejoice and believing that He would back me up on it, that He would make it stick.

When my wife took off in the middle of the night, scared for her life, determined that I was never her husband, that I wasn’t even a brother in Christ, that I was a warlock, that I was evil, whatever, and she was absolutely sure that she was in mortal danger by staying another moment — two o’clock in the morning (I didn’t know that was exactly when she left), but once I was crying and fasting and begging and pleading and asking the Lord to fix it and get the demon off and make it okay and whatever — then at two o’clock He said, “That’s it. That’s it. Stop crying. Wipe your tears. It’s going to be beautiful. I know what I’m doing. Trust Me. Rejoice.”

I found out later that that was the exact moment that they drove out of the parking lot. It’s done.

Like David — King David had a baby with Bathsheba. The baby was born sick. He cried and cried, fasted, prayed, sat in sackcloth and ashes for a week. Then the baby died. His servants were like, “Man, we don’t want to tell him. If this is what he was like when the baby was sick, what’s he going to be like when the baby dies?”

But they told him. The baby died.

David said okay. He got up, washed himself off, and put his clothes on.

His servants said, “We don’t understand.”

The king replied, “When there was a chance to change God’s mind, I fasted and prayed and begged and

cried and humbled myself. Once the decision is done, there's nothing else to be done about it. Why am I going to cry about it? He made His decision."

So when she drove off, the Lord said, "That's it. It's done. No more crying."

I wiped my tears, tried to believe for the good that He knew what He was doing, and I didn't shed another tear.

A day later, the Lord says, "You're an adulterous whore."

I said, "What did I do now?"

He replied, "I told you to stop crying."

I said, "I haven't been crying."

He said, "You're still crying on the inside."

"Okay, Lord. It's been one day. It's hard enough for me to be obedient to the command to not cry on the outside. If You want me to stop crying on the inside, then You'd better do something to me, because I can't do that."

And I put the burden on Him to change my heart, to fix something, to do something so that I could come into agreement with the instruction that He gave me.

And He did.

And it was okay.

I believed it was okay, and I stopped crying on the outside and on the inside and trusted Him.

Some people have things happen to them and they carry it into their eighties and their nineties, and they're still mad about something that happened when they were six years old — and satan wins.

If you've got some resentment, some unforgiveness — I've talked to people and they're like, "My best friend, I loved him with all my heart and I thought that someday we were going to get married, and then he died in a car wreck, and I'm just so angry about it and I know I need to forgive God, but I just can't."

I'm like, "What?! You think YOU need to forgive GOD, like He's going to say He's sorry? Like He didn't know what He was doing and He's going to go, 'Oops! Sorry, that was an accident. I didn't mean for that to happen. I don't know what I was thinking...?'"

No. No.

YOU don't get to forgive God for anything. HE doesn't apologize to YOU. You come into agreement with His will and say, "Thank You, Lord. Yes sir, may I have another."

You don't forgive Him for stuff.

What kind of prideful, arrogant, anti-Christ, over-the-top attitude is that?

I usually say it more gently than that, but that's the essence of it. Are you kidding me? You're mad at God because of the family you grew up in? "How come I wasn't born whiter, or taller, or thinner, or with brown eyes, or with blue eyes? How come God didn't make me whatever?"

You don't get to question the Potter.

He's not waiting for you to forgive Him for anything.

Wow.

That's a lie from the pit. That's a lie from the Garden of Eden. "He didn't really mean that. He shouldn't have done that. He made a mistake putting that tree there..."

The right answer is to humble yourself.

You say, "Lord, I could not have stubbed my toe on that bed unless You allowed it. And You must have

allowed it, so it must be for my good. And I don't understand, because my nail is turning purple and I'm bleeding on the floor, but thank You."

And mean it.

Then the demons run and you have victory. They have no grip on you. There's nothing they can throw at you that you won't thank the Lord for, give Him the credit, give Him the glory, and understand that He's sovereign. There's nothing they can do to get your eyes off of Him — and you win.

Sounds easy, huh?

Yeah.

Because God's going to test the limits of that. He's going to allow the enemy to test the limits of that. I'm not sure what the difference between those two is. I just know that He's behind it all. There isn't anything that happens that doesn't cross His desk.

I can't tell you how many times I've stood up and a cabinet door barely touched my hair when it could've just beamed me. Or the refrigerator door is open and also the freezer door, and I stand up and just barely miss it. How many times I should have gotten a concussion. How many times something should have landed on my head and just missed. How many times I should have been dead in a car wreck and it just barely missed.

So many times when something happens and I'm like, "Lord, You totally shielded me from that," or maybe just moved my head out of the way just a little so I didn't catch that.

So many times.

And then the one time that I do stub my toe, I'm going to be mad at God that it happened?

Instead of acknowledging what the Bible says — that it's part of the plan? That it's for my good? That I may not understand how stubbing my toe and bleeding on the floor works for my good — but He says it is.

So I can either come into agreement with Him and submit, or I can be a rebellious adulterous whore. Those are the choices.

He says rejoice. You want to whine? You want to be bitter and angry and frustrated and feel like you should forgive Him?

And satan's got you.

The Lord will have you intercede. He'll have you cry out and be dissatisfied with the state of the world, the state of the church, the state of the city, the state of your own soul, and beg for Him to change you and do something different and be impatient until He acts. That's all good.

But to be angry at God because He didn't do things the way you thought He should have — that's just antichrist.

Maybe you could practice in the next couple, three or four days thanking Him for something that otherwise you would never thank Him for and would never think was a good thing to thank Him for. Just sort of practice.

Maybe if you hit your thumb or bang your toe — I'm not speaking that on you, I'm not wishing bad things would happen to you — but when you're standing in line at Walmart at the checkout and it's taking longer and longer and longer, try saying, "Lord, thank You for teaching me patience. Thank You for standing here with me so that I'm not alone. Thank You that we have time to talk. Thank You that I have the opportunity to witness to this lady in line. Thank You that had You not slowed me down a few minutes, I would have been in that car wreck that I saw happen out front."

Whatever.

Ask Him to show you why you had to stub your toe. What was the point of this?

A lot of times He will tell you.

Okay, I don't get answers on all that stuff. Some of it is real deep. Some of it is really out there. Four weeks from now, because my toe is purple, it gets somebody's attention and we get to talk about God because I'm wearing flip-flops and they're like, "Wow! What did you do to your toe?" And we talk.

I don't know. Sometimes I can't connect the dots to where it makes sense to me.

I just know that I have to be obedient to the command to rejoice, and I have to believe that all things work to the good of them who love the Lord. In which case, I should thank Him for everything.

And probably the most traumatic stuff that involves the most scar tissue is the biggest blessing, because it's going to make me look more like Jesus than anything else.

I know people with lots of external scar tissue from what they've been through — tattoos, surgeries, shotgun blasts, even one guy with a hole in his neck from a bullet. I don't have a lot of external scar tissue. I've got a lot of gray hair. I guess that's a sign of what I've been through.

But most of my scar tissue now is from betrayal and other stuff.

But praise God, I'm looking more like Jesus all the time.

So bring it.

Bring out your knives. Stab me as hard as you can. My Dad's got my back.

And I'm going to rejoice, knowing that all things work to the good to them that love the Lord.

And there are times that I forget. There are times that I get frustrated. But He's faithful, as quickly as possible, to bring me back around to having the right outlook about it.

You know what? Bring it. Say whatever. Put up videos. Give it your best shot. All that happens is that more money comes, more people come, more attention comes, God blesses me more, I learn more about patience and long-suffering and brotherly kindness — so bring it.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, who endured far more than anyone can think or imagine, give you His strength to persevere through whatever it is that you're going through right now, and whatever is coming for you, that when you've done all that you can, just stand in His strength and know that the victory belongs to the Lord.

In the name of Jesus, amen.

Lord God Almighty, help me to see the good in every circumstance. Help me to know that I know that You're on the Throne and that somehow You're going to make it beautiful. Show me my worst fear, the most terrifying thing that I can imagine – and give me the strength to endure that with grace and peace and love. I pray against any voice that would make excuses about why it's OK to be depressed, resentful, morose, unforgiving, or worried. I reject all of that. I want to have the mind of Christ about this world, even if it hurts and makes me cry. Please, Lord, help me to stop conforming to the pattern of this world so that I can be transformed by the renewing of my mind so that I can know what is Your perfect will. And then give me the strength to do it. I pray all this to the Big Throne, straight to the Father, in the mighty Name of Jesus Christ, my Advocate, Lord and Master. Amen.



Chapter 18 – Curses



Generational and Other Curses

(excerpted from “Demons?! You're kidding, right?”)

We'll start with the easy ones, OK? Probably not going to get any argument from you on these. Let's not argue right now about whether these will pass down spiritually to your children someday; let's just agree that if you DO this stuff and you have children, it will affect them negatively right now – including their relationship with God.

Unforgiveness

Verse Reference: Matthew 18:35 – “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.” Mark 11:26 - “ But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

Way to Get Under Curse: By not forgiving someone for something – worst of all by being angry at God and not forgiving HIM for something!! Like taking your Dad away when you were two or raising you in a rotten family or not rescuing you from that guy that raped you. VERY bad to have unforgiveness. Worst of all to have it toward God.

Effect of Curse: God will not forgive you for anything during the time you're not forgiving others. You may or may not be His anymore. He may not come and rescue you from demons that are oppressing you. This is a BIG wall standing between you and will likely clog up your ability to hear from God – a LOT.

Way to Get Curse Off: Forgive them all the way and mean it. Ask God to help scrub it out. Say you're sorry for disobeying Him and not acting like Jesus – especially if you told people you were a Christian. Ask Him to forgive you. Look around your environment to see if you've opened the door to this and taught it to your children – that would make it a generational curse.

Length of Curse: Indeterminate – it's up to you.

Does it Affect Christians: You betcha. No exceptions. It doesn't look like there is any Biblical exemption that says that if you are “saved” and then later start holding an unforgiveness it's OK. By all indications, during the time that you are holding on to unforgiveness, you will not be forgiven by God. If you die with unforgiveness in your heart, you can't Biblically be sure you're going to heaven. I don't see any other way to read that.

(This might help you see the danger here – https://www.davidservant.com/articles/daniel_main/resurrection-from-the-dead-pastor-daniel-ekchukwu/)

Illegal Soul Ties

Verse Reference: 1 Corinthians 6:15-17 - “15 Don't you realize that your bodies are parts of Christ's body? Should I take the parts of Christ's body and make them parts of a prostitute's body? That's unthinkable! 16 Don't you realize that the person who unites himself with a prostitute becomes one body with her? God says, “The two will be one.” 17 However, the person who unites himself with the Lord becomes one spirit with him.” (God's Word) Genesis 2:23-24 - “24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” Exodus 20:14-17 - “14 **Thou shalt not commit adultery.** 15 Thou shalt not steal. 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, **thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.**” (KJV)

Way to Get Under Curse: Sex before marriage – or during marriage with someone other than your spouse. Because Jesus says that if you even THINK about having sex with a woman, you're guilty of adultery, it's possible to have soul ties with people you only fantasized about. What happens in your mind is very powerful. God holds you responsible. Spiritually, you became one flesh with that girl in the centerfold when you had sex with her – you created a soul tie and God will hold you responsible for fornication (or adultery).

Effect of Curse: Going to taint future relationships. Maintains a connection to a past love that can reestablish – in person or in the spiritual (thought life). If it happens after a time that a person has become “saved” there is no indication that its consequences are invalidated. You became one with some flesh other than the one you were supposed to. That spot is taken and the right person can't fully fill that spot. And God is mad at you because you're unrepentant. Because of the effect it may have on marriage relationship, may also have substantial negative

impact on children. If they grow up seeing illegal soul ties and lust and unrepentant hearts, they will likely respond to God likewise. (I see black umbilical cords coming from a person's back or neck.)

Length of Curse: Indeterminate – it's up to you.

Way to Get Curse Off: Repent to God and to others as needed, break the ties completely in the natural and in the spirit, make life changes as needed, cover in the Blood.

Does it Affect Christians: Surely. Yes, they are a new creation in Christ and these are broken and washed clean if they repented - but if the ties are new, then they're still active. It's a multiple violation of the Big Ten. If a kid grows up in a lust-filled home, it's likely that they'll relate to God like this and be adulterous and disobedient.

Sin

Verse Reference: John 8:34-35, 44-47 - *"34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. 35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever." "44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. 46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."*

Way to Get Under Curse: By sinning – in any of its flavors or frequencies.

Length of Curse: Indeterminate – it's up to you.

Effect of Curse: Will make you the son of satan and you will do the lusts of your father the devil. Because you're no longer of God, you can't really hear His voice and understand Him anymore. It may not be coincidence that the denominations that say you can't stop sinning also say God doesn't speak to us anymore.

Way to Get Curse Off: Repent, if you can, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you stop sinning once and for all. Believe that it's possible and stop cutting and pasting parts like this out of the Bible. If you are doing this in your house and your children are watching, you're probably going to pass it down to them and it will affect their relationship with God and thus become a generational curse.

Does it Affect Christians: Not if you stop sinning. You're exempt and you will abide in the house forever if you are a servant and stop sinning. If you're a son of the devil, then you're in outer darkness. Unlikely you'll have peace and joy and victory and walk in the fullness of all God has for you – you can't drink from the cup of demons and from the cup of the Lord. Pick a team and stick to it.

Hate

Verse Reference: 1 John 4:20 – "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

Way to Get Under Curse: By hating your brother – any brother.

Length of Curse: Indeterminate – it's up to you.

Effect of Curse: God hates liars. And you're a liar if you say you love God and yet you hate your brother – PLUS you're hating your brother! This will REALLY clog up your pipeline to God. It's unlikely you'll hear His voice at all. Then you'll just have to lean on your own understanding and direct your own paths. You'll probably end up surrounding yourself with other men that will tell you what to do, who are also full of hate. If you raise your kids up around this, it will probably affect their relationship with God, fill them with hate and become a generational curse as they grow up being like you.

Way to Get Curse Off: Repent to God and to the people involved. Make changes in keeping with repentance.

Does it Affect Christians: Not unless you're hating somebody that you're supposed to be loving. You are acting like One Body with all the other Christians in your city, aren't you? How can denominationalism not be some form or another of hate?

Fornicators, Idolaters, Adulterers, Homosexuals, Thieves, Greedy, Drunks, Haters, Slanderers, Extortioners

Verse Reference: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 - *"9 Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall **not** inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."*

Way to Get Under Curse: Doing any of those things.

Length of Curse: Indeterminate – it's up to you.

Effect of Curse: You will NOT inherit the kingdom of God. That means you can't walk in the fullness of what He has for you right now and you won't go to heaven. Is there another way to read that?

Way to Get Curse Off: Repent to God and those harmed. Make fruit in keeping with repentance.

Does it Affect Christians: Not unless they do any of those things. And if they do, they stop being washed, sanctified and justified and they get dirty again. They will get separated from God by their sin and it will clog up their hearing really good. If they have kids that watch them and grow up around this as they get more and more depraved, but think they're fine because they go to "church" - the kids will surely grow up with a whacked relationship with God and will probably do many of these things themselves. Then it becomes a generational curse. Know any greedy Christians? Seen any on TV? Any drunkards? Doesn't have to be alcohol. You can get drunk on donuts or fried chicken or chocolate.

Are you getting this yet? You'll find lots of websites and authors and pastors that say that talk of Generational Curses is a heresy because once we're washed with the Blood of Jesus none of that stuff can stick to us. I hope I just showed you that it can clearly still affect Christians. If you raise your child in a home full of rebellion, you can expect a rebellious child. My point is that people may want to dismiss Old Testament curses, but they don't get the very practical, real world FACT that family systems cycle and repeat. There HAS to be something in play here. Never mind your theology and your interpretation and your desire to diminish and dismiss the Old Testament – what's happening in the REAL WORLD?

In a previous career I was Director of Residence Life and Student Life at a small private college. We had a freshman girl who was having a horrible time. She had attempted suicide twice (mostly to get attention), she was cutting herself, she started a fire in the student union. She had decided she was gay, but that was only because the idea of being with a man disgusted her so much. The lesbian students didn't want to have anything to do with her because she was so mangled up. She had been raped by her older brother from when she was five to about fifteen (as I recall). Nobody in the family had ever done anything about it. Mom was oblivious. Now, finally, just before she went to college, it all came out and the family was torn into pieces. The father was defending the brother, it was going to court, the brother was in jail, she was going to have to testify against him, and she was a wreck. I told the father that we couldn't have her on campus anymore because she was just too big a mess and we weren't equipped for that. She was consuming six or eight hours a day of staff time by herself without any progress! He looked me in the eye and said, "We sent her to college here, now she's your problem!" Then stomped out to smoke a cigarette when I wouldn't budge. Then the mother, still sitting in my office crying, between tissues, looked at me and said something I'll never forget. She said, "I just don't understand how this could have been happening all these years right under our noses. I should have seen it! The same thing happened to me!" And they were ALL church members.

OK, so what is that?! Is that a bunch of demons in a family tree or what?! Is that a house full of lust and adultery and rebellion or what? If there is such a thing as a generational curse, they've sure got a big one! Way back then, I had no idea how to handle anything spiritually, so I recommended they put her into residential treatment and medicate her. That's probably what they did, because I never saw her again. I pray to God that she's still alive and there's a way for her to find peace and joy and victory in Jesus. And I'm sorry for not being better prepared to handle that as Jesus would have and really free her – instead of turning her over to Man's medicine.

Those same people that say Generational Curses aren't real, also probably don't believe in witches or cursed objects or that satan has ANY effect on us anymore. They probably think the war is over and done with and there's nobody left to fight. Or you can just quote the Bible to anything that comes for you and they'll run away. I got news for you, they'll quote the Bible right back to you! If you're not walking clean before the Lord, you don't have any authority to be throwing around the name of Jesus any more than the Sons of Sceva did. (Acts 19)

Here's another shocker for all those folks that don't believe Generational Curses are real.

The word "heresy" means "a difference in doctrine" or a "faction" and those who participate with them will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. For example here -

Galatians 5:19-21 (KJV) - *19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have*

also told you in time past, that they which do such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Galatians 5:19-21 (Amplified) - 19 Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency, 20 Idolatry, sorcery, **enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies), 21 Envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

Galatians 5:19-21 (Darby) – 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness, 20 **idolatry, sorcery, hatred, strifes, jealousies, angers, contentions, disputes, schools of opinion, 21 envyings, murders, drunkennesses, revels, and things like these; as to which I tell you beforehand, even as I also have said before, that they who do such things shall not inherit God's kingdom.**

So try this Generational Curse on for size:

Denominationalism (Factions, party spirit, heresies, disputes, strifes, envyings, idolatry, hatred)

Verse Reference: See Galatians 5:19-21. 1 Corinthians 1:12-13, 1 Corinthians 3:1-4

Way to Get Under Curse: By being a part of, supporting, encouraging, agreeing with, or otherwise fomenting a division/sect/denomination within the Body of Christ.

Length of Curse: Indeterminate – it's up to you.

Effect of Curse: You WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. How much more clear does a verse have to be? And that's the New Testament by the way. You are carnal and you are worldly and you will not inherit the Kingdom of God. If you have made up your own doctrine and dogma that explains away this CLEAR, UNAVOIDABLE instruction in the Bible then you have cut and pasted the Bible and you're also subject to the curse in Revelation 22:19 that says you will be erased out of the Book of Life. You have created your own mystery religion, set up your own idols, followed men instead of God and you're off the reservation. You will not inherit the fullness of what He has for you right now and Biblically it seems clear that you're not going to go to heaven. Since it's likely that you will take your children into that same cult you joined and indoctrinate them into your mystery religion, it's likely that this generational disobedience and rebellion will continue and become a curse upon you and all your children. You are also under a Red Dragon curse from God (See Appendix B of the "DEMONS!?" book).

Way to Get Curse Off: If you can and your eyes aren't still blinded, repent to God for not obeying Him and His word, repent to all the people that are also trapped because of you, put all sects behind you and produce fruit in keeping with repentance. Listen to Him really good and do whatever He tells you.

Does it Affect Christians: ABSOLUTELY NOT. Biblically speaking as soon as you joined a "Faction" you went your own way and stopped inheriting the Kingdom anyway. So you're not really a Christian anymore and you're not in the Book of Life. Is there any other way to read this? If I were you, I'd be VERY afraid, just in case.

1 Corinthians 3:1-4 (KJV) - "1 And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: nay, not even now are ye able; 3 for **ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men? 4 For when one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not men?"**

Revelation 22:19 (KJV) - "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Did that get your attention? You don't think there are Generational Curses? Go look at what people that said they were Christians have done to oppress and dumb down and make sure whole family trees were on the Broad Path to Hell while they were all being told they could be absolutely sure they were "saved" and safe.

Now, if you don't mind, I'm just going to proceed with my discussion of Generational Curses from the Old Testament. Just in case they might also be affecting people spiritually.

Witchcraft

Verse Reference: Exodus 20:5 (KJV) - *"5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;"*

Way to Get Under Curse: The best way to show that you hate God is by worshiping false gods and messing with witchcraft. I'm not going to quote all the witchcraft verses here because they're in Appendix F. But ANY dabbling with stuff from foreign gods (which doesn't mean un-American, by the way, it means ANY God that ain't Jehovah!) will invoke this curse upon you.

Length of Curse: Three or four generations. About 100 to 150 years.

Effect of Curse: Increasing rebellion and distance from God. Increasingly difficult to turn back.

Way to Get Curse Off: Repent to God substantially and thoroughly. Wash it all in the Blood. Break any ties to familiars. Get anything out of your house that is related. May require lifestyle or location changes. Repent to all the people you took down a path to hell.

Does it Affect Christians: If they mess with witchcraft, it sure does. Even if they were washed clean before, if they pick it up again, it can still affect them. If a child was dedicated to satan, that child is tagged. The Blood of Jesus can wash it off, but not unless you ask Him to. If you don't have, it's because you don't ask.

Bastard Curse

Verse Reference: Deuteronomy 23:2 (KJV) - *"A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD. 3 An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever: 4 Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.*

Way to Get Under Curse: Sexual illegitimacy either by babies born before marriage or babies born by people you're not married to or babies born by incest. The Ammonites and the Moabites were the descendants of Ben-ammi and Moab the sons of Lot's daughters and who were conceived by incest. Later on, God curses them, not just because they are rebellious and fail to come to the aid of family, but also because they are illegitimate, bastard sons to the 10th generation. King David brought this curse on his family line by his relationship with Bathsheba – complicated by his murder of her husband – the result was increasing rebellion and perversion in his house for generations. (Even though he repented for the act, and that particular child died, it remains an active curse on the family tree. Probably because he kept the poor man's lamb – the prize of his sin.)

Length of Curse: Ten generations – minimum 400 years.

Effect of Curse: Rebellion, inability to get along in fellowship with others, inability to develop intimacy with the Lord, increasing sexual perversion, increasing problems in each subsequent generation. (I see this as a big fat black umbilical cord coming from a person's back.)

Way to Get Curse Off: Repent to God and confess your sins and the sins of your forefathers. Ask the Lord to break it and sever it on you and all of your descendants to the tenth generation. Cover it in the Blood of Jesus. It's important that you have legal ground for this. That means that you need to be the head, or the spiritual leader of the family. If the husband doesn't know Jesus, the wife can do it. It should be the first born or the eldest living male, if possible to scrub it out across all cousins and nephews and all.

Does is Affect Christians: I have definitely seen it affect Christians and make a huge difference in their walk with God when it's broken. The Blood of Jesus is sufficient, but if we're taught to disregard parts of the Bible and that they're not even real, then we don't ask the Lord to apply the Blood to those things and they remain "live". If this is in play, it will really clog up communication with the Throne. It's like a glass ceiling, where people are trying to grow in Christ and have intimacy, but just seem to keep bouncing off of this ceiling and can't get any farther. MANY lives have been changed by breaking this one.

This particular curse is REALLY nasty and satan wants to get it instituted across all the world. The African-American community in America has been decimated by it. This trend of young, single girls having babies is creating massive spiritual problems and will keep many from the Kingdom if we don't start breaking this off of people. This curse can last 400 years!! We're talking about someone in your family tree that was a Christian but misbehaved even many generations ago. This curse isn't on the "world" for doing what the "world" does. This is a curse on the children of God for not obeying His laws about sexual behavior. People that say curses are real, but not on Christians need to explain why God keeps cursing His own children over and over in the Bible – but He won't do it to us? (Read Deut. 28!). He loves us more than He loved the children of Israel? We are the grafted in vine, but THEY are the natural vine! Why should we think we're going to get any more grace than they did?

If He was willing to whack them, He's willing to whack us just as hard. Those curses on natural Israel had natural consequences with spiritual after effects – the women actually did end up eating their babies in the book of Lamentations, just like Deuteronomy 28 said would happen. On spiritual Israel, those curses have spiritual consequences with natural after effects. We're still turning our children over to foreign nations, but we call them MTV and Wicca and Islam and Humanism and Evolution. They may not go in chains marching across the desert, but they're just as much in chains.

The best resource that I have found on this is from my friend, Paul Norcross. <http://www.kingdomfaith.org>

And you can order his book about the Bastard Curse here - <https://kingdomfaithministries.org/viewproduct/25>

Imagine that Israel was enslaved in Egypt and we're down to the last plague. Pharaoh has named it – death of the first born. God has told Moses to tell everyone to put the blood of a lamb over the doorposts of the house so that the death angel will pass over. (Exodus 12) Now imagine that some of the Israelites were really good friends with their neighbor Egyptians and didn't want to see their kids die. So they told the Egyptian families to do the same – put blood on the doorposts. Would it work for them too? Surely it would. They were being obedient to the command. There was no other clause about nationality or color or political allegiance. Just to do as instructed. If the entire nation had done it, maybe nobody would have died.

But what if some of the Israelites had said – as the Pharisees did to Jesus – “We are sons of Abraham. We are already free. God would not kill us! We don't need this blood on our doorposts.” What would happen? That's right. They would surely die. Did they not have a lamb? Yeah, they probably did have one. Was the blood of that lamb going to work to drive off the death angel? Yeah, it would have worked.

But they didn't APPROPRIATE that blood! It was effective, it was fully powered with enough to break every curse – but they had to take the step of APPLYING it as directed, and they refused. There are churches today that talk about generational curses, apply the Blood of Jesus to it – and you're done! But then there are those that deny a Christian can even have a curse because the Jesus died to become a curse and His blood is sufficient to break every curse. So they never APPLY the blood the the problem!

Is it true the He took our curses? Yes! Is it true that His Blood is effective? Yes! But who would create a theology that Christians can't even be affected by curses (or demons) so that it would never even OCCUR to us to get a brush and paint it over the doorposts of our heart?! Sounds like exactly the kind of thing that the snake would want us to believe. Oh, He's powerful – so there's nothing for you to do. Oh, He's busy running the universe – so don't bother Him. He's too big and busy to talk to you. To save time and energy, He wrote it all done one time, that's all you need. Oh, and He already decided who is going to be saved and who won't – and He only died for the elect ones – and you couldn't switch from one to the other anyway, so do whatever you want. Oh! And there's no reason to send missionaries to tell people about Jesus because they are going to irresistibly, irrevocably be saved or they're screwed from the foundation of the world anyway. Doesn't matter what we say or teach or pray. Yep. Sure sounds like the snake.

Don't get freaked out about generational curses, just put a stop to it, don't repeat it and break it all off with the Blood of Jesus. Then stand.

Chapter 19 – Persecution



Over the years I've read a lot of books by or about the persecuted church. Some really formative ones were "Tortured For Christ" by Richard Wurmbrand of Voice of the Martyrs. Another was "The Heavenly Man" by Yun and Hattaway about the underground church in China. Corrie Ten Boom has a lot to say about enduring persecution and suffering as well.

But, in the end, when I'm getting hunted or tortured or whatever is coming for me, I don't think that it will be those things most responsible for informing my responses to it all. It will be a word from the Lord to a sister that was here many years ago.

She had a dream. In this dream she saw two little kids, a boy and a girl, maybe ten to twelve years old. They were dressed in bright summer clothes, the girl in a yellow sundress. They were singing and dancing through the streets, the little girl twirling just to see her dress spin up. They were in a city that looked like it has been bombed or burnt up. People were there, sitting on stoops, and they were dirty and bloody and hungry and haggard. There was no food to be had, crime was high, people were desperate. It was apocalyptic.

And yet, these two little kids came dancing and singing down the street, oblivious to all the devastation. While everyone else was in dirty, torn, gray clothing, these two were spotless and bright. Immediately a lot of the people hated them and wanted them to shut up. Nobody could figure out how it was even possible that someone could be clean, look well-fed – and be happy. Some people tried to stop them and hurt them, but if you looked in their eyes, there were like 1,000 years old and people backed off immediately. The kids never stopped singing and smiling, never scowled, never threatened, never got bothered at all.

And there were some people that were intrigued. Some that wanted to know where they came from. Some that didn't understand, but desperately wanted some of whatever those two kids had. As they danced through the town like the Pied Piper, people started to get up and follow them. Some tried to sing the song, or dance along – not quite sure why. And they circled through town and then led their procession out of the city, down the long dusty road, and then off down a secret trail into the woods that eventually opened up into a beautiful, fertile green valley where there were cabins and gardens and people working together. There was community and safety and enough for everyone.

Only the two little kids knew that pathway into the secret valley. They would leave their group there and go back up the trail to the city and dance their way through again and again, leading more and more people to safety.

She told us this dream but didn't have an interpretation for it. We prayed about it and the Lord revealed to us that this was a picture of the Bride and the Man Child during Tribulation, that even while the world was falling down around them, they would be rejoicing through it all. That they would look so unlike the world and the misery and suffering and despondency of the world – that there would be people that just HAD to know what was different and want whatever they had.

There are repeated commands in the Old Testament and the New Testament to rejoice in ALL things. And again I say, rejoice. It is the answer to the times. As men are going mad for the things they see, as two thirds of the world is dying around them, as a loaf of bread costs a day's wages and people are killing each other – we are supposed to be above it all. We are the ones that see the ending – and that Jesus wins and we rule with Him. We are the ones that were supposed to teach the world about community and love and sharing with each as they have a need.

I have made no apology about my intention to raise up a people that are so radically in love with Jesus, so FULL of the Holy Spirit that as they are in line for the guillotine, the guy pulling the handle, their executioner, will look them in the eye, be broken, leave his station – and get in line behind them. I want to be the kind of person that, without a word, will convict people of their sin and turn them to God. And I don't want to be alone.

Do you want to be one of those? People that will praise God as your wife and children are killed in front of you? People that will witness to the guys torturing you? People that will pray as our Master did, "Forgive them, they don't know what they're doing"?

Richard Wurmbrand said of his time in a Communist prison, "I liked talking about Jesus and the guards liked beating me for talking about Jesus – so we were all happy." The Fellowship of the Martyrs is what the Church is supposed to be – the Koinonia ton Martus – the comradeship of those who are already dying daily, dying to self, and wouldn't change their testimony no matter what. If someone puts a gun to my head and demands I deny Christ, they don't understand that I hate this place and want to go home. That I'm indestructible until God is ready to take me – so they better pray hard about pulling that trigger in case it backfires or an angel cuts them in half or something.

If the government is hunting Christians and I get caught and they are torturing me to find out where everybody else is hiding, how does that work with people that want to go home? The whole point of waterboarding someone is to simulate drowning because their instinct is to cough it up and try to get a breath in their lungs. How do you water board someone that sucks it in and doesn't want to spit it out?

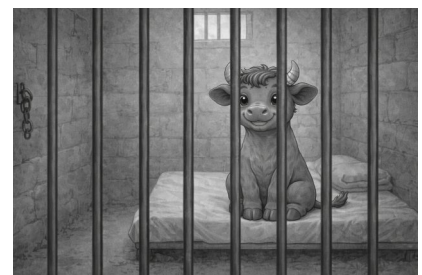
Do you have any idea how frustrating it is for demons to throw everything at us and we just keep pointing it back to Jesus? I've learned that if I hit my thumb with a hammer and instantly thank the Lord for the opportunity to suffer just a little, to be reminded of what He did for me, to have one more scar so I look more like Him – it stops hurting. I get a call, "Uh, Doug, I'm really sorry, but the ministry box truck is on the side of the road on fire." (True story.) My immediate response now is, "That's terrific!! God is good! We're getting a new box truck!" I've got LOTS of stories of suffering turned to victory – of God replacing whatever is stolen or I laid down for the Gospel. NOBODY, but NOBODY, can talk me out of it or change my mind.

They say half of Christianity is on antidepressants and/or anti-anxiety medication. How can that be? We're supposed to think on good things. (Philippians 4:8) We're supposed to take every thought captive and bring it into obedience with Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:5) We're supposed to believe that ALL THINGS work together for good for those that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28) We're supposed to believe that He has good plans for us to give us a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11) We're not supposed to have a spirit of fear. (2 Timothy 1:7) Who is teaching these Christians to worry and fear and stress?!

Rejoicing crushes PTSD. Rejoicing prevents resentment and victimization and survivor guilt. It's no accident that He repeatedly commands us to rejoice. The accuser can't deal with it. When everything that happens to you is turned into worship and praise, then the enemy can't get to you.

Rejoice or else. It's the only thing that's going to get us through what's coming.

Lord God Almighty, I'm so sorry for all the times that I've forgotten how good and faithful You are. I'm sorry for the times I let the enemy convince me that disaster was coming and You couldn't make it beautiful. Please give me the strength to know that I know that whatever happens to me is not bigger than Your grace for me. Please fix me so that I can sing Your praise on the way to be eaten by lions (or whatever). May my faith and joy be seen by the world that they would marvel and see You. Amen.



Chapter 20 – Cups

Back in 2004 when I got the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and was praying desperately to see through the eyes of Jesus, He showed me a vision of how mad He is at “churchianity” and how much He loves His kids all over the world – that we’re killing. It wrecked my life forever.

Soon after I started seeing something in the spirit. It was like a science beaker with yellow at the bottom, blue in the middle and red at the top. I asked the Lord what that was and He said, “That’s your cup.” Huh. So I asked Him what were the different colors. He said, “The yellow stuff is you. The blue stuff is Me. The red stuff is willful sin, demons, false paradigms, bad doctrines, generational curses, whatever is of the enemy and doesn’t belong.” OK, well, I kind of noticed that my cup was about 20% yellow and 20% red. It seems that the red stuff is roughly proportional to the yellow stuff – YOU are the one constantly inviting it in.



In the beginning it’s just yellow. A little baby screams because he’s hungry. He’s a little selfishness machine, but it’s not sin because he isn’t disobeying, he’s just self-focused. But at some point, Mom says, “Did you eat that cookie after I told you not to?” And the kid LIES – and red stuff gets in. And it will grow and grow the more we empower it and have no stops to resist it.

At some point you hear about Jesus and have a chance to invite Him to come in. Then He stands in the gap between you (yellow) and sin (red) and points to it and asks you to get it out. If you obey, there is less and less red stuff and more of Him.

{Now here is where Once Saved Always Saved/Calvinism/Reform is a problem because they tell you that if you have even the SMALLEST DROP of blue stuff then there can never be red stuff in your cup EVER, no matter what you do. But the end result is that a theology like that just looses the yellow stuff to do whatever it wants – which means throwing the doors wide open to the red stuff! They may also tell you that whoever is supposed to have blue stuff will have it no matter what, so there’s no reason for us to go tell them about Jesus or encourage them to try harder to obey. That would be “works.” In fact, that doctrine is straight up ugly red stuff.}

Now, the world likes to shake you up like vinaigrette. You’re so busy with getting the kids to soccer practice and the PTA meeting and problems at work and the dog is sick – that you don’t have time to pray. Surveys say 50% of pastors in America say they are so busy with committee meetings and boards and administrative things that they don’t have time to pray. Surveys also say 50% of pastors are addicted to porn, too. (Might be the same 50%.) America is the CAPITAL of shook up like vinaigrette! Microwave, drive-thru, rush-rush-rush. You HAVE to take time to sit still and let the layers sort out so you can see what’s in there that shouldn’t be – and get it out!

Sometimes you might need help getting all the red stuff out. Sometimes it’s really entrenched unforgiveness or generational curses or stuff that might require some deliverance from doors you opened. But you really CAN get all the red stuff out. That’s the easy part. Though your sins are as scarlet, He can wash them white as snow. You can be a new creation from one minute to the next!

But then He's going to look at the YOU in your cup and show you pieces of you that need to die. And that's the hard part. For sin we just confess and turn. The yellow stuff has to be crucified daily. For that we have to carry our Cross, buffet the flesh, resist evil, take captive every thought, put on our full armor, humble ourselves and pray, and have patient endurance. Getting yellow stuff out means offering our bodies as living sacrifices holy, pleasing and acceptable. (Romans 12:1-2) We have to trust HIM all the way, don't EVER listen to our yellow stuff and let Him direct ALL of our paths. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

The red stuff is like a cork, but if you can get that out, the your cup can overflow (press down, shaken and overflowing). As more and more of you is crucified, then He can increase as you decrease. If you can keep your cup in honor, then you can get a bigger



and bigger cup. (2 Timothy 2:20-22, Romans 9:21) Not once or twice, but more then you can think or imagine! Until you're like a shrimp at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. In order to still give us free will, but have His way with us, we have to surrender to Him, have Him increase until it's like a giant elephant sitting on a flea. Then you just CAN'T get in His way anymore. He starts talking out of you, loving through you, doing supernatural stuff – and you just want to obey. At a certain point, when your cup is big enough and the walls thick enough and you're out of the way enough, you hit “the second blessing” that the old Pentecostal Holiness people talked about. Or “Entire Sanctification” that John Wesley talked about. It's not sinless perfection that can never be undone, but it's a place where God moves in and out of you pretty seamlessly and sin is under your feet.

So I learned how to get my cup full. Then I learned how to help other people get their own cups full. Often the Lord would let me see what was in their cup that didn't belong or if their cup was leaking. I learned that the church hyperfocuses on the Gift of Tongues as “evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.” But the reality is that we should be imparting ALL the stuff. Paul even says to seek the greater gifts, especially prophecy. (1 Corinthians 14:1) He wants us to be a complete package. (Romans 1:11) One of my favorite verses, 1 Peter 4:10 says that we should be good dispensers one INTO another of the various gifts of the Spirit.

As I was traveling around visiting different congregations, at some point I would hear the pastor speak in tongues (usually without any interpretation) and I would comment, “Lord, I've never heard that one. That's You, right.” “Oh, yeah, that's me.” I would ask if I could have it and He would say to go down front when they offer prayer. So I would go and ask the pastor to pray for me to get the gift of tongues. They NEVER asked if I already had it, they just laid hands on me and I sucked it out of their cup. (After putting ALL my armor on and being sure that I was ONLY there for Jesus!) I collected different tongues like baseball cards because nobody told me not to! Then I met someone with interpretation, someone that could see demons all the time, someone with a gift of administration, etc. ALL the stuff is available if God will let you have it.

At some point in 2006 the Lord told me to stop praying for Him to pour His Spirit out on all flesh. There are giant stadiums full of people gathering to pray for the Latter Rain and the Early Rain. He said it was a giant waste of time, that He put endless springs of water inside of each of us and as soon as we stopped being lukewarm and stagnant and started sharing with each as they had a need, we'd get this show on the road! That He is waiting for US to pour His Spirit out on all flesh! It really does work like that. See Isaiah 58. Restoration comes when WE “extend our soul out to the thirsty soul” then WE will be well-watered gardens with springs that never fail – so we can keep doing it more and more. THEN foundations and streets and cities are restored. (Lots more in our book “Rain Right NOW, Lord!”)

What we've learned is that cities and countries also have a cup. They contain good, bad and ugly, too. (By they way, YOU are the ugly.) As more and more Jesus moves into the town it starts exposing and ejecting the badness. There's a BIG difference between San Fransisco or Portland or Las Vegas and

Branson – or some other places where there’s just a lot of Jesus. Now, OK, yeah, Branson is a lot smaller and the Jesus there is a sort of country cousin, patriotic, Bible belt, white Christmas Jesus, but still, you can leave your car unlocked and people are kind and crime is low despite millions of people moving through there every year. Something good is there. Where you have Godlessness, you are more likely to have lots of problems. (And I don’t mean a lack of religion. I mean a lack of Jesus.) You’re more likely to find peace in a place that has a lot of Jesus. But small towns are always going to be easier to see that shift than in great big towns.

You CAN pour your cup out on your whole city. You should be praying a shield around it, that the structures of sin would be crushed or run out (gambling, drugs, prostitution, addiction, etc.). Now, we’re not praying against the people, just against the powers and principalities behind it all. We want Jesus to take the ground. (Go on YouTube and search for “700 Club Manchester Kentucky” and “Transformations Almolonga Guatemala”)

There are lots of examples through out church history where whole cities got more and more full of Jesus until the whole city seems to have hit the fire. It is like the whole city hit “Entire Sanctification” and the enemy was just driven out. Read about the revivals in Wales under Evan Roberts or the revival at Asbury College in 1970 or Finney’s revivals or many others.

- Revival changes people.
- Changed people change systems. (family, schools, government, business)
- Changed systems change cities.
- Changed cities change states.
- Changed states change nations.
- Changed nations changes the world.

Stop thinking about “revival” as an event in a particular building and start praying for it to settle on your whole city or town. Pray that the fire of God would purify everything and everyone. That it would be visible to the world and that the Christians would be ONE.

And we’re NOT talking about theocracy where Christians rule. We’re not talking about stupid N.A.R. Seven Mountains stuff about taking over industry and spheres of influence. We’re talking about Jesus Christ moving amongst His people and expressing Himself to all the people around. We’re talking about HIM changing things for the better. (Until He comes back and changes everything and rules it all with a rod of iron.)

Lord God Almighty, we know that everything here is a mess. We know that, as the church, we have some responsibility for the place where You planted us. Please pour us out on this place. Please import more and more Christians with big cups so that the balance of power shifts more and more to You. Please expose and scrub out all works of darkness in this place. We want You to be in charge of city government, of law enforcement and the courts, of the school system, of public works, of the Chamber of Commerce, and everything else. Make this holy ground where people can feel it when they step into it here. Send whatever reinforcements we need to fight the entrenched enemy here and help us to claim the ground. In the mighty Name of Jesus Christ, we pray all this to the Father, Amen.



Chapter 21 – Go!



The Great Commission is for EVERYONE!

Matthew 28:16-20

16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 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 should all be going OUT and evangelizing the world! Right?

NO!! Don't go! Don't spend money on foreign missions. Don't street preach. Don't have big crusades. How can we teach them to obey everything He commanded us to do – when we are intentionally and willfully IGNORING stuff that Jesus said WE should do? Like being One?

We MUST get “churchianity” fixed!! Then we'll have somewhere to send them that won't make them twice the sons of hell that they are! Stop feeding this “system” that we've built that is fundamentally broken. The very BEST you can do is make a convert that ends up dumbed down and lukewarm. And the WORST you can do is get them all hyped up and then send them into a dead church with no power (or a fake church with emotionality) and they end up turning on God and never coming back!

I'm not saying that Gospel for Asia, for example, should stop training missionaries to go into villages in Asia where the Gospel has never been before and stop preaching Jesus to the lost. That one Christian preacher is in unity with all the other Christians in town (himself). But in the United States, they are all so oversaturated with Jesus that they are numb to it. The best thing might be to STOP, work on ourselves, and by the time we're ready, there will be so much power of God flowing out of our obedience that we won't have to go tell anybody! They'll be banging on the door to get it.

Can we really GO when we're not one body? What's the point really? We can tell them about Jesus, but that's not ALL of the Good News. A bunch of the Good News is about walking in liberty as part of a real Body that functions as it should. It's about leaving the world behind, maybe even family – and being a part of a new family. Being adopted brothers and sisters of Jesus – and loving one another

Practically nobody today can tell you what it's like to truly be in a God-directed, in divine order, sharing with each as they have a need, Biblical CHURCH. As I go through in Chapter 14, the only Biblical model for “church” is the City Church. And it doesn't require everyone in town to be on board with the idea. It's not about meeting in a football stadium or as a mega-mega church. It's about someone standing in that place of unity, loving the brethren whether you agree with them on every little thing or not and refusing the “party spirit” that has always been used to divide us.

Once there is a restoration of the church, once we see real “revival” within those who were once “vived” but need to be “revived” – then the lost can't HELP but see something that is Christ-like and amazing. Most people reject “churchianity” because of how it hurt them, or because they see the powerlessness and futility of it. But a restored church, even in one little city, can change everything. When you study the Great Awakenings or Finneys revivals or Maria Woodworth-Etters, it was always about small towns. It's far easier to change the momentum of a small town than a big city.

In many of the accounts of those famous revivals, they say that the hand of God was so strong on that

town that you couldn't even curse inside city limits. If the police found someone passed out on the sidewalk, they would have to roll them over and sniff their breath because they weren't sure if they were passed out drunk or had been to the revival and just couldn't get up from the power of God. Bars closed, prostitutes repented, people made right with people they had cheated, prisons opened and the police walked them to the revival and then they walked back weeping afterwards. In some places there was no crime to deal with.

I want THAT! It's worth anything I have to sacrifice for a CHANCE to see that. I love Liberty, Missouri and I have poured all I have onto this ground. I believe God's promises over Kansas City. I believe it's coming. Even if I'm wrong, I've spent myself trying to bless the people here and striving toward unity.

God is searching for even ONE person to stand in the gap for each town. Maybe you're that person. Maybe you're not, but you need to be praying them in. If you're out street preaching, keep at it, but know that you're going to have to disciple them yourself. You can't just tell them to go find a good Bible-believing church. Even the most twisted, rainbow, whatever steeplehouses BELIEVE they are teaching the Bible clean and pure! So raise them up yourself and PRAY for the family of God to come together.

It's pretty much guaranteed that The Church of Yourtown lost its first love a LONG time ago and is divided and weak. Repent and pray for a lampstand in your city. Pray for people with that heart to come together. Pray for the power of God to come back and fill His people that are standing in that place of unity. Show churchianity (and the world) something they have never seen by your patience, longsuffering, and love. Spend all the resources God gives you on caring for the least of these, not building another steeplehouse.

You don't have to start a new church – you just have to MANIFEST the one that has been there all along. All those in Yourtown that made it through the Narrow Gate and are His, are your brothers and sisters already, whether they agree with you on everything or not. Even if they hate you! Even if they think you're the devil. It doesn't matter if they banned you from THEIR fellowship. People can love Jesus with all their heart and still be wrong about stuff. WE still have to stand in a place of willingness for unity (with those who are IN Christ) – even if no one else does.

When that begins, the lost will see something so beautiful that they can't help but want to know what happened and be a part of it. Our ministry has seen lots of people that have been blessed by our homeless shelter or food pantry or free store and want to start volunteering. Then they want to know more about Jesus. They love being around us and want to be a part of it and understand Jesus more.

So, I'm saying, "GO!" But where we need to go first is to that place of unity and love and self-sacrifice where we model something that is so beautiful everybody can't help but see it. And it will make Jesus smile when brethren dwell together in harmony. What could be better? Can you even imagine what could be accomplished? Surveys say that 55% of all the assets in the world are owned by Christians. Or at least by people that SAY they are Christians. We're a Super Power!

Lord God Almighty, we're sorry that we are the kind of people that need reviving. We're sorry that You have sent fire before and we've blown it out. We're sorry that we haven't taken seriously your prayer that we would be one. We're sorry that we've focused so much on trying to be right instead. None of us are right. None of us have it all figured out. Please have mercy on our stupid selves and show us that we're ants that need to just humble ourselves before you and stop making it up as we go along. Make us ONE, whatever the cost, however much it disrupts everything we've built in our own power. It's the right thing. Do whatever You have to do. Please, Lord. We're so very sorry. Make us a proper Bride that is dressed in white and will love You only and submit to You without question. We're sorry for how we've loved the world and listened to them instead. Please fix us! Please Father, in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Advocate, Messiah, Lord. Please?



Chapter 22 – Father

Taken from the video “Communion: Layers of Meaning.”

We're going to talk a little bit about Communion because the Lord has shown me layer upon layer upon layer upon layer about Communion. When we do the Lord's Supper, what it stands for, the depth of it and the beautiful magnificence of it. I want to tell you some stories and I want to urge you to seek revelation from the Lord on your own as He tries to explain and write on your hearts what it is He's talking about. Thanks.

I accepted Jesus when I was six years old. I can't even remember how many times I might have taken communion through the years and I realized that the vast majority of the time I had no idea what I was really doing. I didn't really mean it. Now I take it very, very seriously and we have communion when the Lord says to have communion, not on a regular schedule. And we make sure that we do it with right hearts because He says, you know, if any of you have ought against a brother, to leave it at the altar and go and get that right before you take Communion. You think it says that, right? But it really doesn't! It says that if you realize anyone has ought against YOU, you're supposed to go fix it. (Matthew 5:23 - *“Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”* KJV)

I Corinthians 11:27-30 – Damnation not discerning the Lord's Body

And if you have unforgiveness in your heart, that some of you are sick and dying because you're taking communion unworthily because you are “not discerning the Lord's Body.” That's a serious thing! How can we even have a church that splits in half and then they both have communion and they're not all doing it unworthily? When they are divisive and factious and hateful and unforgiving and unwilling to love each other? Surely part of the curses on America and the reason that judgement is coming is because of all the people taking communion unworthily without even a thought about what it means to come before God clean.

Anyway, so a lot of times the Lord would have me, as I'm visiting different congregations, not take communion with them. He says, “I don't want you to break bread here with these people. This is just you and Me.” So He would have me wait and take the little oyster cracker and the one ounce of grape juice after everybody else was finished.

I started to understand that there's layers and layers of meaning when you start listening to the Lord. The difference between His words (*logos* – written or *rhema* - spoken) and everything else of Man is that His words you can hold up to the light and, like a prism, see hundreds of different colors and applications. Like that the Lord's Supper is a betrothal ceremony between the groom and the bride and they share a cup, are officially husband and wife, but then he goes to prepare a place for them and, at an hour she doesn't know, will come and get her and her companions and take them to the wedding feast – only after which they can then be intimate.

But it's also a blood oath as primal as any tribal hand-cutting promise of kinship and mutual protection. And it's also Jesus allowing His body to be broken for us. Stepping in front of the long black train headed right for us and pushing us out of the way.

It's a blood oath. Every primitive culture understands that when you become blood brothers you swear on your blood that whatever they need, whatever it takes, I'll leave my village, I'll sacrifice my warriors, I'll come defend your village, because we are blood brothers. That when blood is spilled and an oath is taken, then you commit that whatever I have is yours, as if you were my real brother. I commit my

resources, my manpower, my money, my whatever, to your benefit.

And part of communion is that you will drink of this cup, you “will drink of this my blood which is shed for you” is a commitment between the Lord of the Universe who has EVERYTHING and little old us who have nothing – that we will be blood brothers and that whatever He has is available to us and so whatever we have should be available to Him. Piddly, tiny, little dust that we are, we are renewing a blood covenant between us and Jesus that we are blood brothers and that whatever He needs of ours He can have and that is a very serious thing.

If communion was explained to primitive cultures in that way, I think they would totally understand it. Pastor, evangelist, writer and Christian radio pioneer E.W. Kenyon wrote a book around 1949 called “The Blood Covenant,” about this. Now I don't agree with E.W. Kenyon on some other stuff, but I think that this is a really insightful, deep revelation about the reality of communion. If He gave His Body to be broken for us then every time we take Communion (worthily) we are reaffirming that we offer our bodies to be broken for Him, if He needs it.

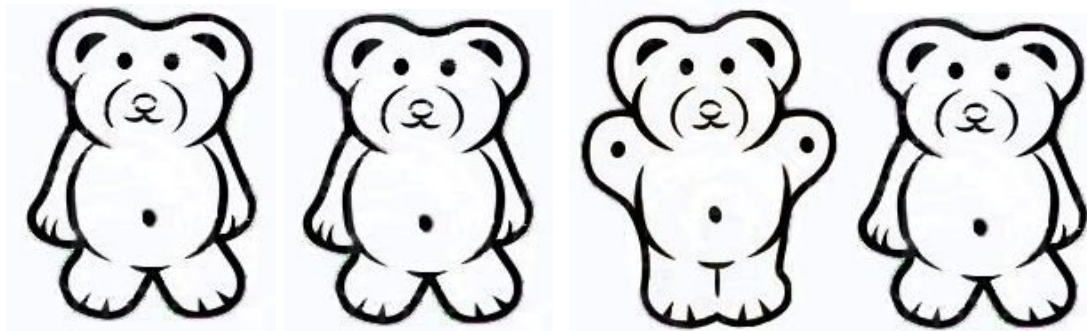
But there are deeper things, as well. I want to try and go through and show you. One day in 2006 I was going down to a conference here in Kansas City. The Lord had told me to go to see Heidi and Roland Baker speak. They do a lot of good work with the orphans in Mozambique. Although I've got issues with them on other things, the Lord has me be very careful with them because He “will not turn His back on those who care for the widows and orphans.” (James 1:27, etc.) So you get a lot of grace. Jet planes and giant mansions and you in a Rodeo Drive wardrobe, not so much. Care for the widows and orphans, God's gonna cut you some slack. So I try to be really careful with Heidi and Roland Baker in terms of how I handle them. That's fear of the Lord and wisdom.

Anyway I was going down to this conference they were speaking and the Lord stopped on the way. I had been fasting for several days without food or water. (During that time I fasted 200+ days out of the year without food or water in stretches up to eight days in a row.) The Lord said, “I want you to do Communion before you get there.” So I stopped at a convenience store and they had a little bottle of grape juice and I asked, “What do you want me to use for the bread?” He said, “Get the Teddy Grahams.” So I purchased the juice and a small bag of Teddy Grahams (graham crackers).



I was thrilled, so I went out to my van and parked where I could be alone with Him without the distractions of sitting right in front of the store. I said, “Okay, Lord, how many bears do I get?” (Because I had been fasting and was just glad to have something in my mouth!) He says, “The first four complete, unbroken Teddy Grahams that come out of the bag. You can have those.” Okay – and he didn't say I only had to have one ounce of grape juice, that's just entirely religious because we don't want the church to spend too much money on grape juice, you know?

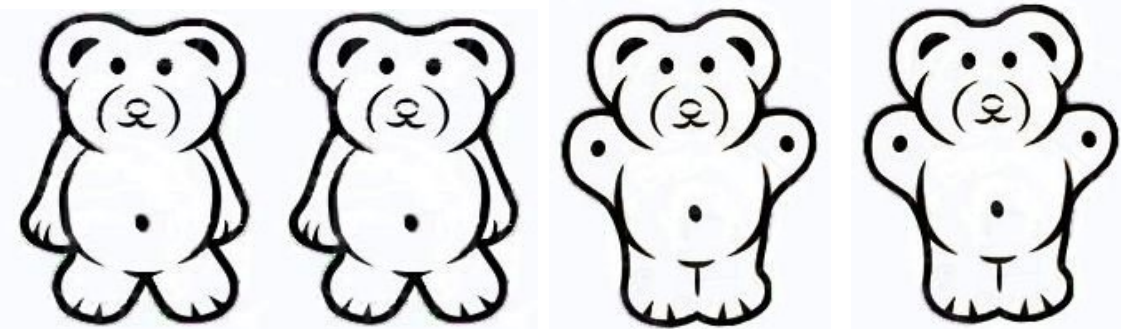
So He said I could drink the whole little like six ounce juice thing. So I open the bag and the first four Teddy Grahams that pop out are all complete. There are no broken arms or legs or heads. It looked just like this picture. There are two kinds of Teddy Grahams – one with their arms down and ones with their arms out. So I got three in my hand that had their arms down and one with their arms out. Not one to just do without knowing why, I said, “Okay Lord, I don't believe anything is an accident with You so why these four?” He said, “One for the Father, one for the Son, one for the Holy Spirit and one for you.”



I know that I'm talking to Jesus as we're having communion and I said, "Well, that's really sweet Lord. Which one are you?" He said, "I'm the one with the outstretched, nail-scarred hands." I'm shocked! Oh my gosh, look at that! Sure enough the dopey cookie has nail-scarred hands! He says, "Do you know how much trouble it was to get a Teddy Graham with outstretched, nail-scarred hands?" I'm like, "Lord! That's amazing!" I start crying because He's so beautiful and, I mean, I could have got a Club cracker or something, but He said to get Teddy Grahams. I would have missed this if I didn't ask!

Anyway, so I have communion and it's really pretty and sweet. Then maybe a couple of weeks later I'm having communion again and I still have most of the bag in my van armrest. He says to use the Teddy Grahams again. He says the first four complete, whole teddy bears that come out of the package, that's what I get. Sounds great to me.

This time there's two with their arms down and two with their arms out.

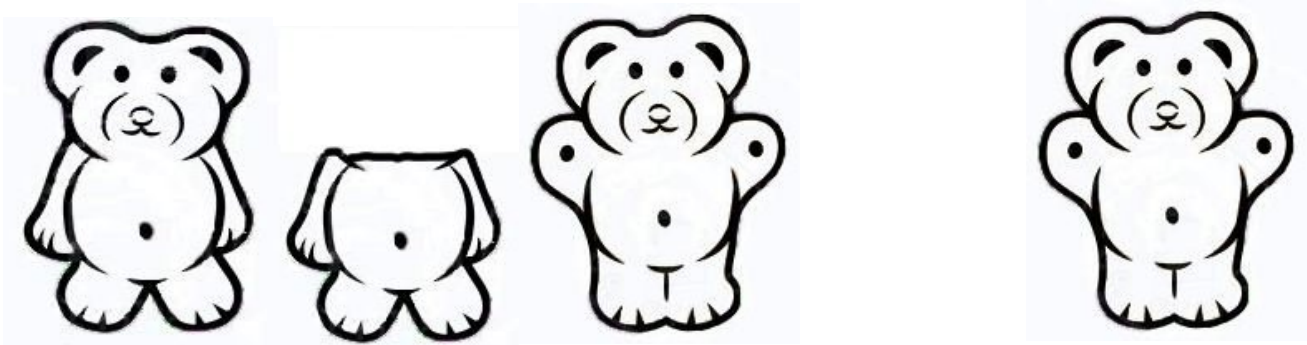


I said, "Lord, why four?" He says, "One for the Father, one for the Son, one for the Holy Spirit, and one for you." I said, "Lord, there's two of them with their arms out." He says, "Yeah, you're looking more like me all the time." Aw, c'mon now! The Creator of the Universe just said that to ME?! I'm like, "Oh, that's so sweet, Lord!" It was really pretty – and so I had communion with Him and just had some sweet time with Him. I took it very seriously and made sure I was clear with everybody. I renewed my vows to Him and thanked Him for His sacrifice for His body being broken for us.

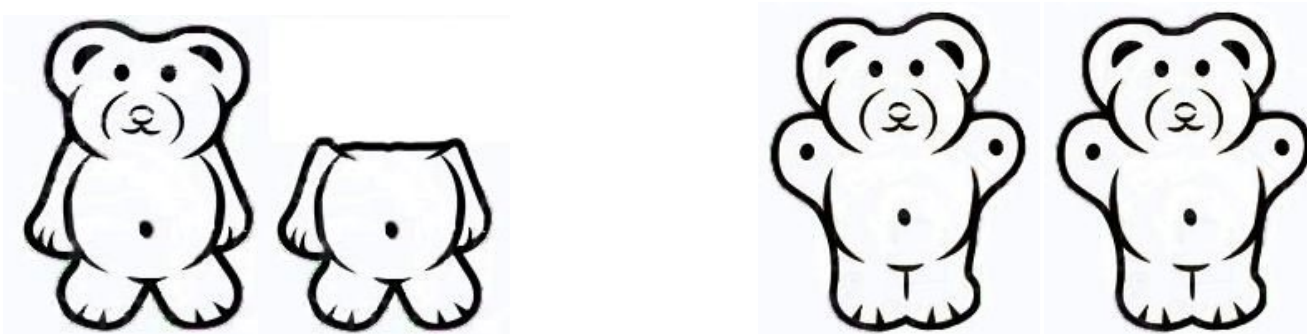
Now here's the real point of this chapter. I want to show you one other thing here, okay? Some time later I'm talking to the Lord and really seeking deep things and I know that there's more revelation about communion than what I have and He says to do communion again while I'm in the middle of the long fast. You know, I try not to do that unless He tells me to. I appreciate it when He lets me have communion during a fast. It's not that you're going to get a lot of nutrition from four Teddy Grahams and a few ounces of grape juice, but at least it's something in your mouth! If you've ever fasted without food or water for an extended period of time you can appreciate what I mean.

So I'm talking with Him some more about Communion and thanking Him for His body being broken for us, and Jesus says, "You don't think I invented this, do you?" "HUH?!" He says, "I only do what I see the Father doing and there's layers here you don't see." I said, "Okay, well, show me, Lord." (I'm from Missouri, the "Show Me" state.)

He says, "Get four Teddy Grahams like the last time." So I get four Teddy Grahams out and he says break the head off of one of those with its arms down. Okay.



He says, "You understand that I came in the flesh, left heaven, sacrificed everything to come down for My body to be shredded, whipped, torn, broken, mocked, spit on – so that I could take on the sins of the world, die and be resurrected.



But there was one I never understood until I was doing Communion with Jesus one day, quietly weeping and thanking Him for allowing His Body to be broken for me. Very gently the Father said, "What about me?" "Huh?!" He said, "Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing. His Body was broken because He saw My Body broken." "HUH?!?" I said with a wide open mouth.

I'm like, "Yeah, I get that."

He says, "I don't think you understand the sacrifice that the Father made in having His body broken for you."

"The what?!"

Jesus goes on, "In the beginning God was one and He wanted to reach Man. He designed all of creation, planned it all out, intended to create Man in His image as a three-part being. He knew that in order to do this, His body would have to be broken."

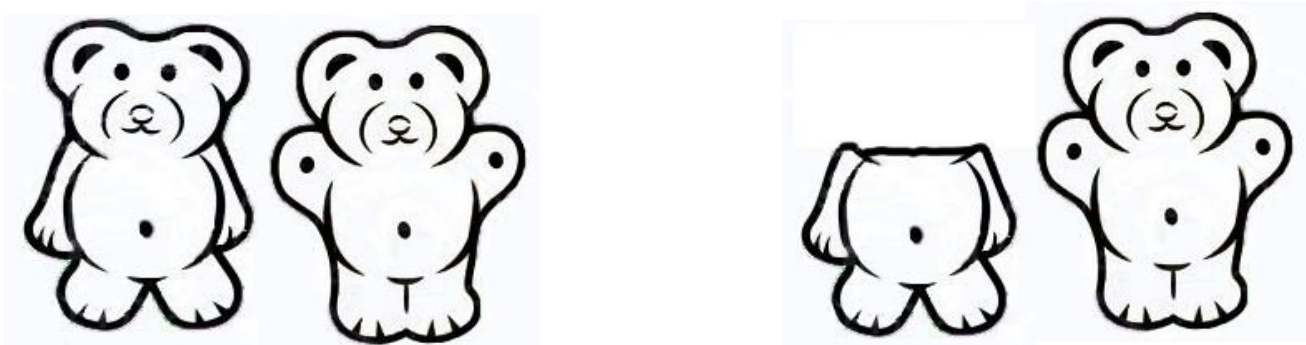
"The Father's body was broken?"

He says, "Yes, in order to do everything that needed to get done, the Father had to be broken into the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the body, the Spirit is the spirit, but the Father is the Head. The Father is the soul of the Trinity and He is a three-part being; soul, spirit and body – just like Man is a three-part being. In order to reach man, the Father had to be broken into three, so the Father split His body on purpose – split and broken for Man, so that He can reach you. The Father created Man – and they were in communion until The Fall. Then the spirit of Man was severed because of sin from the Father. Now there is this divide where man cannot reach God, so the Father comes at Sinai and talks to Man – and Man says, 'He's too scary! We don't want to talk to Him! We will die if we hear Him like

lightning and thunder again.’ So they tell Moses, ‘You go up on the mountain and talk to Him. We’ll listen to you.’”

“Of course then Moses goes up and gets six hundred nine more laws because they won’t listen to the Big Ten straight from the mouth of God. If they would have been willing to listen to His voice about how to apply those ten to their lives it would have been enough. So Moses goes up the hill and says, ‘Don’t talk to them anymore, they can’t handle it.’ So God says, ‘Oh, for a people that would hearken to My voice, so that I could bless them.’ (Deut. 5:29) He says, ‘I’m going send one like unto them, that will be able to reach them and talk to them.’ (Deuteronomy 18:15) Well, in order to send Jesus, His body had to be split. So Jesus comes to talk to Man to tell them about the Father, to lead them to the Father, to show them that He is the path to bring them back and reconcile them with the Father.

As quickly as we can, we crucified Jesus – but He doesn’t stay dead because He takes on the sins of the world, is selfless and understands God’s economy. He is raised from the dead and elevated and He says, “I must go so that the Holy Spirit can come and dwell in you and write His law on your hearts (instead of tablets of stone) and be with you and explain everything to you and bring all things to your remembrance all of what was said to you.” So Jesus goes back to heaven and the Holy Spirit comes and lives in Man.



Now the Holy Spirit doesn’t have His own head. (John 16:13) The Holy Spirit only speaks what He’s told by the Son and the Father. The Holy Spirit dwells in Man, bringing Man closer and closer and closer to God.

Now at some point things are going to get so bad, because so many men are rebelling, that Jesus is going to come back get His bride. (Jesus comes back, gets the bear that looks like him and takes it to the Father.) At that point, she is walking in the fullness of what she’s supposed to be – dressed in white, spotless – and take her back to the Father. Then there will be a Sabbath rest during which Jesus will reign on earth with man for a thousand years. Because the Father rests on the Sabbath, on the seventh day Jesus, who is the Sabbath rest, will take care of everything. He will run the planet, ruling with the rod of iron. After the seventh thousand years then all things return to the Father from whence they came, everything is consumed and everything returns back to where it was and we are one. (At that point you stack all the bears on top of each other.)

But in order for us to be one eventually, the Father’s body had to be broken. Jesus is not the greatest example of sacrifice and suffering. Jesus is not. He said that I only do what I see the Father doing. So He must have seen the Father be willing to have His own body intentionally divided and broken and split for our sakes.

Well, that just wrecked me! I can’t say that I have explained it just now in a way that some professor can’t fight with me about it and take issue with something. But I believe it’s entirely Scriptural and we see that God purposed in the beginning “let us create man in our image.” He wasn’t talking to the Angels. They are not three-part beings. We are not created in the image of angels. He was talking to Jesus and the Holy Spirit when He created us as three-part beings. Jesus is not a created being. Jesus is the Son

of God, but that doesn't mean that He was birthed in the way that we think of birth. As if He wasn't and then He was. No. It says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." It was talking about Jesus. This is the part that so grieves me when people make Jesus the end-all be-all and forget the Father and leave out who He is and the sacrifice that He made.

Can you imagine your body, your soul, and your spirit being pulled apart? Maybe they'd still be connected somehow, but they are separate. I have no idea, you have no idea, of the sacrifice that's required for the Father to endure that for all the amount of time that He's endured that – so that He could create you, so that He could bring you into His presence, so that He could connect you through His son – who is Jacob's Ladder to the Father.

No one comes to the Father except through Jesus. If you just stopped with Jesus, then you haven't made it to the Father. You have to see that all worship and glory and honor belong to the Father and that in the end of this great panorama, this arc of the storyline that he's building here, all things return to the Father and He becomes more than He was because we are integrated into Him, into Christ, one with Him.

I don't even begin to understand how that's going to work or what that is gonna be like. I'm just trying to convey to you what I heard from the Lord the best way that I can. It was conveyed to me as a spiritual understanding and I'm not sure that I can even explain it in English and do it justice. But I gave it my best shot. I hope it does something for you. I hope the fear of the Lord increases in you. I hope the respect for the Father increases in you. I hope that you see more and more the sacrifice that He made for you – not just Jesus, not just on the Cross, not just physically, but the spiritual weight that He endured on Golgotha in Gethsemane, in Hell, taking the captives, leading captives out, getting the keys of Hell. But not just that, but what the Father endured, what the Holy Spirit endures, being grieved constantly by people spitting on the Holy Spirit and saying that it was satan that healed, it was satan that blessed somebody, it was satan that answers prayer, when it was God himself that did it for you.

"It was coincidence. It was luck. It was my intuition. It was a déjà vu." No! It was the Holy Spirit and no one should steal His glory and I want you to see the bigness of the Father, the sacrifice, that it's from His heart, it's from His love. Somehow Jesus was extruded, extricated – I don't even know that we have a word for how God became flesh and dwelt among us.

Seek the Lord about the deep things. Ask Him to show you something that will just increase in you the fear of the Lord and the awe for His majesty – and see what it does for you. I'm just trying to be faithful to report what I believe He showed me. You take it to Him. You test it with the Bible and you see whether He backs me up on this or not.

Thanks for listening.

Dear Father God, thanks so much for all that You have done for us. Please teach us the really deep things. Please continue to increase the fear of the Lord in us and give us more and more awe for your sacrifice and love for us. We want to serve you forever because You are worthy. Help us to understand You better every day. Help us to get our eyes off of this world and keep them on You. We love You, Father. We love You, Jesus. Please fill us full of You. Amen.





Chapter 23 – Son

I pray that the words that I speak will be truth. I pray that the Lord will be fully in charge. I pray that He'll bind up everything of the enemy that would get in the way. And I pray that it would settle on the hearts of those who have ears to hear, that it would be written on their hearts, and that if anything is not true, it would fall to the ground harmless, in the name of Jesus.

I want to talk to you about something kind of cool that the Lord showed me. Really, really cool. It affected me a lot, and it's affected a lot of people when I've told them what the Lord showed me about this.

One day I was sitting around, and since I can't watch TV, can't play video games, can't whatever — as the Lord has pretty much sworn me off everything — it was kind of a quiet moment. There were no emails to answer at that moment. So I was just sitting around and talking to the Lord, and I said, "Lord, tell me something — some of the deep things."

The Holy Spirit searches the deep things of God, so sometimes you don't even know what to ask. So the Father says, "Ask Me how Jesus got out of hell."

I said, "Oh, YEAH! That's cool." I've never liked any of the answers I've heard about that. I've never been satisfied with anything I've ever heard about that. People seem to think that Jesus just all of a sudden took on the sins of the world and then, three days later — POOF — He's dressed in white and ready to appear before the Lord. That the Father just forgets that the sins of the world are on the spotless Lamb of God.

Well, no. That just can't be. There had to be some process. Something had to happen.

So I said, "Okay, Lord. Yeah, I want to know the mechanism. I want to know the process. What happened to take the sins of the world and somehow Jesus be glorified and justified and everything?"

Well, there are verses — particularly Psalm 16:8–11. That is a Messianic psalm, and Jesus says:

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

It's mentioned again in Acts 2, when Peter quotes that as clearly being a Messianic passage — that Jesus would not stay in hell and that His body would not suffer corruption.

1 Peter 3:18–20 talks about how Jesus went to hell and preached the gospel to the people from the days of Noah:

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

And then in Psalm 68:18–19, it talks about how He ascended on high and led captivity captive and received gifts for men:

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah."

In Revelation 1:18, it says:

“I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

Anyway, He didn't just lay there in that tomb for three days. He was in hell.

We can talk more about that if you need.

In the Old Testament, the High Priest chose two rams. Lots were cast. One was sacrificed and the blood sprinkled on the altar. The other was Azazel — the scapegoat — and they laid hands on it, imparted to it the sins of the nation, and then someone led it off into the wilderness to die.

One proof of Jesus is that they took a white rope, dyed it crimson, cut a piece off and kept it at the Temple, then used the other piece as a leash and someone led the scapegoat off into the wilderness to die. If God accepted their sacrifice, the crimson cord turned white. Rabbinical history says that after the veil — the curtain in the Temple — was torn when Jesus died, the cord never turned white again from A.D. 33 to A.D. 70 when the Temple was destroyed.

Jesus was the once-for-all Azazel, AND He was the Lamb whose blood was sprinkled on the Mercy Seat. (See Ron Wyatt's discovery of the Ark with blood on it directly under Golgotha.)

And in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He's sweating blood, I don't think He's sweating blood about the crucifixion and being whipped and beaten and the crown of thorns. He is not a “natural” man. He is not focused on the natural. He knows that the body — the flesh — can endure whatever.

As horrible as *The Passion of the Christ* movie is, as much as it makes you cry for what He suffered, I think in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He asked for this cup to pass over Him, He was more concerned about the time He was going to be in hell than the 24 hours the Romans were going to beat on His body.

And I want you to understand better what it is that Jesus did for you. And it's not just that He took a whipping He didn't deserve — or even crucifixion.

This is what happened.

The Lord used the “Cup Model” He had given me previously to illustrate this. We use this to talk about your cup and what's in your cup.



The red stuff is sin. The blue stuff is Jesus. The yellow stuff is you.

And essentially we want holiness. We want to have this great big cup of Jesus with hardly any of US in it.

It's easy to get the red stuff out. Say you're sorry and don't go back to it. Get full of Jesus and then ask Him to give you a bigger cup all the time as you're a good steward of whatever He gave you. More of Him, less of you. Grab the hem of His garment and suck real hard. Stick your face in the river that flows from the throne of God. Tug on His robe and tell Him you're thirsty until He gives you to drink.

Whatever you can think or imagine — but don't depend on “church” to fill you.

Jeremiah 2:13:

“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”

Then crucify pieces of you so there's just hardly any yellow stuff left in there. It will change everything.

Anyway, the Lord used the Cup Model to explain to me what happened. And as I'm telling you this, I can't show you in the Bible where this is directly. But it's implied all over the place — like Isaiah 58. This is just a behind-the-scenes look at the mechanism as the Lord explained it to me.

You take it to Him. Have Him explain it to you. If He explains it to you some other way, you let me know. But you can't just accept that Jesus popped out dressed in white because He took a beating — many of the Apostles suffered at least as much or more.

So here we go.

Jesus had the biggest cup there ever was. He was so full of the Holy Spirit that He had to leave us. He was using all of the Holy Spirit. There was practically none left over because Jesus was using practically all of the Holy Spirit — especially when the stone blew off the tomb.

Anyway, the biggest cup that ever was, full of blue stuff — full of the Holy Spirit — with one tiny little speck of Him in there. One little speck of Him because He was a person. He was a man. He was God, but He was man.

If He wasn't man, then He wasn't tempted. He wasn't one of us. He doesn't understand what we go through.

There had to be some Self in order to submit and obey God. Otherwise it's not obedience.

Anyway, this giant cup full of the Holy Spirit — full of blue stuff — with a little speck of yellow stuff, never saw any red stuff in it. He kept His cup full all the time. There was never any sin, any red stuff in His cup.

The biggest cup ever went to the Cross, hung there, committed His spirit to the Father, poured out all the blue stuff — and then sucked in all the red stuff of everybody for all time into His cup.

Okay?

Then He died and went to hell — which is where you have to go if your cup is full of red stuff.

And He knew that was going to happen.

He knew that He was not just going to die for our illnesses, but also for our iniquities, for our sins — and that He was going to have to go to hell.

Every fallen angel, every bad guy in hell, is really happy to see the spotless, sinless Lamb of God in hell. And if hell is a place of torture and torment, nobody ever got tortured as much as Jesus did.

He had the sins of Hitler and Pol Pot and Mussolini and Stalin (and Donald Trump) and me and every other horrible rotten stinker out there — on Him.

And they were really glad to be able to chew and gnaw and rip at His flesh and slice and dice and hack and whatever they do in hell. Burn and shred mercilessly — maybe even specialized based on the kind of sin you did — and Jesus had them all.

You need to understand that hell is a place of ultimate self-focus. You can't possibly take your mind off of the pain that you're in, the suffering that you're going through, with no hope in sight. No end. Ever.

And the test is to understand God's economy and apply it even in the place designed — out of every place in the universe, in all of creation — the place designed for ultimate self-focus.

And Jesus understands God's economy and the transactional laws of creation. And some of those are that if you give something away sacrificially, God will give you more.

Isaiah 58:10–11:

“And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day: And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy

bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

God will bless you. If you're good with two talents, He'll give you two cities. If you're good with five talents, He'll give you five cities. If you bury it in the sand, even that will be taken away from you.

If you focus on yourself, nothing good is going to happen.

Isaiah 58:6–9 says that if you feed them, clothe them, take in the poor wanderer, stop the malicious talk and the pointing finger, then your healing will quickly appear.

These are promises like gravity.

This is God's economy, and it applies everywhere in creation — even in hell.

So what happened was this:

Jesus went to hell. He had one little shred of Jesus in there — one little shred of God-flavored yellow stuff.

And in a place of ultimate self-focus, He leaned over to the guy next to Him and said, “Hey, if I give you this, will it help? Will it be like a drop of water? If I take a few of the demons off of you that are messing with you and I take them on myself and I give you this, will it help?”

And He gave away the last little kernel, the last shred of anything good that was in Him, to the guy next to Him — while being chewed on by every demon in hell.

And because Jesus was selfless in a place created above every other place to make it impossible to do, God put a drop of blue stuff in His cup.

And He looked to the guy on His other side and said, “Here, maybe this will help.”

And He pushed and He poured and He gave away that little bit of blue stuff in His cup.

And God gave Him two drops of blue stuff — and He gave that away.

Because, you see, He had to preach the gospel to everybody, and they weren't all sitting on a hillside. He had to preach individually to each person. And they can't hear Him while they're being tortured, so He has to take on their torturers and fill their cup while He's being tortured.

One at a time. And if they hear Him, their cup gets full and the demons have to stop torturing them.

And how long could that have taken?

You ask yourself, how long was Jesus in hell?

Well, three days. He was in the tomb three days.

No. A day is as a thousand years. There's no time in hell. As close as you can get your head around it, He was in hell for eternity.

Okay?

There's no time there. However long it takes to get the demons off of somebody, get their full attention, preach the gospel to them, get their cup full — while you're being devoured by demons, while they're shredding you and biting you and whatever — and you're selflessly taking care of that guy, giving him everything you've got.

Then God gives you more. Then you pour it out on the next person. Get them free.

Maybe the first guy gets the idea and helps you tell them the Good News. I don't know.

But however long it took to spread the Gospel, that's what Jesus did.

Eventually, He got full and full and full and full of blue stuff until the red stuff just wouldn't fit in His cup anymore.

Then hell lost all legal ground, had no rights on Him anymore, and had to let go.

He burst through the gates, got the keys to hell, led captives in His train, and everybody whose cups He had filled came with Him — because He understood that when you're in a place of ultimate self-focus and you do something selfless, God will heal you and reward you, and even hell can't hold you.

And those are the keys to hell.

So whatever your hell — whatever hell you're in right now — do something selfless and watch and see your healing quickly appear.

Maybe you don't want to hear it. I know it upsets all your "church" baggage.

But something had to happen so that the Azazel could come back white.

Something God-sized.

This wasn't about Him freeing us from sin. We were free at the Cross. It was finished for us on the Cross. That was the blood sprinkled on the Mercy Seat under Golgotha. (See Ron Wyatt.)

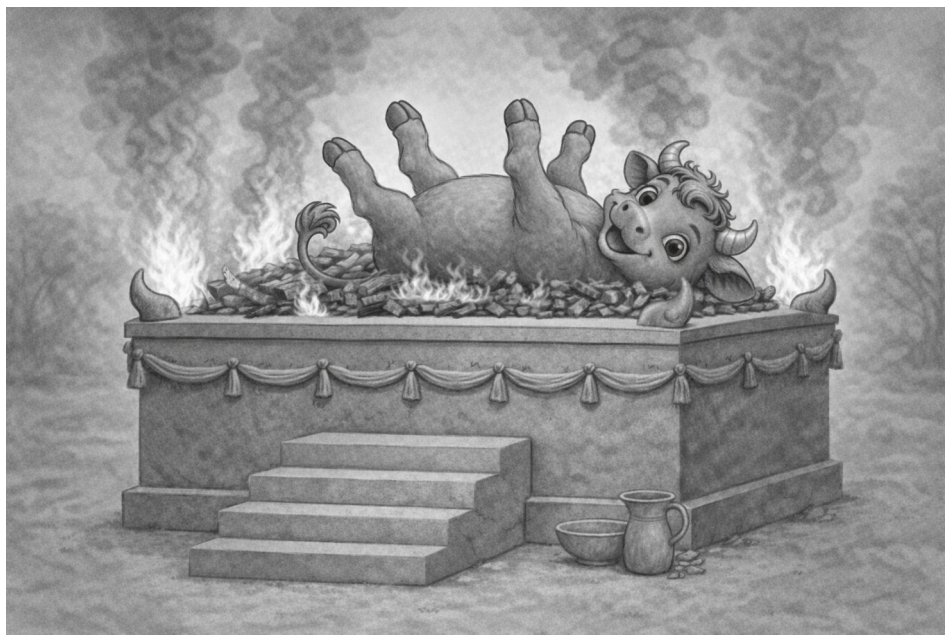
But how did the scapegoat come back alive? How did the unclean Azazel show back up alive and dressed in white?

If you have a better explanation, I'd love to hear it. But something had to have happened.

You don't just take on all that baggage and then, three days later, blow the door off — with no baggage.

(See Isaiah 58, Luke 6:38, Luke 9:24, John 12:24, Philipians 2:5-11, Isaiah 53:10-12, Hebrews 12:2, Romans 8:11, Psalm 139:8)

Lord Jesus Christ, thank You for all that You did for us. We don't really understand it all and maybe we're not right about this, but we're just SURE that what You went through for us was beyond our understanding either way. Please help us to be able to hear the deep things, even if they challenge what we think we know. We love You, Lord. We pray all this to the Father in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.





Chapter 24 – Spirit

Like it or not, so much of my ministry has been about identifying “sacred cows” in the “system” that we’ve built and confronting them head on – hopefully with grace and some good humor.

There are lots of deep questions that I ask people, that they can’t answer – but that I don’t have time to address in this book. Mostly because I don’t know the answer either (or care that much to solve it).

But, so that you have something to ponder on a rainy day (or in a prison cell):

- Did Eve have a belly button?
- How long were Adam and Eve in the Garden together before the snake showed up? Could he be one day.
- In the Book of Jubilees, it says that after Adam and Eve got thrown out of the Garden, the animals couldn’t talk to them anymore. And in the Garden nothing was dying and nothing was being eaten by each other. So when God told Adam to name all the animals do you think it was, “Elephant, giraffe, hippo,” or “Fluffy, Bob, Spot”?
- Where does it specifically say in the Bible that supernatural Gifts of the Spirit don’t work anymore?
- Where does it say in the Bible that God’s going to stop talking to His people?
- If long hair on a man is unnatural, then how come it grows naturally? How does “nature” tell us that’s wrong? And how long is too long? And why would God want Nazarites to grow their hair out? Samson?
- Where does it say that the Two Witnesses are old guys standing at the Wailing Wall uninterrupted for three and a half years with fire coming out of their mouths? Where does it even say they are men?
- Where is denominationalism approved in the Bible?

Just some things to think about. Some of which will get you tossed out of church on your ear, just for asking. These are “sacred cows” or “third rails” that you’re just not supposed to touch. They don’t want to answer them and they don’t even like being asked.

A few years ago I stepped into the middle of a digital fight to defend a sister that had a YouTube ministry and was getting pounded for simply asking the question, “Why is the Holy Spirit a male?” I tried to simply point out, to no avail, how overwhelmingly STUPID it is to divide the Body of Christ over what kind of genitalia the Holy Spirit has. Fairly predictably, it turned into a boy/girl thing and the men were furious that we were “sissifying” the Holy Spirit by even suggesting the very possibility that the Holy Spirit wasn’t at least as masculine as John Wayne or Chuck Norris.

But there’s a reasonable linguistic argument to be made here. You see, in the Old Testament, in Hebrew, the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost) is referred to as “Ruach” which is a feminine noun. Strong’s H7306. Look it up. (www.BlueLetterBible.com is a good tool.)

“Wisdom and her sisters” refers to the biblical personification of Divine Wisdom and accompanying virtues like insight or understanding. It is often depicted as a protective, intimate, and divine feminine presence. Proverbs 7:4 describes wisdom as a “sister” to guide through temptations.

Proverbs 7:4-5 – “Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister, and call understanding thy kinswoman; that they may keep you from the adulteress, from the stranger with seductive words.”

See also:

Proverbs 1:20 – Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: (Read vs 20-33)

Proverbs 8:1 – Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? (Read the whole chapter. It’s describing the Holy Spirit – who was there before creation.)

Proverbs 9:1 – Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: (Read the whole chapter. It’s describing the Holy Spirit.)

In the New Testament, in Greek, the word used is “Pneuma” and is a neuter noun. In English you would never call someone an “it” – but there is nothing insulting in Greek about using a neuter.

In John 14:26 the word John uses is “paraklētōs” meaning “that one who shall teach you” – and it’s a masculine word. In John 15:26 he uses “ekeinos” which is a demonstrative pronoun meaning “that one/he/that person” that becomes masculine because the antecedent is “paraklētōs” – which is masculine. But in John 16:13 he uses “pneuma” as well as “ekeinos” in the same sentence, showing that the personhood of the Holy Spirit isn’t defined by the grammar used. In Romans 8:16 Paul talks about “the Spirit itself” and uses “pneuma.”

There are other examples in Greek grammar that show that grammatical personhood is not related to biological sex. For example, the following are all neuter: child (paidion), demon (daimonion), little girl (korasion).

So you would think that the King James got to “He” for the Holy Spirit because of John using a masculine description, but that’s not true. You might think that there was some conspiracy amongst the Catholic popes and bishops to make sure God was shown as all male. But that’s not true either.

What happened was that Jerome translated the Bible into Latin in the late 4th century. He (naturally and rightly) translated the neuter “pneuma” into the Latin masculine “spiritus.” So in the Vulgate ALL of the references to the Holy Spirit became male. I grew up in Mexico, having to learn whether a table or pen or a hat or a car is male or female. All the Romance languages are like that. Nobody thinks the car (el coche) has a penis or the table (la mesa) has a vagina. Even within the “Romance Languages” that are derived from the Latin – French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Romanian – the gender of things can flip back and forth.

Table – Spanish “la mesa” (feminine), Italian “il tavolo” (masculine).

Car – Spanish “el coche” (masculine), French “la voiture” (feminine).

Milk – Spanish “la leche” (feminine), French “le lait” (masculine), Italian “il latte” (masculine).

In no case does anyone think it has something to do with sexuality.

So Latin didn’t cause a theology about the Holy Spirit being male, it just became a part of the language, it just cemented linguistically. It’s not a question of personhood, that was well established within the church, way before Jerome. In fact, the Oxyrhynchus Hymn, the oldest written hymn we have, found in an excavation of a city dump in Oxyrhynchus, Egypt from 250 A.D. is a hymn singing to the “Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” Showing that a trinitarian understanding was well established long before the Council of Nicea.

Because Latin became the predominant language of Christianity for over 1000 years, it was just an automatic that priests, learning Latin and using the Vulgate would use the masculine language. By the time English translations emerge from the Latin-shaped theological world, “He” was just assumed.

But that’s not the ONLY theological stream that goes back to antiquity. The Syriac Christians translated the Bible into their Aramaic-near language. The “ruach” became “ruha” – which was still grammatically feminine. The earliest Syriac Bible (the Peshitta) preserves this. In John 14:16 where Greek says, “He will help you,” in the Syriac it reads closer to “She will help you.”

But that does NOT mean that Syriac Christians believed that the Holy Spirit was biologically female, simply that it was grammatically feminine – and nobody panicked about that. Early Syriac Church fathers like Aphrahat (4th Century) and Ephrem the Syrian regularly used maternal imagery for the Spirit. Ephrem in particular speaks of; the Spirit nurturing, the Spirit as brooding (Genesis 1 echo) and the Spirit as motherly in action. None of this was controversial in Syriac Christianity. Why? Because the grammar made it natural. And it remains this way to this day.

If you argue that the Bible clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit is “he” – you’re just not linguistically correct. The early church lived with feminine spirit, neuter spirit, masculine spirit – all within an orthodox Trinitarian belief. And they didn’t let that bother them. All of them lived in cultures where the language labelled pretty much everything as one gender or another (or neither).

So ... we should be ashamed of ourselves. We should look at how we have escalated a use of words that didn’t bother the Early Church to become a divisive issue for us so that it’s no longer about a grammatical use, it’s about actual sex organs.

For the record, I think it’s beyond debate that, for His reasons, God the Father wanted Himself described to Mankind as a male and as a father. And, for the Father’s reasons, Jesus Christ, being God, set aside Godhood and put on MALE flesh and dwelt among us. But, again, for His reasons, the Father chose to leave a fair lack of specificity where it comes to the Holy Spirit.

As we restore the city churches and learn to play nice together, we’re going to have people that don’t like Paul, people that don’t like the Gifts, people that think baptism is by this method or that – and people that want to call the Holy Spirit a “she.” Maybe it’s just to push buttons. But whatever the motive, NONE of that stuff is salvific.

That’s a word you need to learn – “salvific” means that which will save you. Christ and Him crucified. Not Christ plus pretrib rapture. Not Christ plus boy Holy Spirit. Not Christ plus Jesus-name only baptism. Not Christ plus dietary laws. On primary issues – Unity. On secondary issues – Grace.

You need to get real clear, REAL FAST about what is primary. And you need to get some thick skin about being around people that disagree with you on secondary things. Even stuff you think is really important. People aren’t “false prophets” or “heretics” or “false teachers” because they disagree with you on secondary things.

Lord, help us not to divide over nonsense like this anymore! Please help us to be reasonable and calm and focus more on being one then needing to be proven right. Help to show grace on all the secondary things. We love You. We’re sorry. In Name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.





Chapter 25 – Enemy

Deliverance

Let's just start here. Demons are real. Not metaphorical. Not symbolic. Not "ancient superstition." Real.

Demons lie. Demons manipulate. Demons whisper. Demons exploit wounds, pride, fear, trauma, bitterness, addiction, lust, religion, and false doctrine. Demons oppress God's people — if they allow it. Demons can possess others.

If God's people don't believe demons are real, they won't defend against them. And if they won't defend against them, they won't know how to deal with them.

Whose idea could that possibly be?

Who is glorified most by a theology that says there is a war between good and evil — but evil doesn't really exist and can't really mess with us — and yet we're sick, addicted, divided, depressed, anxious, powerless, and weak? That can only have been satan's idea. He is the only one who benefits from us ignoring him.

Warfare Is Not Optional

Warfare is real. And it is necessary.

Jesus did not treat demons like metaphors (Mark 16:17). The apostles did not treat demons like metaphors (Acts 16:16-18). The early Church did not treat demons like metaphors. And we are commanded to use the authority we've been given. (Luke 10:19)

You cannot ignore that part and still fulfill the Great Commission. You cannot say, "Go into all the world," and then skip the part where Jesus said to cast out demons (Mark 16:17). You cannot preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and ignore the fact that the Kingdom displaces another kingdom. If there is a kingdom of light, then there is a kingdom of darkness (Colossians 1:13). If there is a war, then somebody is shooting back.

Flesh and Blood Is Not the Enemy

Scripture is very clear:

Ephesians 6:12 – "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

And yet most of what we do in the Church is aimed at flesh and blood.

We argue with people. We debate personalities. We fight cultural battles. We attack symptoms. Meanwhile the actual enemy laughs.

Our battle is not against flesh and blood — but most churches behave as if it is. More effort should be placed on the spiritual and less on the natural. Instead, we are mostly entertaining people's flesh.

Body, Soul, and Spirit — Out of Balance

Most churches are ignoring SPIRITual warfare and focusing on SOUL and BODY.

We have:

- Excellent educational programs (mind training).

- Excellent service programs (meeting physical needs).
- Excellent emotional engagement (music, atmosphere, belonging).

But very little equipping in the spirit.

- Very little training in discernment.
- Very little teaching on authority.
- Very little deliverance.
- Very little intentional confrontation of the demonic.

Across the spectrum of the Church, the emphasis is overwhelmingly on body and brain — not on spirit (1 Corinthians 2:14). Not exclusively. But predominantly. And that imbalance has consequences.

Milk Instead of Meat

The result is milk. Because it requires the Spirit to understand the meat. You cannot feed someone solid spiritual food if they refuse to acknowledge the spiritual realm. You cannot raise up warriors if they refuse to admit there is a war.

So we produce:

- Well-educated Christians.
- Emotionally supported Christians.
- Socially connected Christians.

But not many spiritual warriors. Not many who can discern. Not many who can command. Not many who can stand. Not many who can drive darkness out of a room.

The Deliverance Vacuum

In all the individual congregations that I've visited, I have not met a single official, platform-recognized leader who was a true powerhouse in deliverance.

Not one.

However — I have met people who were incognito, quietly defending the ground behind the scenes.

Intercessors. Watchmen. Deliverance warriors.

And in most cases, they were in churches that would eject them instantly if they “outed” themselves as deliverance ministers. That’s how entrenched the opinion has become that “talk of demons glorifies satan.”

But who is glorified most by silence? Who benefits most when the Church refuses to talk about one entire side of a two-sided war? That idea did not come from the Holy Spirit. It can only have come from the enemy himself.

He is the only one who wants us:

- Unaware of his tactics.
- Unaware of his personality.
- Unaware of his hierarchy.
- Unaware of our authority.
- Unaware that he is even present.

The Bible does not express the opinion that we should ignore him. It informs us substantially about:

- His character. His strategies. His lies. His limits.
- And how to fight him. (Resist James 4:7, Expose Ephesians 5:11, Stand 1 Peter 5:8-9)

In fact, we are commanded to do so.

The Soulsh Church

Mostly we are feeding intellect, occupying emotions, and providing comforts for the body. That appeals to the soulsh nature. It is easier to:

- Improve behavior
- Improve mood
- Improve knowledge
- Improve attendance

Than to confront spiritual bondage. Deliverance is messy. Spiritual warfare is confrontational. Authority requires faith. Morale requires winning every skirmish. Discernment requires holiness. It is far easier to host a seminar than to cast out a demon.

So the Church has largely chosen the seminar.

The Cost of Avoidance

Here is the real issue. If you remove deliverance from the Church:

- Addiction stays.
- Trauma festers.
- Bitterness grows.
- Division multiplies.
- False doctrine spreads.
- Leaders burn out.
- Marriages collapse.
- Secret sin thrives.
- Abusive leaders can hide.
- Decoy churches (total enemy facades) can exist.

And we treat all of it as psychological or circumstantial.

Sometimes it is. But sometimes it isn't. If you remove the spiritual lens entirely, you will misdiagnose spiritual problems as emotional ones. And misdiagnosis guarantees mistreatment.

Who Benefits?

Ask a simple question. Who benefits most from a theology that minimizes demons, avoids deliverance, discourages talk of spiritual warfare and treats the enemy as irrelevant?

It isn't Jesus. It isn't the saints. It isn't the lost. There is only one kingdom that benefits from that arrangement.

And that should tell you everything you need to know.

What Now?

If this offends you, good. If this scares you, ask why. If this angers you, examine whether it is conviction.

The point is not to glorify satan. The point is to stop ignoring him.

Jesus did not glorify demons by confronting them. He humiliated them. And He commanded us to do the same. If we are going to fulfill the Great Commission, we cannot amputate the spiritual dimension of it.

If there is a war, then fight. If there is an enemy, then expose him. If there is authority, then use it.

Anything less is surrender. And the Church was not built to surrender.

The Best Trick He Ever Pulled

The enemy's greatest accomplishment in the modern Church is not persecution.

It's not witchcraft. It's not open satanism. It's not Hollywood. It's not government corruption. It's theology.

His greatest victory is convincing Christians that he either: doesn't exist, has no meaningful influence, cannot touch believers, or should be ignored entirely.

If there is a war, and one side convinces the other that the war is imaginary, that side wins without firing a shot.

Ignore Him — That Was His Idea

Somewhere along the way, doctrines crept in that sound spiritual but function as blindfolds:

- "Christians can't have demons."
- "Generational curses don't exist anymore."
- "Deliverance was only for Bible times."
- "Talking about demons glorifies satan."
- "Everything is just the flesh."
- "Just renew your mind and it'll go away."
- "Demons were rampant at the time of Jesus, but not anymore."

Let's ask a very simple question. Who benefits most from those doctrines? Certainly not the people who are: addicted, bound in shame, cycling through the same sin for years, destroying marriages, tormented by thoughts, living under generational patterns (curses).

The only one who benefits from being ignored... is the one being ignored.

"Christians Can't Have Demons"

This one has done enormous damage. The argument usually goes like this:

"Light and darkness can't coexist."

"You're a temple of the Holy Spirit."

"Greater is He that is in you."

All true verses. But here's the problem. They are all being interpreted in a self-serving way and

misapplied. Let's look at them one at a time.

“Light and darkness can't coexist.”

Light and darkness DO coexist. Both are in the world currently. How small does a container have to be that an omnipresent God can't fit in it? In fact, where could evil hide that an omnipresent God would be there? Jesus said that even when He was in hell, the Father was there! Can there be any doubt that they can't coexist? Is every Christian 100% pure light with no hint of shadow? Why are 50% of pastors addicted to porn? Sales pitches usually sound good – until you try the product. Believers are warned not to give the devil a foothold (Ephesians 4:27). Why, if it's not possible?

“You're a temple of the Holy Spirit.”

Have you read Ezekiel 8 and 9? At the time of Josiah, the temple had been the town DUMP for years. Maybe you're more like a house and you can invite Jesus into the living room and the kitchen, but you got something else hiding in the bedroom. You won't let Him in there. You've got to throw open ALL the doors and windows and let Him come clean out everything – even that trunk in the attic and that spot under the mattress. Paul says not to defile the temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). He doesn't say it's impossible.

“Greater is He that is in you.” (1 John 4:4)

Yeah, He is, but how much of HIM is really in you? And that doesn't mean you've appropriated Him fully and applied Him to the problem. Do you really know how hard it is to be FULL of Him and keep everything else out – including the YOU can keeps inviting the bad stuff in? Go read the “Cups” chapter again. But believers are also told to cleanse themselves (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Look, demons swirl. Demons tempt. Demons try to overpower. Demons get people to do stupid stuff – particularly when they are impaired (drunk, high, angry, hurt, lonely) and can't/won't/don't keep the doors shut.

What's the difference really between afflicted, attacked, oppressed, stalked, or tempted?

Oppression is not ownership. Influence is not identity. Attachment is not possession. (2 Corinthians 10:4-5, Galatians 3:1, Luke 22:31)

A Christian may belong to Christ — fully — and still have:

- Unhealed trauma and/or deep unforgiveness.
- Doors opened through past sin. Or unrepentant current sin.
- False filters, lenses, doctrines and paradigms that cloud their mind.
- Agreements made unknowingly. Contract through secret societies and oaths taken.
- Generational strongholds not yet broken.

When Jesus cast demons out of people in the Gospels, many of them were covenant people. When Paul wrote to churches about footholds and strongholds, he wasn't writing to pagans. He was writing to believers. The idea that “Christians can't have demons” has shut down deliverance in most churches.

And satan applauded.

Generational Curses? “That's Old Testament.”

Another convenient dismissal.

We are told that it was under the Old Law, that the Cross broke everything automatically, that Jesus became the curse for us and that family lines don't matter. (Exodus 20:5, Galatians 3:13)

And yet we watch: Addiction run in families, Rage run in families, Sexual brokenness run in families, Occult involvement run in families, Suicide run in families, and Atheism run in families.

Patterns. Spiritual patterns. Yes, the Cross provides freedom.

But freedom must be applied. Authority must be exercised. Agreements must be broken.

If generational influence didn't still exist, the enemy wouldn't work so hard through bloodlines.

Look, in Egypt Moses told them to take the blood of the lamb and put it over the doorposts so that the death angel would pass over. That was the instruction from God. What would happen if they had said, "Well, we killed the lamb, but the blood is automatic. Spreading it around is icky. We don't have to do any of that. We're Israelites and God will protect us." I'll tell you what would happen – they would have died! They didn't follow the directions. YES, the blood is effective. But you have to appropriate it and apply it as instructed! All the enemy has to do is to convince you that all your weapons either don't work, aren't necessary or work fine all by themselves. And he won!

"Don't Talk About Demons — It Glorifies satan"

This one may be the most ironic.

The Bible speaks plainly about:

- Principalities. Powers. Rulers of darkness. Wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)
- The schemes of the devil. (2 Corinthians 2:11)
- Armor. (Ephesians 6)
- Strongholds. (2 Corinthians 10:4)
- Authority. (Luke 10:18)
- Casting out demons. (Colossians 2:15, others)

Jesus did not treat silence as spiritual maturity. He exposed darkness. He confronted it. He drove it out. Talking about cancer does not glorify cancer. It prepares you to fight it. Talking about demons does not glorify satan. It unmasks him.

And he hates that.

The Result: A Neutered Church

When you combine all of these doctrines, what do you get?

A Church that focuses on behavior modification, emotional comfort, and intellectual stimulation.

A Church that avoids confrontation, avoids deliverance, and avoids spiritual authority.

We are strong in: Programs, Conferences, Branding, Sermon series and Deacons with gun permits.

But weak in: Discernment (Hebrews 5:14), Authority (Luke 10:19), Confrontation of darkness (James 4:7), Breaking bondage, and Faith (Hebrews 11:6).

We are raising educated believers. We are not raising spiritual warriors. And that is not an accident.

The Subtlety of It

The enemy rarely shows up in a red suit with horns. He shows up as:

- A reasonable theological adjustment.

- A “balanced” teaching.
- A caution against “extremism.”
- A call to “stay focused on Jesus.”
- A desire to “avoid controversy.”
- An angel of light. (2 Corinthians 11:14)

He doesn’t deny the war. He just convinces you that your weapons aren’t necessary.

He doesn’t deny demons. He just convinces you that they’re irrelevant.

He doesn’t deny evil. He just relocates it exclusively inside “human psychology.”

And millions nod along.

Why This Matters

If the enemy can convince you that he isn’t real, he isn’t active, he cannot influence you or that confronting his is either immature or glorifying him, then..

You will never resist him properly. You will treat spiritual attacks as: bad moods, stress, personality flaws, succumbing to temptation, chemical imbalances or “just the way I am.”

Sometimes those things are real. But sometimes it’s war. And if you don’t know it’s war, you won’t fight or you won’t fight in a way that’s likely to actually CRUSH the enemy.

The Bible Never Told Us to Ignore Him

It told us to:

- Resist him. (James 4:7)
- Stand against him. Be sober and vigilant. (1 Peter 5:8)
- Not be ignorant of his schemes. (2 Corinthians 2:11)
- Take every thought captive. (2 Corinthians 10:5)
- Put on armor. (Ephesians 6)
- Cast out demons. (Mark 16:17)
- Tread on serpents and scorpions. (Luke 10:19)
- Overcome. (Revelation 12:11)

None of that language suggests indifference. It suggests engagement with prejudice.

The Bottom Line

The enemy has worked very hard to:

1. Obfuscate his existence.
2. Insert doctrines that neutralize resistance.
3. Shame those who talk about deliverance.
4. Make spiritual warfare seem fringe.
5. Reduce Christianity to intellect, emotion, and morality.

And he has largely succeeded in the West. But the Bible does not support that version of Christianity. And the early Church did not look like that either. And as he gets more bold and more doors get opened, we better get to dealing with this for real.

If we are going to be the Bride, if we are going to finish the race, if we are going to restore the body, then we cannot keep ignoring one entire side of the war.

A side of the war that has largely beat us down until we're unrecognizable as an army – and what's left is very far behind enemy lines.

None of this was never God's idea. It's what we got for not listening Him.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” — James 4:7

WEAPON UP, SHEEP!





Chapter 26 – Apostasy

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths (2 Timothy 4:1-4).

John 15 - If/Then Statements

God does **not** change. What irritated Him then, still irritates Him now. What pleased and honored Him then, still pleases and honors Him now. These If/Then statements are guarantees! IF you do these things, then He WILL do what He said He would do – sooner or later, one way or the other. He reserves the right to manifest it in whatever way He wants, but He WILL do it.

It's equational. Like math. Just insert the quantity.

IF you do Behavior X **THEN** Consequence Y will result. Quantity N is the only variable.

$$BX(N) = CY(N)$$

Positive Behavior = Positive Consequence **OR** Negative Behavior = Negative Consequence

Get it? Doesn't even require faith. It's just a guarantee from God. Now, it may not manifest like you expect or when you expect, but it WILL happen because God's promises are good. He is faithful and just.

So here we go. Let's look at the guarantees. (*Scripture quoted from Amplified Version.*)

John 15

1 I AM the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser.

Just so we're clear who is whom. God is the one doing the pruning, with whatever tools He wants to use.

2 Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit [that stops bearing] He cuts away (trims off, takes away); and He cleanses and repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more and richer and more excellent fruit.

If you are stagnant my Father will spew you out. He repeatedly prunes EVERY branch. Don't think you're exempt and don't think the pruning you just went through is the last of it! And know that the ONLY reason He is doing it is so that you and the Vine will bear more fruit.

3 You are cleansed and pruned already, because of the word which I have given you [the teachings I have discussed with you].

The disciples to whom I was speaking were currently in pretty good shape. That wasn't always the case. Peter, in particular, required additional pruning later on. And then there was Judas.

4 Dwell in Me, and I will dwell in you. [Live in Me, and I will live in you.] Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (being vitally united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me.

Here you should begin to see the recipe book of conditional statements that follow. It's very important to note that "abiding" is not at all the same as "believing in". It's not a one time acceptance of a truth, it's a constant relationship. Abiding infers constant and deep symbiotic relationship with Me, not just an acknowledgment.

IF you remain in ME, THEN I will remain in you.

5 I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.

Just so we're clear on who is whom. I'm the Source. You're the twig. You're the fruit bearers, but you CANNOT do it without a constant relationship with Me. If ANYTHING interrupts the flow or nourishment from me, you will NOT be able to bear good fruit. Just so we're clear.

IF a man remains in Me AND I in him, THEN he will bear much fruit.

IF you are cut off from Me, THEN you can do nothing.

6 If a person does not dwell in Me, he is thrown out like a [broken-off] branch, and withers; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and they are burned.

{Editors note: It's possible to be a fruit-bearing branch, stop bearing fruit and be thrown into the fire. This ought to scare the pants off of all of us!! Why else do you need to work out our salvation with fear and trembling?! If our acceptance of Jesus resulted in permanent, unchangeable salvation, how is this possible? These aren't branches that stay attached to the Vine and are refined by fire and then made useful again. The clear implication is that these are trimmed off, hauled off and burned. There is nothing here that indicates that it is for medicinal value and they eventually return to the Vine. I know this disrupts a lot of people's theology. I'd sure like somebody to tell me how else to interpret this! Note these are not some other kind of branch that is pruned off. These are not non-Christians. These are people that WERE connected to the Vine and stopped bearing fruit.}

IF you stop dwelling in Me, THEN you will be cut off, hauled off and burned in the fire.

7 If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My words remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

As long as we're in relationship and you are producing good fruit, I'll listen to you and answer you.

IF you abide in Me AND My words in you AND they continue to live in your heart (active and operating, not passive), THEN ask whatever you like and I'll do it for you.

8 When you bear (produce) much fruit, My Father is honored and glorified, and you show and prove yourselves to be true followers of Mine.

The Vinedresser is pleased with you when you effectively accomplish that for which you were designed. You are like the Vine when you take what the Vine feeds you and produce that which defines the Vine. If you produce nothing OR make olives on a grape vine, you're not pleasing to the Vinedresser. You must do as you were designed and as the Vine and the Vinedresser desire. You must obey THEIR design for you, not your own plans and goals.

9 I have loved you, [just] as the Father has loved Me; abide in My love [continue in His love with Me].

The Vinedresser lovingly cares for Me and I will lovingly care for You. Please don't do anything to screw it up. Please make good fruit so nothing bad will happen.

10 If you keep My commandments [if you continue to obey My instructions], you will abide in My love and live on in it, just as I have obeyed My Father's commandments and live on in His love.

The Vinedresser is pleased with Me, so He will be pleased with you if you are like Me and do as I instruct. Make the fruit in the time and in the way and in the proportions that I tell you to, or else.

IF you keep My commandments, THEN you will abide in My love and live on.

11 I have told you these things, that My joy and delight may be in you, and that your joy and gladness may be of full measure and complete and overflowing.

I want everybody clear on the expectations and requirements. I don't want you to have to guess about what I'm expecting of you. This should be pretty clear. If you mangle it all up later, don't say I didn't warn you. You will not have joy and gladness in full measure, complete and overflowing, unless you operate within My guidelines. You and I both have to do it the way the Vinedresser designed it.

12 This is My commandment: that you love one another [just] as I have loved you.

Just so we're clear. If you don't keep My commandments, I'm not going to abide in you and you're in danger of being pruned, cast out and burned. So please obey Me on this. Love one another, just as I love you. What the Vine feeds you should flow THROUGH you and on to all the other members without interruption. Don't clog up the flow and don't add your own spin or flavor or virus to it. Just let what I do for you flow on through you to others. If not, then you're a wart and a cancer and you're keeping others from bearing fruit and the Vinedresser is NOT going to be happy. Nothing personal. I love you. I'm just saying so you're clear and there won't be any surprises. If you try to prune parts off yourself, you're going to be in big trouble. That's not your job. You need to love and feed all your members and let the Vinedresser take care of the rest.

13 No one has greater love [no one has shown stronger affection] than to lay down (give up) his own life for his friends.

This is what I'm doing for you. I'm serving and upholding and feeding and sacrificing so YOU can bear fruit. For a little while I was the Vine AND the Branches, but it was only a one-man show for a tiny sliver of time as it was growing. Now I'm the support mechanism so you can grow and prosper. And I love doing it! It would sure be great if you would be willing to do it, too. Lay down your own desires and just feed and love your members as they grow. And if they produce more fruit than you, that's OK, that was the plan. What you don't get is that even though I'm the Vine, when a branch gets pruned, that's part of Me too – and I'm willing to let that part of Me die for the sake of the whole. Be willing to lay down whatever is necessary for the sake of Me or for those around you. If you do, the Vinedresser will be REALLY happy with you.

14 You are My friends if you keep on doing the things which I command you to do.

A reminder of verse 10. Not just producers, not just branches, but FRIENDS if you KEEP ON doing what you are commanded. This is active and ongoing. Constant acknowledgment, listening and obedience results in friendship. I want you to be My friends. Please be My friends.

IF you want to be My friends, THEN keep constantly doing what I command you to do.

15 I do not call you servants (slaves) any longer, for the servant does not know what his master is doing (working out). But I have called you My friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from My Father. [I have revealed to you everything that I have learned from Him.]

You're not flying blind here – I've given you plenty of information about what the plan is. You are partners and team members, so long as you don't deny Me by going your own way.

16 You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and I have appointed you [I have planted you], that you might go and bear fruit and keep on bearing, and that your fruit may be lasting [that it may remain, abide], so that whatever you ask the Father in My Name [as presenting all that I AM], He may give it to you.

I picked you, I grafted you, I grew you, I feed you, I instruct you, all with one goal – that you will constantly bear good fruit that is lasting AND so that whatever you ask the Vinedresser, He will give you. We have an open heaven over us when we don't make it about us – we abide, we obey and we bear much lasting fruit.

17 This is what I command you: that you love one another.

Remember verse 12? I wasn't kidding. Do this or else. You CANNOT abide in me without this. You will surely be pruned sooner or later if you don't do this. And I'm not defining who "one another" is, but it's a lot wider sphere than you think. For sure it includes EVERYONE connected to the Vine. I'm talking to the whole lot of you. If ANY of you are not loving ALL the others, you're going to be in big trouble and you need to wonder if I'm really abiding in you. The Vinedresser might prune you off at any moment.

18 If the world hates you, know that it hated Me before it hated you.

You're not alone. The more you get to be like Me, the more you need to expect this stuff.

IF the world hates you, THEN be comforted in knowing that it hated me first.

19 If you belonged to the world, the world would treat you with affection and would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world [no longer one with it], but I have chosen (selected) you out of the world, the world hates (detests) you.

This is pretty clear, isn't it? If the world is in love with you, you need to wonder how much you are like me. If you fit right in with them, you are a lot more like them than you are like Me. The world cannot produce the fruit My vine bears, so you might be in danger of pruning at any moment. Better turn.

IF you belonged to the world, THEN the world would love you as is own.

IF you are no longer of the world because I have chosen you, THEN the world hates you.

20 Remember that I told you, A servant is not greater than his master [is not superior to him]. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word and obeyed My teachings, they will also keep and obey yours.

You will endure what I endured if you seek to be like me. You will not surpass me, but you should expect the same treatment. That may just be one of the most depressing sentences in the Bible. Since they DIDN'T keep My word and obey Me, you really shouldn't expect anybody will listen to you either! Be surprised and thankful if they listen at all.

IF they persecuted Me, THEN they will also persecute you (assuming you're like me).

IF they obeyed Me, THEN they will also obey you.

21 But they will do all this to you [inflict all this suffering on you] because of [your bearing] My name and on My account, for they do not know or understand the One Who sent Me.

Don't be ashamed, they're doing it because you are like Me! That's great! They would love you if you looked like them. They don't understand the Vinedresser and how He works – or they do and they hate the whole idea – it's not your fault they're mad at you.

22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin [would be blameless]; but now they have no excuse for their sin.

Without my voice and my commands, they could not really be expected to produce fruit at all or they would not produce the correct kind. But now they have no excuse. If they expect to abide, then they need to obey.

IF I hadn't explained sin to them, THEN they would not be guilty.

23 Whoever hates Me also hates My Father.

IF you hate me, THEN you hate My Father as well.

24 If I had not done (accomplished) among them the works which no one else ever did, they would not be guilty of sin. But [the fact is] now they have both seen [these works] and have hated both Me and My Father.

They saw miracles. They saw undeniable proof that I am who I say I am. They have no more excuse to deny they need to obey Me. I am greater than you and that's just all there is to it. But instead they saw and hated both the Vine and the Vinedresser.

IF I had not done miracles, THEN they would have an excuse to disobey – but they do anyway – and by it show their hatred of Me and the Father.

25 But [this is so] that the word written in their Law might be fulfilled, They hated Me without a cause.

I saw it coming. They saw it coming. There's no avoiding it. Had to happen.

26 But when the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengtheners, Standby) comes, Whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth Who comes (proceeds) from the Father, He [Himself] will testify regarding Me.

The Holy Spirit will explain it all later and help you hear My voice so you can produce good, abundant, lasting fruit forever. Hang loose, it's on the way. He will be your teacher, not Man.

27 But you also will testify and be My witnesses, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

You will tell the world. You will be witnesses (martureo from martus – meaning martyrs) because you can hear Me, are abiding in Me and are obeying Me. Big fruit comes when you are witnesses, no matter how much persecution comes, no matter how much the world hates you, even unto death.

SUMMARY

Below is a list of the If/Then's in this amazing chapter. These are straight from the mouth of Jesus. These are conditional statements and promises. It is a recipe for success and fruit bearing and a road map to know what to expect. It is also a condemnation of those who are not doing these things and should not expect ANY blessing! The thing you need to see is the equational nature of these. They aren't just On/Off switches, they are Dials. It should be obvious that some people bear more fruit than others. Why? Because they did these to a greater degree, they poured out more of themselves, they dialed it up higher. They've learned how to let Jesus flow through them without getting in the way. They have a bigger cup of Jesus. However you want to think about it. It's all math, just plug in the quantities.

IF you remain in ME, THEN I will remain in you.

IF you remain in 20%, THEN I will remain in you 20%.

If you remain in me ALL, THEN I will remain in you ALL.

IF a man remains in Me AND I in him, THEN he will bear much fruit.

IF you are cut off from Me, THEN you can do nothing.

IF you stop receiving from Me, THEN you WILL stop growing.

IF you turn the valve down to 50% of capacity, THEN you will grow 50% of capacity.

IF you try to grow on your own power, THEN nothing that looks like MY fruit will result.

IF you stop dwelling in Me, THEN you will be cut off, hauled off and burned in the fire.

IF you shut the valve all the way off and walk away, THEN you are in big trouble.

IF you abide in Me AND My words in you AND they continue to live in your heart (active and operating, not passive), THEN ask whatever you like and I'll do it for you.

IF you do this stuff a little bit, THEN you can ask for help with your headache.

IF you do this stuff all the way, THEN you can ask to raise the dead.

IF you keep My commandments, THEN you will abide in My love and live on.

IF you keep some of my commandments, THEN you are abiding SOME.

IF you want to be My friends, THEN keep constantly doing what I command you to do.

IF you don't want to be my friends, THEN just do some of them sometimes.

IF the world hates you, THEN be comforted in knowing that it hated me first.

IF the world hates you once in a while, THEN you're probably like me a little bit.

IF the world boils you in oil and kills you, THEN you're probably like me all the time.

IF you belonged to the world, THEN the world would love you as its own.

IF the world loves you 40%, THEN there's probably 40% of you that's not obeying Me.

IF the world can't tell you apart from its own people, THEN you're probably not much like Me.

IF you are no longer of the world because I have chosen you, THEN the world hates you.

IF I chose you AND you choose to let me, THEN I will make you someone the world despises.

IF they persecuted Me, THEN they will also persecute you (assuming you're like me).

IF they obeyed Me, THEN they will also obey you.

IF the vast majority ignored me, THEN don't expect any different.

IF I hadn't explained sin to them, THEN they would not be guilty.

IF you understand the equational nature of this chapter, THEN you need to give ALL.

IF you abide and obey 50%, THEN the other 50% is sin and you are guilty.

IF you hate me, THEN you hate My Father as well.

IF the world hates me and won't receive from me, THEN they won't receive from the Father either.

IF you abide in me 70%, THEN you hate me 30% - and the Father too.

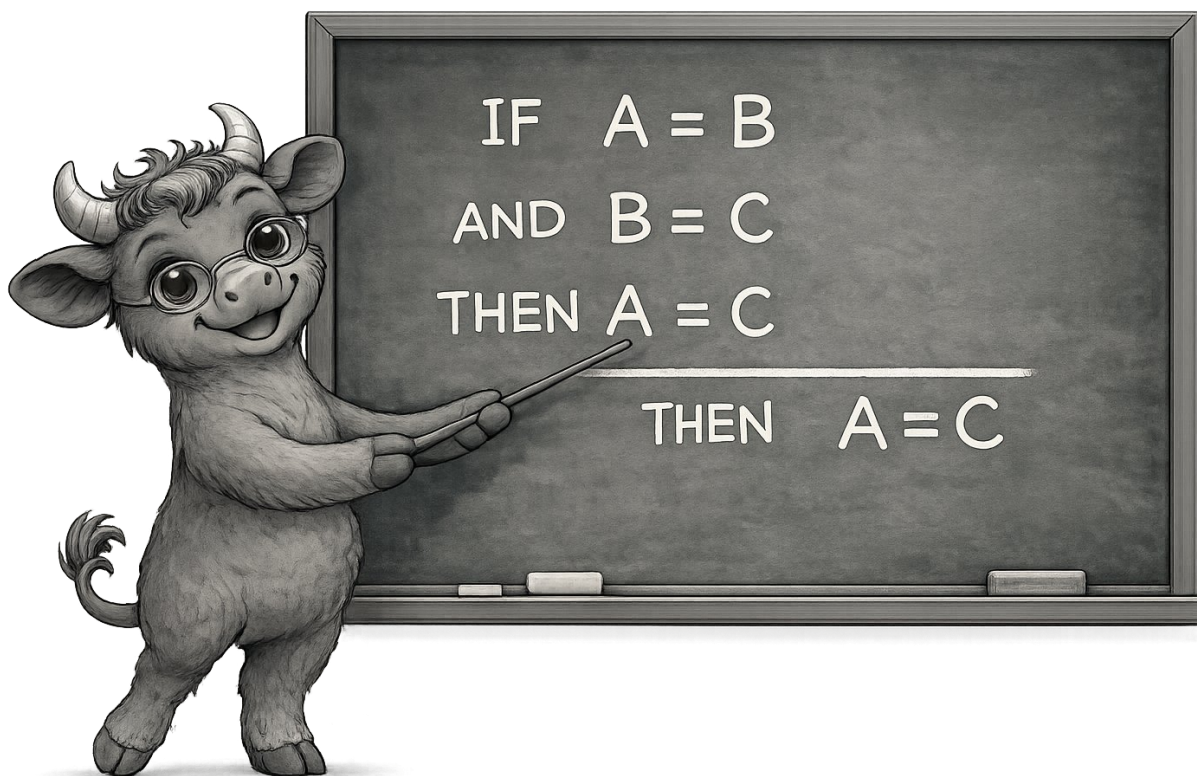
IF I had not done miracles, THEN they would have an excuse to disobey – but they do anyway – and by it show their hatred of Me and the Father

IF you have EVER seen Me work, ever heal or transform or redeem,
THEN you have no excuse – and any disobedience is hatred toward Me and the Father.

**So what's it gonna be? How far are you willing to go? What still needs to be laid down?
Could you do it now?**

Maybe pray this prayer, if you have the guts for it -

Lord, I really WANT to surrender ALL. I really do, but I don't know how. I know I'm not there and I'm sorry I ever held anything back. Please help me. Please? If there is anything that stands between me and You, anything I love more than You, whether I realize it or not, whether I like it or not, no matter where it came from or how long it's been there, would You just rip it, shred it, burn it, crush it, kill it, tear it out of my grip even if I like it. Whatever You do, DO NOT stop breaking me until You are finished, no matter how much I whine. Do not dial down Your refining fire. YOU have your way with me. Give me Your Spirit right now in as big as measure as I can handle. I trust You. Please don't leave me like this, I stink. I'm sorry I didn't pray this sooner. I love You, Jesus. Do it now! Amen.



Chapter 27 – Prayer



from the book “Do It Yourself City Church Restoration”

The point is this: when we act like Jesus, God honors that.

Jesus had massive backup. His army included enough angels to flatten the planet in an instant. But He never called them. He stood alone, knowing that God would back Him up. He stood in the gap for all people, for all time, against all of hell and the weight of all sin. He just knew. He knew that He knew that God would back Him up. He knew His Dad was bigger than their dad.

That’s why He loved David and others throughout history who have gone up against impossible odds alone, but with God at their back and willing to lay down anything for others. That’s why He loved Moses. That’s why He loved Paul.

Can you pray the Big Prayer?

Exodus 32:30–32 (KJV) – *“And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.*

And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.”

Romans 9:1–5 (KJV) – *“I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”*

Clearly, as the ultimate Apostle, this is the model that Jesus set forth for us when He offered Himself as the scapegoat for all the sins of everyone for all time.

He had to have known He could never go before the Father again with all that sin on Him. Can you get your head around the kind of sacrifice that was? Not just His physical body being beaten, but what it was like for the Son of God to be separated from the Father by the weight of all sin.

Are you willing to pray that God would blot you out of the Book of Life, if only He would send the people into the Promised Land?

What is the Promised Land for us now but a true community under God’s headship — in oneness and harmony and sharing with each as they have need? What is the Promised Land but church outside the walls all day, every day, being one body?

Doesn’t that sound great?

What’s it worth to you that Christ’s body would be restored and that final prayer of Jesus in the Garden (John 17:21) would be answered? How much have you been begging and weeping and groaning for that to come?

Can you pray the prayer of Moses?

John 15:12–13 (KJV) - *“This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”*

I’m not going to mince words. Which is more valuable — your physical life or your eternal life?

You are a blade of grass that withers. (Job 14:1–2)

But your eternal life is where your treasure is.

John 10:27–28 (KJV) – *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”*

If you’re one of His, no one can take it from you. But you can lay it down.

I just gave you three examples of people who did: Moses, Paul, and Jesus. It’s your birthright. But you can offer it in exchange for another.

If you have too much of you in your cup, there’s no way you can pray that prayer. But if there is hardly any of you left and you’re so cramp-packed full of Jesus that nothing else can fit, it’s no problem — because He prays that prayer really well.

I’m not going to make any excuses about this. My goal is to raise up, or gather together, or whatever, the people who understand this and get them to pray together the biggest prayers they can pray and see what breaks. I know lots of them. I’ve helped grow some of them.

Nothing is more loving than to be willing to lay everything down. It’s nice that people give 10% to the church. It’s better that some people will offer up their car, or sell their boat, or invite strangers into their home. It’s amazing when someone sacrifices their life for the Gospel.

But all the forces of hell quake in fear before those who are broken enough and sincere enough and fearless enough and so full of Jesus that they can offer up their eternal salvation if only their kinsmen could enter the Promised Land — whatever that land might be.

These are people who love God so much and trust Him so much that if it brings Him glory and furthers His Kingdom or heals one little old lady or restores a marriage, they will be willing to go to hell for eternity. And this isn’t reckless self-deception or bravado or an empty offer. These are not people who don’t know what they’re doing. These are people who may have even seen hell. These are people whose eyes are fully open — and still are willing to go.

Hear me.

Do not pray that prayer unless you mean it. You may think you mean it. But God will correct you real fast if you’re holding something back. I’ve seen it happen. And it hurts.

My goal is to raise up the kind of people who love the brethren enough to lay down anything — including praying the Big Prayer — if only the Gospel would be preached in power and things would change. Those kind of people don’t argue about dogma or doctrine or man-made things. They don’t hold tightly to their cash or their stuff or other idols. They will lay down their family, their marriage, their hobbies, their job — anything — if God tells them to.

They hear His voice and they won’t settle for anything less than Him directing all of their paths all the time. They will not listen to man anymore. They know Jesus’ voice — even when it’s coming out of another person — and they won’t settle for less.

Never mind teleporting through walls or being bulletproof or fire coming out of your mouth or whatever other stuff some folks preach. The people I just described are the “manifest sons of God” that the earth is crying out for.

Romans 8.

Those who are dead to self. Those with a giant cup of Jesus. Those walking in holiness and unshackled from this world.

Those whose love for each other is so big, so sacrificial, so totally unlike the world that no one can figure them out. They are led by the Spirit. They hear Him. They go and do as He says.

The glorious liberty of sonship is absolute submission.

The manifest sons of God are those who understand the meaning of the word *all*.

Proverbs 3:5–6 - *“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

All thine heart. None of thine own understanding. All thy ways. All thy paths. He directs. Period. All means everything. What to eat. What to wear. What to say. Where to go. How to spend every dollar. What to pray. Everything. At every moment.

“All” means if He says to jump then you jump WHEN He tells you, HOW He tells you, how HIGH He tells you – and you don’t come down until He says.

Unless you think “all” means something else. How much free will does a bondservant really get?

I think you had free will just long enough to decide to be a bondservant. Now you’re not your own anymore. Bondservants don’t need 40 days to decide what their personal purpose is. They don’t get to decide what they think they would like to do for the Master and King.

They trust and obey. Trust and obey. For there’s no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.

These are the people who can walk shoulder-to-shoulder without jostling each other because they’re not looking at each other for cues. They’re watching the Commander-in-Chief, and He is their Head. (Joel 2) They keep their eyes straight ahead and keep marching. And yet they are true community and have true love for each other.

When they come together, the world has never seen anything like them before.

But they are just the First Fruits of what’s to come.

Let me put it another way. It’s entirely possible you have made going to heaven an idol. Ever consider that? Are we worshipping salvation more than we worship the Savior?

Are we giving people a shortcut to escape hell and letting that be the end-all, be-all of their spiritual walk? That makes heaven an idol. And that’s just as deadly as carving wood or stone and bowing to it in your living room.

We are not to worship any created thing. Heaven is created. Your soul is created.

We’re to worship the Creator.

If you hold onto something too tightly, it’s an idol. That includes your own salvation. If He wants it, He can have it. Extended to the extreme — this applies even to your own salvation. If He wants to send me to hell, I deserve it. A thousand thousand times over I deserve it.

It’s only by His grace and mercy I’m not already there. And He is really big. And I am really not. So if He wants to change His mind or cash my soul in to save someone else, who am I to argue? Whatever brings Him the most glory is fine with me.

Ask Him if I’m bluffing. I am deadly serious. As the Lord is my witness, I lie not.

This is the big leagues. If you’re going to restore the Body of Christ, you better be all the way willing to lay down anything He asks.

He will test you like Job. Like Abraham with Isaac. Those are the people who change things.

And if you make it about you — He’ll crush you.

Chapter 28 – Predestination



from the video “Predestination or Freewill? BOTH!”
Doug Perry, 2009

Here’s a tree.

I want to talk to you about trees... and about predestination and free will. And I’m going to try and do it in as childlike a way as possible, because the Bible says that those are the ones that are going to inherit the Kingdom of God.

So let’s talk a little bit about this tree for a minute.

Predestination vs. Free Will

I want to talk a little bit about the sovereignty of God. I want to talk a little bit about predestination and free will.

Now, to substantially simplify things: imagine that this tree you’re a little worm—a little inchworm—and we start you off at the bottom of the tree, and you start working your way up. And we tell you, “Just go as far as you can up the tree.”

Predestination says we know how far the inchworm is going to get before he falls off one of these limbs. And he might walk a little bit and fall off one over here, or he might walk all the way up the really tall ones up at the top.

But predestination says God knows the end from the beginning, so He knows all the choices you’re going to make and which branch you’re going to fall off of—where you’re going to end, the destination point for your journey.

Okay. That’s not a big enough God. A future-telling, soothsaying God is not a big enough God.

Jeremiah says: “I know the plans I have for you, plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Okay—this is the tree of your life that He designed for you, and it has all these possible variables.

If, as you’re inching your way up right here, you decide to go that way—and you get drunk and die in a drunk-driving accident when you’re fourteen—and right there, bam, it’s over. You fall off the branch.

Or maybe you go up a little bit farther, get a girl pregnant, ruin your witness, ruin your ministry, can’t be effective... whatever.

He would have liked you to stay on the main trunk, on the narrow path, and gone as far as you possibly could.

You would think, wouldn’t you?

Now, predestination basically says you’re a little meat puppet. You’re a little inchworm. You don’t have really any choices. He knows exactly where you’re going to end.

Free will says this is all sort of just you doing whatever—and yeah, He’s calling to you, and yeah, He wants you to end up on a certain branch—but you’re pretty much going to do whatever you want.

Well, I think they’re sort of both right, and they’re sort of neither right.



in

Because in order for Him to know the plans He has for you—plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope—He has to know all the available plans, all the possibilities, pick from them, determine which is the best possible one for you, and then try to get you to go that direction.

Now, by “trying to get you to go that direction,” I mean He’s going to call you. He’s going to whisper to you. And sometimes He may tweak things to where you don’t have a choice.

Doesn’t that violate free will? Well—there’s the paradox. There’s the conundrum. Because on the one hand, it looks like you’re predestined. On the one hand, it looks like you have free will. And on the other hand... it’s just part of the thing.

It’s a whole bunch of “if/then” statements—like if you were programming in BASIC—and as that little inchworm gets to a fork in the road, it has to decide: A or B. Which way do I go?

Okay.

Now—let’s say that little inchworm comes over here, and he’s working his way out this branch. And this isn’t really the branch the Lord wanted him on, ideally. But he’s on this branch, and he’s coming to a shorter conclusion than where the Lord wanted him.

Now did he have free will to get on this branch?

It kind of looks like he did, because this isn’t really going well. There’s Deuteronomy 28 curses on his head. He’s not obeying God.

And yet God is merciful—wants that none should be lost—doesn’t want to violate free will, but is still going to tweak his life so that somehow He can call him back.

So maybe he did have free will to get on this branch. And he’s here, inching along this little branch... and God takes this branch and touches it to that branch. And all of a sudden this little inchworm—he gets off this branch, and he thinks he has free will, but he’s really going back toward the trunk all of a sudden, and he didn’t know he was doing it.

And maybe he gets to this fork right here and he starts going the wrong direction again. And God bends that branch.

Now how could God bend that branch so that he could get back on track?

Well, it doesn’t take much.

If you’re driving to work one morning, and you’re rebelling against God—you’re in the wrong marriage, you’re in the wrong job, you’re in the wrong city—everything’s wrong about what you’re doing... all the Lord has to do is have a butterfly land in the middle of your windshield, obscure your vision, a truck hits you—bam—you’re in a wheelchair. You’ve got to go back, live with your parents, and start over.

Lose your marriage, lose your house... I mean, it doesn’t take much for Him to tweak a circumstance a certain way if He wants to get you back on track.

Now if you hear God—if you are led by the Spirit at all—you understand what I’m saying. You understand how He can tweak you, and you feel like you have free will, but then all of a sudden you just end up where He wanted you, and you don’t know how you got there. And He did it—and you know He did it.

And it might even irritate you that you feel like you don’t have a choice. And yet He knows the plans He has for you—plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Do you understand that a predestination God that simply knows the destination from before the journey starts is not nearly as sovereign, nearly as complicated, nearly as great, nearly as deserving of glory and honor as a God that knows all of the possible destinations for your life, has thought it all through, has intersected your tree with everybody else’s tree—with the butterflies, with the rain, with the hurricane, with all the other variables in your life that had to come together to weave just a certain way—designed the whole thing, wove everybody together, and then picked which was the best possible destination for you out of all the possible destinations there could be for you.

That is a really big, really complicated God.

He worked it all out—saw every tree of every person before creation ever started. How long that took, I have no idea. He has a really big hard drive.

Designed it all out. Every atom, every meteor, every comet, every new invention of man—every everything. Put everybody in place in history where they needed to be, intersecting with everybody else's trees. Picked the best possible plan for you, and then set it into motion.

That's a really big God. And that's way bigger than some crystal-ball soothsayer "I know the end from the beginning" god.

I don't know when exactly I began to understand this. I think it was around eighth grade. Some beautiful, sweet Sunday school teacher—who was a computer guy—explained it to me in terms of a decision tree: that we make all of these decisions, and God knows all the possible decisions, picks from them the best possible outcome for you based on His will, what brings Him glory, and how it intersects with everybody else—and then asks us to obey Him to end up at that point.

Now, there may be places near there that are almost just as good. This branch is just as good as that branch, but you're not quite as happy, not quite as satisfied with that spouse... whatever. Live three days longer. But within His permissive will, either one is okay.

But He is going to do what He can, when He can, to twist a branch that we're on that we're not supposed to be on—twist it back over here in some creative way—so that we'll get back where we were supposed to be.

And that is so beautiful.

And that is such mercy.

Conclusion

And He is so deserving of honor and glory and praise, because He didn't just set it into motion like a watchmaker and it's all worked out.

We have choices, and yet He tweaks our choices.

We have free will, and yet we don't. We believe that we do, and we can love Him—we're not robots—and yet He's fully sovereign.

I pray that you can get this. I pray that it will make some sense to you. I can't possibly do justice to explaining this. I can't possibly. And I don't even believe this is the fullness of what He does—but it's the best I can do.

And I pray that He'll explain it to you His way, in a way that only He can explain it to you, so that you will let Him out of the box—the Arminianism box, the Calvinism box—that you put Him in. And let Him be God. Let Him be creative. Let Him be fluid. Let Him adjust things on the fly as He wants.

Submit to His will. Seek the best possible choice—the best possible plan for your life—according to what He wants.

And see that when He calls and says, "Come out here on this branch—this is where I want you," it may not look good. There's some under here that are dead. There's no reason, there's no nothing, and they end real early. But this may be the place that brings Him the most glory, because you die a martyr in China spreading the Gospel.

And yes, you would have lived to eighty and had a successful job and a career and family and grandkids and whatever—but somehow He's always going to pull you back to this branch or one like it, because this is what He has for you.

Whatever brings Him the most glory is what we should strive for—not whatever makes us the happiest, not whatever gratifies us the most. That's just humanism.

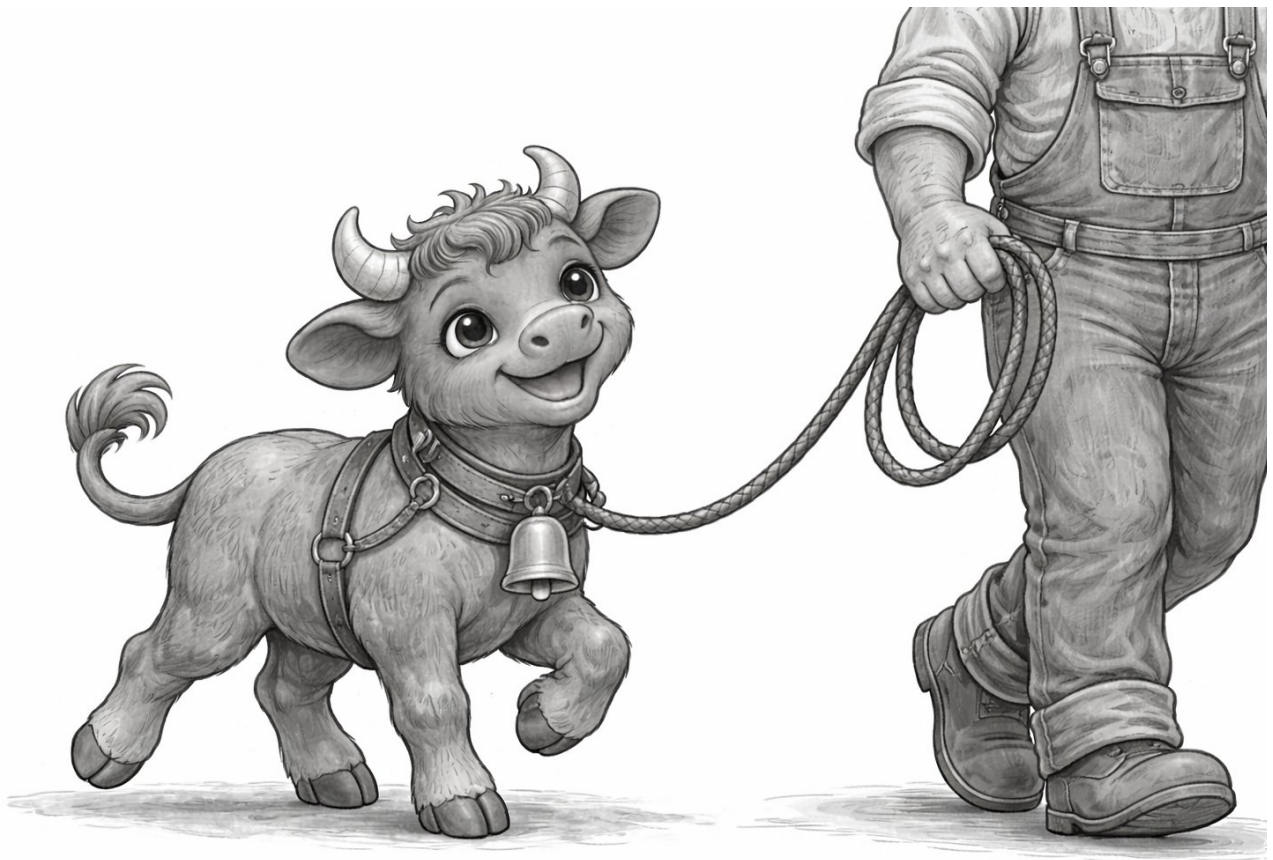
It's not for us to know the fullness of the possibilities and where we should end up according to what we would like or what the world would like. It's for us to listen and obey.

And if you say, "Yes Lord, I'm willing to go be a martyr. Yes Lord, I'm willing to die. Yes Lord, I'm willing to have men hate me and lie about me and revile me," and it looks like a dead end... He may just twist it around and just wanted to know if you were willing to walk out on this limb.

His ways are not our ways. He is bigger and more complicated than you or I can ever imagine.

Whatever box you put Him in—let Him out. Let Him be God. Let Him explain His ways to you.

Lord God Almighty, tweak my life whichever way You want. I'm just a dopey inchworm trying to climb this tree. I know I've made bad decisions. I'm not even sure if I'm where you want me to be. Please bend whatever branch, pick me up and plop me down on whatever branch You want me. I want to be in Your perfect will. I'm sorry for all the wrong turns I've made. I'm Yours. Please get me where You want me to be. In the mighty Name of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Chapter 29 – Gideon

The story of Gideon in Judges 6-8 is one of the most fun stories in the Bible. But it brings with it some unanswered questions. In chapter six we find that the Midianites are oppressing the Israelites – because they all have altars of Baal in their backyard and God was mad. But they can't have all been worshipping other gods because SOMEBODY is crying out to Yahweh, complaining about how hard their life is. So in His mercy and love, God raises up an unnamed prophet (God bless his heart) who points out the problem and preaches that they need to repent.

Evidently enough of them repent because then God sends an angel to commission this twerp, Gideon, who was the least of his house, who was of a clan that was the weakest in the tribe of Manasseh. God has to assure Gideon repeatedly that He's not kidding around and that He knows what He is doing.

So Gideon gets the altar of Baal out of his own backyard. Builds a proper altar with undressed stones, cuts down the groves (pointy fertility symbols, just like steeples) for firewood, takes dad's second best bull and offers a proper sacrifice to God on a proper altar. The guys in the village get up in the morning and are mad that somebody messed with their altar to Baal. They find out it was Gideon and want to kill him. Gideon's dad, Joash, says, "Aw, c'mon guys! Let Baal fight his own battles." And they all wander off! Something in them KNEW that the kid had a point and that they probably should have had an altar to Yahweh, not Baal.

And you know something is going on in their heads because this same altar vandal blows a trumpet for war in verse 34 – and they all show up. At the beginning of Judges 7 we see 32,000 men have showed up. But God doesn't want any of them taking credit for the victory by their own hand, so He tells Gideon to tell anyone that is afraid to go home. Right away 22,000 head for home.

Now here is where I've heard dozens of stupid sermons:

4 But the LORD said to Gideon, "The people *are* still *too* many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, *that* of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' the same shall go with you; and of whomever I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' the same shall not go." 5 So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, "Everyone who laps from the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set apart by himself; likewise everyone who gets down on his knees to drink." 6 And the number of those who lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water. 7 Then the LORD said to Gideon, "By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the *other* people go, every man to his place." 8 So the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all *the rest of* Israel, every man to his tent, and retained those three hundred men. Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

{One quick point, it's not as clear in this translation, but Gideon sent the 9,700 home, but kept their provisions and trumpets. That's the way we ought to be sending out missionaries. Three hundred have enough provision for 10,000 that they can spread around and bless people. If they are the ones willing to go out front against insane odds, then they can be trusted with extra to face any need.}

Typically, in trying to explain this crazy test, pastors and Bible teachers argue that God sent all the men down to the river and the 300 that drank out of their hand were more watchful and ready. The ones that stuck their face into the water couldn't see the enemy coming. The 300 kept one hand on their sword and their steely, warrior eyes on the horizon while they drank out of the other hand.

I even heard one pastor, determined to be different, preach that all the people that bent over to drink out of the river wanted to see their own reflection and were too prideful, so God rejected them. Which is just

NUTS because it's not a BIRDBATH, for Pete's sake! It's a river with running water and with tons of guys next to you stirring it up. How are you going to see your reflection?! Plus wouldn't those self-interested, shallow, weenies have gone home with the first batch of scaredy cats?

None of that makes any sense. If God was intent on making sure that HE got credit for it and not the people themselves, then why would He create a test to separate out the most attentive, most watchful, best soldiers? No! That doesn't make any sense. And I'm not reasoning this out either. I had wondered about it for a long time. But I'll tell you what God told me when I stopped trying to guess – and just ASKED Him.

Back in 2006 there was an event at the old Youth For Christ building in Kansas City where Heidi and Roland Baker were supposed to be there. I knew that they were both part of a stream of charisma that I had problems with, but I also knew that they had orphanages in Mozambique and were doing a good work there. There are some folks I have ZERO use for, like Todd Bentley, and am not particularly shy about how I feel about them and their ministry. But God is partial to those who care for the widows and orphans so that buys Heidi and Roland a lot more care and consideration before I pop off accusing them of things. That doesn't mean I agree, but simply that I have enough fear of the Lord to be extra careful.

Anyway, the Lord said that I should go. So I got prayed up and went to the event. There were about 500 people there, including a few that I knew from the past. During the warmup music time there was a young lady playing an acoustic guitar and singing prophetically – which just means that God was giving her the lyrics on the fly. At one point in the song she sings, "Who will stand up for Jesus?" And I hear the Lord say, "Stand up." I try to argue with him, "C'mon, Lord. Nobody else is standing. The people behind me won't be able to see." Nobody wants to look weird if they don't have to, you know? The Lord says, "Are you more afraid of them or afraid of ME?" WHAM! Just like that I'm standing up!

As soon as I stand up, people around the auditorium start popping up. They didn't stand because I stood. I'm sitting in the middle toward the back and everyone standing up was forward and to the left or right of me. About six or seven people stood up during the song. Two or three of them I happen to know – and they are big guns. Before the song is over, the Lord tells me to sit down. As soon as I sit down, the others start sitting down.

After I sit back down, I ask, "Lord, what was that? You told those people to stand up?" He said, "No. I told EVERYBODY here to stand up. Those are just the ones that hear me and obey." OUCH! Maybe one percent of the entire auditorium stood up. NONE of the leaders, sponsors, promoters, up on the front row stood up.

A couple months later I'm reading through Judges again and I get to that passage above about sending the guys down to the river. The Lord takes me back the Heidi Baker meeting and says, "It was the same thing. I spoke to everybody there, the 300 were the ones that heard me and obeyed."

Of course! Now it makes sense. It wasn't a test of who was a better warrior! It was a test of who hears God. In fact, if I know anything about Him – they probably only had one arm, walked with a limp, were autistic, were super old, had an eye patch – something that would give GOD the glory that they were in a battle at all! In fact, I suspect that these were the ones that were crying out to God about the Midianites, instead of praying to Baal. I think this is the big payoff for being obedient. I think they were the equivalent of the Sons of Zadok. And one way that I know I'm right about this comes next.

16 And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars, with torches inside the jars. 17 And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. 18 When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then blow the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

OK, imagine you're a soldier and your commander calls you out with 299 others and says, "OK, Boys, here's the plan. These 300 funny looking rejects are going to surround 135,000 men. You're going to

take a torch with a jar over it and a trumpet – never mind about your sword. When I give the signal, you’re going to break the jar, wave the torch, shout ‘Victory for God and for Gideon’, blow the trumpet – and they’re all going to kill each other.” You have to know that these 300 weren’t the best soldiers or strategists or most experienced in combat. NOBODY ever heard of such a plan and nobody has ever practiced such a thing! If they were good soldiers, they would have defected on the spot!

But ... if they hear God tell them to drink out of their hand, they can hear Him say, “This is me, it’s all good. Trust me.” As a warrior on the front lines, I can tell that there have been a LOT of battle plans like this that I would have NEVER gone along with if I hadn’t heard God tell me it was His idea and it was going to be OK. (But that’s a whole other book.) Despite how crazy, there were no injuries, no casualties, and they looted the entire army and the kings that were with them.

Forever after, these guys that heard God could show their kids and grandkids some of the spoil and brag about how they were Gideon’s mighty men that took on 450 men each (on average). I think this was God’s reward for those that listen to Him, those that are the “flock of His inheritance” that Micah talks about – the lonely little sheep that walk with a limp and are fed by His rod. There’s just ZERO chance that God picked the meanest, toughest Seal Team 6 guys. At least not in the natural. They were a different kind of warrior.

THAT is the only way this test makes any sense. It was God’s opportunity to reward those that heard His still, small voice and obeyed. They didn’t have to do much of anything. The battle belonged to the Lord.

Lord God Almighty, please let me be one of those little, humble ones that hears you and obeys. Please do whatever you have to do to me so that it will be more important to me to hear you, than to be distracted by the battle or the world. Please don’t let me be one of the weenies that squeals and is scared. I want to go face the bad guys with you, even if the plan sounds crazy, even if the odds are against us, even if it’s dark out. I want to stand by Your side. Please give me the grace, the boldness, and the faith to endure to the end. I love You, Lord. Give me a trumpet and show me to the bad guys! In the mighty Name of my Commander in Chief, Jesus Christ. Amen!



Chapter 30 – Love

from the video- “Extreme Spiritual Warfare – Love more than Love”

So I've been thinking... just kind of starting to make a mental list of what I could do that would do the most harm to satan.

I'd like you to maybe start working on your own list. Take it to the Lord and see: okay, what could I do to get even for the harm — the viciousness, the nastiness — that this little snake has done to me and my family over the years? What could I do to his kingdom that is more damaging to his kingdom than what he's done to God's kingdom?

I think if all the Christians thought that way, it might just wreck him. If the people that say they love Jesus actually were warring alongside Jesus instead of letting satan twist them into a pretzel and have his way with them, we could probably turn this ride around pretty quick.

The problem is, for far too many, the enemy whispers and it's subtle. And it looks like gossip, or it's got a little truth and a little lie, and they listen. And the enemy gets in. And it destroys harmony, destroys unity, destroys the body of Christ, hacks it up into pieces, and somehow we're convinced it was a good thing.

But you know the first thing that goes is love.

I've seen love. I've seen beautiful, amazing people that your hearts feel so intertwined, so woven together, that when they have to leave — even for a few days — or they have to head out onto their ministry to Africa or Mongolia or whatever, and that connection feels severed... it aches inside and it rips you up. And I just beg the Lord to send them back: let me hug them one more time, let me pray with them one more time. You cry out, “Lord, why is the body being divided?!”

And you get a sense of the reality of that kind of love.

Now there's a lot of people in the world who have never had that experience. Don't understand “*agape*,” don't understand unconditional love at all.

People say, “I love broccoli,” “I love the Kansas City Chiefs,” “I love Twilight,” “I love World of Warcraft,” and... well, love is a cheap word in this world right now.

And at the risk of casting pearls before swine, I'm going to tell you something I've only ever told to a handful of people — maybe six or eight people — because it's so holy and so precious and so true and real that to abuse it would heap damnation on your head like nobody's business. To do this wrong, to use this incorrectly...

I'm just warning you. I'm just warning you now.

If you speak this and you don't mean it... oh... it's as close to blasphemy of the Holy Spirit... and I don't even know, I don't even know, but you better not ...

I've seen it thrown out there ... and then withdrawn ... and you don't get to do that. It's just ALL bad.

Count the cost. Here we go.

One day I was on the phone with one of those precious folks that God knit our hearts together, feeling like we were going to be torn apart and might never see each other again. And I'm telling them how much I love them, and I'm crying and I'm groaning inside, and my heart is hurting, and I'm just desperate to somehow try to express the depth of my heart for this person — the willingness, the sacrifice, the love, the whatever.

And I'm telling them, “I love you,” and it sounds so cheap.

I don't love them like I love broccoli. (I don't even love broccoli.)

I don't love them like I love a Nathan's cheese dog, or bacon, or a sunshiny day and a hammock. That's not what I'm talking about. That word doesn't even work.

And I'm crying out to the Lord, "Why? Why isn't there a better word? Why isn't there something I can say that will mean more? Why is there not SOME way that I can express my heart to this person bigger and better than saying 'I love you,' It sounds so cheap in this world. Why isn't there a better word?"

And the Lord says, "There is."

I said, "There is? There's a better word? There's something I can say that would express it better and bigger?"

He says, "Oh yeah. Oh yeah."

I'm like, "What?!"

Oh God... and then He tells me. And then He tells me.

And I'm like, "Oh, oh, man. Oh, Jesus! Oh God — yes, You're right."

Never, never thought of that. Never thought of that.

And the Holy Spirit was so present. It was so awesome. I could barely talk.

And I got on the phone, shaking and weeping, and I said, "He said there's something better. He said I could say something to you that was bigger, that would express more clearly what's in my heart for you!"

And I know they feel the same way, and they're on the other end of the phone going through the same thing desire to say something that fully expresses the love God put in our hearts.

And if you don't have anybody like this, I can tell you: only the love of God can do this.

This is not romance. This is entirely something different. There are probably only a TINY number of marriages where the spouses can truly say it to each other.

And I'm crying and I almost can't breathe, and I'm scared to even speak it.

I said, "Lord, if I'm gonna say this, I gotta mean it. I gotta... this is..." And I know right away the condemnation that will come, the judgment that will come for saying it incorrectly — if you don't mean it — if you throw this around like you love broccoli... oh my God, have mercy.

So I'm on the phone, and I believe it's pure and I believe I can mean it from my heart. So I dare.

God says, "Do you really understand? Can you say this to that person?"

I'm like, "Yes, Sir. I really would. I really could. I would take whatever for them. And I really believe deep down I mean this."

He said, "Then say it."

So I'm on the phone and I'm bawling. I'm bawling and twitching and fear of the Lord is all over me.

And I said, with all my heart:

"I Jesus you."

And I can feel the weight of it.

And they get it, and they mean it, and they say:

"I Jesus you, too."

Satan has so corrupted everything of this world — from marriage to church to doctrine and dogma to human communication — we've got to try something new, something pure, something bigger and cleaner.

And if I say “I Jesus you,” that means I’ll bear anything, go anywhere, sacrifice anything, love you no matter what, forgive you no matter what you do. That I’ll take a bullet, be crucified, whipped, beaten, scourged, rip my beard out — anything for you, no matter what you do to me. No matter how wrong you are. No matter how many times you ask me to forgive you.

That I will love unconditionally, no matter what will take whatever shots that are due to you or even FROM you. And then I’ll stand with you and never leave you, to the best of my ability.

I’m telling you: satan will try to corrupt it. And satan will try to get you to say that you “Jesus broccoli.” God help you. God help you if you don’t get the holiness, the danger, of this. Even in the best circumstances, it’s not something you say going out the door on the way to work every day.

Somebody that I’d said that to multiple of times, and they had said it to me a lot of times, recently turned on me. Just wrote me off completely. It’s not the first time. I’ve had folks that said it to me and then decided that I’m a warlock, I’m a cult leader, I’m evil, everything I’ve said is wrong, that I’m a danger — and worse.

There are two different passages in the Bible where He talks about what looks like the last days’ army: that they will march shoulder to shoulder without jostling each other (Joel 2:7-8), and if one falls somebody will replace him (Psalm 109:8) In another place it says if one falls his brethren will pick him up (Ecc. 4:10). I don’t know which is which. I don’t know how it works.

But I’m pretty sure that you cannot hurt somebody more than saying that to them and then turning completely against them. It brings in doubt and can destabilize everything.

Oh. I want to ask you a question:

Do you feel that way about the body of Christ around you? Or just the ones that are in your building? Or just the ones that agree with you on everything?

If Christ is in them, how can you not say that to them and mean it? What justification, what excuse do you have to divide, to ignore, to marginalize, to dismiss anyone that has Christ in them? If you love Christ, if you love Jesus, and Jesus is in them, then you ought to be able to say “I Jesus you” to them— unless there’s no Jesus in you.

Or unless you define it in some twisted, perverted way that means, “I’m going to love you by criticizing and rebuking you all the time,” and not acting in love by dismissing and marginalizing you so you’ll learn the error of your ways, so you’ll agree with me.

He warns us that if we’re not careful we’ll end up devouring each other.

And as near as I can tell, the church of America has pretty much devoured itself.

To me it’s very simple: if Jesus is in you and Jesus is in me, then you’re my brother, you’re my sister, and that’s all there is to it. We need to learn how to get along without killing each other.

But here’s what satan does: he as quickly as possible convinces someone to forget every good thing, magnify and highlight every bad thing, turn things that weren’t even bad into bad things, make every difference of opinion a salvation issue, and no matter how secondary convince people that it’s right to dismiss that person because they are a heretic, they’re apostate, they’re a liar, they’re a cult leader — whatever — and they’re not even a brother.

When that happens, in my experience, there’s nothing you can say. The Bible says that if you don’t LOVE the Brethren, then the LOVE of God isn’t in YOU. (1 John 4:20, 1 John 3:10, 14)

I can say, “Jesus Christ is my Lord. I confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, born of a virgin, raised on the third day, sits at the right hand of God, and He is my Lord.”

They’ll say, “No. We disagree about marriage. We disagree about communion. We disagree about the color of the new carpet. Rapture. Long hair. You’re apostate. You’re going to hell. I don’t have to be one with you.”

Sometimes down to inflections, nuances... I mean, anything that's different. I watched a video the other day of a Church of Christ minister rebuking all the other Church of Christ ministers that think it's OK to do communion out of little individual glasses instead of taking turns at one big chalice. He didn't quite say they were going to hell – but it was close!

So.

I want to do the most damage I can to satan, and the best way to do that is to have the name of Jesus spoken as much as possible — in a sincere way, not used in vain, not used as a curse word — used in its proper context kind of a way.

So I encourage you now. I'm not talking to the world. I don't think the world ought to even use His name until the heart of God is formed in them and they know what it means.

But you that say that you're a Christian, that say that you love Christ, that say that He's your Lord: go find someone in your life that you could truthfully and honestly and sincerely say, "I Jesus you," and say it to them — with all your heart, with fear and trembling, with sincerity — and see what it does.

There's times I've said it to somebody and it hits them in the chest like a mule kicking them. And they can't even breathe. They can't even speak — if they understand the holiness of His name, and the fullness, the depth of His sacrifice, the power of it as a promise, and they believe the sincerity of what I'm saying.

It is so unlike the world.

And this is a challenge, because if you say it and you go back on it... I just don't know how you can take that back. I don't know how you can later define it differently, or say, "I never felt that way about you," or "I don't really mean it like that," or "I meant it at the time, but I don't mean it anymore."

I don't know. None of that is consistent with Him.

And if you're a Christian, and you say you love Jesus and He's your Lord – and I challenge you to say that to somebody, and if you can't think of anyone that you love that way... then the love of God may not in you in sufficient quantity – or maybe you aren't really one of His. (1 John 3:14)

If you don't love the brethren then the love of God is not in you.

And the reality is that I love lots of people that way that I haven't said it to, because I didn't feel a release until now to even try to make this public. And the people that I said it to understood the holiness of it in such a way that they wouldn't toss it around either.

And I do this with fear and trembling.

I hope I'm not casting pearls before swine just by writing this down. The world is a very dangerous place where satan has his playground and whispers lies and makes the holy common, and makes the common wicked.

I hope this wrecks you. I hope it just destroys every sense in you that you're okay, if you're not.

Because if you can't say it and mean it and stand by it, then how is the love of God really in you?

In John 17:20-26 Jesus prayed for us:

20 "My prayer is not for them alone. {the Disciples} I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, {you and me} 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. 25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you[e]

known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

The best proof to “the world” that Jesus is sent by the Father is when the CHRISTIANS can play nice together!! What a horrible condemnation of us. That the best miracle is us BEHAVING. Then He says how it’s going to have to happen – the Father in Jesus and Jesus in us, then we will be in Him and we can all be ONE. Is Jesus IN you in sufficient measure that you can be ONE with the other Joint Heirs that made it through the Narrow Gate – even if they do see darkly about some stuff? Is the love that the Father has for Jesus in YOU in sufficient measure that you can’t HELP but love ME? And other Christians? And your enemies? Is there enough Jesus in you? Do you even know how to get Him in there in greater and greater quantity?

And if you can’t think of anyone that you love that way, maybe it’s that you’re surrounded by unbelievers — which is a problem. Maybe it’s that you’re the only part of the True Bride anywhere around there.

Or maybe it’s a problem with your heart.

Don’t practice. Don’t play with it. Don’t even let it out of your mouth until the Lord has given you a revelation of the bigness of it and an assurance that you can say it and stand by it.

And these are the last days, and even the elect could be deceived and fall.

And if somebody does say it to you and then they turn on you — rejoice. He says even the members of your own family will try to kill you and they’ll think they’re doing God a favor.

That is a serious delusion — when a mother or a wife or a father honestly believes that God is going to thank them for crucifying their kid or their spouse. Because the heart of Jesus is to get on the cross for them, not the other way around.

So I hope the name of Jesus, in this context, is used far and wide.

I hope that you are so full of the Holy Spirit and so full of the love of God and so transformed by the renewing of your mind (Rom. 12:1-2), that you can think of a great big long list of people that you feel that way about.

And I pray you would call them and let them know, because the time is short and none of us know how long we have — and urge them to go speak that word to someone else. It’s not the kind of thing that you wait for them to say back. It may take months for them to be ready – or never. If you need yours validated by hearing them say it, then yours is probably not true.

We are to be known by our love — not by our politeness, not by our civility, not by our ability to get along well together on Sunday for an hour and a half.

We are to be known by our Christ-like love.

Not “I love broccoli.” Not “I love football.” I love like Christ. Like Jesus. All the way. No retreat.

So why don’t we just say it that way, when we mean it all the way?

And then let us be judged — because it’s a challenge to the darkness and the light. It freaks out the bad guys. Freaks them out. They take notes.

And the accuser of the brethren may go before God one day and say, “He said that. He said that — but then he did backed down and did that other thing, he didn’t really live up to it.” He stands condemned.

We’re going to have to throw ourselves on the mercy of Jesus and ask Him to forgive us, because when you accept Him as Lord, He says to you: “I Jesus you.”

And you say back to Him: “I just don’t want to go to hell, but I’m not going to obey you.”

Or, “I love you, but not enough to get on a cross. Not enough to be whipped or persecuted. But I love you three hours a week worth.”

If you can’t say “I Jesus you” back to Him and mean it, then He’s not your Lord and He’s not your Jesus.

I don't know how else to explain it. I would think that would cover it.

That's all for now. Thanks for listening.

Lord, have mercy on our stupid, stupid selves. Help us to love You all the way. Please³⁵³⁵ do what You have to do to our hearts so that we can love one another ALL the way. Fill us full of You so that You can love like You do through us. There's no other hope really except for us to get out of Your way so that YOU can love like Christ. Please do whatever You have to so that the world can see You in us – and not us in us. We pray all this to the Father in the mighty Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.



Appendix A –

The Open Letter of Apology to the World

Please bear with me, this is long overdue and there's lots of ground to cover. I want to make sure that I get it all out. Not just for me, but because I think you need to hear it. Maybe there are other Christians out there as well that need to make apologies and will find courage here. I appreciate your time, I know it's valuable.

Dear Members of the World,

I'm just a guy, nobody really. Son of a preacher and missionary. Years and years of Vacation Bible Schools, summer camps, youth ski trips, puppet shows, revivals, choir trips - you name it. Even went to a Christian college and got a degree in religion. I ended up in the business world, but I spent two decades tithing, sitting on committees, teaching Sunday School, going to seminars and conferences, etc. I even met my wife in the single's class at church. I'm not a bad guy, I've been mostly behaving myself and everybody seems to like me. I do some good stuff here and there.

But lately I've been trying to understand Jesus more and stuff I never noticed before has really started to bug me. I've been taking a look around and I'm having a hard time making sense of what it is we've built here. So, it just seemed like, whether anybody else says it or not, I need to take responsibility for the part I played and say what I have to say.

Here we go ...

I know you think that Christians are a big bunch of hypocrites. We say we're more "religious" and we're going to heaven and you're not, and then we drive our big shiny cars with little fishies on the trunk and cut you off in traffic as we race by the homeless guy on the corner. We average just 2% of our money to church and charity, despite that we say the Bible is the word of God and **it** says we're supposed to give **everything**. On average, we buy just as many big screen TVs and bass boats and fur coats and makeup and baseball cards and online porn as anybody else. Maybe more. You've seen leader after leader end up in jail or court or a sex scandal of one sort or another.

Well ... you're right. We're guilty of all of it. We've done it all. And, I'm really sorry.

You see our cheesy TV shows and slick guys begging for money and you get that there's something seriously sneaky and wrong here. A high-pressure call for money so they can stay on the air? Were we supposed to use Jesus as just another form of entertainment? Who do we think we're kidding? Where's Jesus in all this? Aren't we supposed to rely on him? Isn't He going to meet our needs if we're inside His will? What happened to sacrifice and suffering and helping the poor? I'm just sick about this. I mean, the church leaders, they're not all bad guys, there are lots and lots of really hard-working well-meaning folks who love and care and are meeting real needs in the community. Some of them understand and love Jesus - but I'm just real sure those pastors don't drive Bentley's, have multi-million dollar homes and their own lear jets! I mean, what "god" are we worshipping? Money? Ego? Power?

You see our massive shiny new buildings all over the place. Heck, maybe we even kicked you out of your house so we could expand our parking lots. You can't figure out why we need four different Christian churches on four corners of the same intersection. We've got playgrounds and bowling alleys and basketball leagues. We've got Starbucks coffee in the sanctuary. We've got orchestras and giant chandeliers and fountains out front. We've got bookstores full of "jesus junk" with every imaginable style and flavor of religious knick-knack. But where's Jesus? Is this what HE wanted?

Oh, sure, there are good folks all over and not every church is such a mess, but Christians are the ones that

say we're supposed to be "One Body." So even the good ones are guilty of not putting a stop to it sooner. We were supposed to keep each other in line and not tolerate factions and dissensions and greed and idolatry and all this other bad stuff. Man, we really blew it! We've got 33,000 denominations and most of them won't talk to the other ones. We lose over \$5 million a day to fraud from "trusted" people inside the church! We spend 95% of all our money on our own comforts and programs and happy family fun time shows and we let 250 MILLION Christians in other countries live on the very edge of starvation. Not to mention the billion or so that have never even once heard of Jesus - or the homeless guy downtown we almost ran over when we cut you off.

We're as guilty as we can be. All of us. Nobody is exempt. We should have put a stop to it a lot sooner. But I can't apologize on behalf of anyone else. This is about me.

I know that you might have gone to church as a kid and stopped going as soon as you could. I know that you might even have been abused by somebody in the church! Maybe we got you all fired up and then just let you drift off like we didn't really care. Maybe you just don't fit our "profile." You might have piercings and purple hair or tattoos or been in jail -- and somewhere inside you just know that even if you wanted to go to church one Sunday, it would not go well. I'm sorry for that. Jesus loves you. He always hung out with the most unexpected people. He had the biggest heart for the folks everybody else tried to ignore. What have we done? We've told you to put on a sweater and some loafers or you can't go to heaven. I just want to throw up.

Look, I know you're mad. And you have a right to be. We've done you wrong for a LONG time now. There's some things about Jesus that people need to hear, but we've buried a beautiful masterpiece under hundreds of layers of soft pink latex paint. If you have a Bible handy, look up Matthew 23. (If you don't, you can look it up here - www.BibleGateway.com .)

Find it? Read it carefully, the Pharisees were the "religious" people of the day, the leaders of the faith. In this chapter Jesus SEVEN times says how pitiful and wretched and cursed they are for what they're doing to the people they're supposed to be leading. He even calls them "white washed tombs of dead mens bones" and a "brood of vipers"! I don't have time here, but read it and see if we're not doing EVERY single one of those things. Jesus can't possibly be happy about what we've done to you.

Sure, we like to kid ourselves and pretend everything is OK - but it's not. We're hated. Now, please understand, Jesus was hated, too. But that was because he said hard things and sometimes people don't like hearing the Truth. And he promised we would be hated if we were like him. But that's not why we're hated at the moment. We're hated right now because we're a giant pack of lying hypocrites that say one thing and do something else altogether. If we were hated because we were like Jesus, that would be one thing, but that's not it at all. You see right through our happy music and fluffy services and you can tell there's something desperately wrong here. We're no different than anybody else - except that we say we're better than you.

It was never supposed to be like this. Jesus asked us to care for the widows and orphans, to feed the hungry, care for the sick, visit those in prison, reach the lost. He wanted us to love our enemies and pray for them. He cared about human justice and suffering, the lost and lonely. But I don't think He would have marched on a picket line - He had His mind on much bigger problems. He wanted us to focus on the eternal things, not the everyday. He never once said to go into all the world and build big buildings and divide up into factions and buy Bentleys. Just the opposite! I get that you're mad at us and I think you have a right to be, but please understand, you're mad at what we've made under our own power, you're mad at "Churchianity." That's different than Christ and what he wanted. Don't be mad at Jesus! This mess wasn't His idea!

Look, I'm really sorry. I accept responsibility for my part in having hurt you. But I'm committing to you all, dear Members of the World, that I'm not going to do it any more. Not a single penny more. I'm not going to put my faith in "Churchianity" or any leader or program or TV show -- but in Christ Jesus and His salvation. That's when I was set free and began to see that God wants and expects more of us than this. And I'm not helping anybody that's not fully committed to the same thing.

It took centuries to build this monster, so it's not like it's going to just turn around overnight. But the times are changing and we're way overdue for something new. Big bad things are happening - like the tsunami in Asia -

and I think more are coming. I don't want any more time to go by without having said this. I'm sorry for all the time and money I've wasted. But Jesus saves. Really. The church itself isn't even the point. Jesus is the real deal. He lived and He died for my sins and He rose again. He is who He said He was and He cares about me - and you. He's our only hope. We need places you can go that will only teach Jesus and will not be swayed or tempted or distracted by anything else. God willing, that's coming.

Please don't think all Christians are just posers. Some of them really mean it when they say they belong to Christ. The problem is mostly in the West where we're all comfy and complacent and seem to like it that way. The Christians in China and other places are deadly serious. There's no room for anything but Jesus when you're on the run from the government. They are dying every day for their faith and doing crazy hard things because they're absolutely committed to Christ. These are martyrs. People willing to crucify little pieces of themselves every day to be more like Christ. People willing to set aside everything they want, to do what Christ wants. People willing to rot in prison or take a beating or die if that's what it's going to take. People that act in pure love and never back down. I'm not worthy to tie their shoes. And there are some like that here, too, and I hope we can get a lot more people to start living that way. It's way overdue.

If you're talking to someone and they tell you they're a Christian, ask them if they're the kind of Christian that really means it all the time or the kind that just means it on Sunday. The Bible says we'll know them by their "fruits" - by the faith and purity and love in their deeds and words. When you find one that proves Christ is in them by how much they love you, ask them to tell you all about Jesus. If you know one of those fearless martyrs that speaks nothing but pure, clean, hard Truth - ask lots of questions. Truth is a lot more rare than you would think. But don't settle for soft, fluffy and comfortable anymore - that's not in the Bible.

As for me and my house, we're really sorry. From now on, we're going to serve the Lord, not "Churchianity." We're going to try to call together as many of those martyrs as we can and start doing what Christ wanted. If I run into you someday, please give me a chance to shake your hand and apologize in person. I'm going to try harder from now on, I promise. I think there are lots of others feeling the same way, so don't be surprised if you start hearing stuff like this more often.

Thanks for your time. I hope it helps.

Doug Perry
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Appendix B – The Fridge Dream

I thought the book was finished, but the Lord won't leave me alone until I include this.

I got the Baptism of the Holy Spirit on November 23, 2004. A week or so after I was sleeping and had a very vivid dream that I knew was from the Lord. This is the account of that dream.

In the dream I was outdoors in a field. There was an old-style refrigerator, you know, the kind with a single door, rounded top and a big chrome handle. A local pastor that I knew was standing at the door of the fridge and passing out food to his congregation. They were lined up, excitedly waiting to receive the food.



It looked like a party.

But I could see that the fridge had been unplugged for a really long time. All the food was moldy and rotten.

The people in line were excited to receive it and quickly ate it when the pastor handed it to them. But I could see that they were getting sick from it. Some were throwing up and some were dying.



I rushed to warn the pastor. Surely he couldn't know what was happening and doing it on purpose. But he either couldn't or wouldn't hear me. So I went to all the people in line warning them that this was rotten and moldy, I even pointed to friends that were sick and dying. But they couldn't hear me, no matter how much I shouted.

Behind us there was a cliff into a deep ravine (as there always is). So, out of love and with no other option, I put my shoulder against the refrigerator and pushed it off the cliff.

We all stood there watching as it crashed down into the ravine, clearly destroyed. They all looked at me, not knowing what to do next.

I looked at them and said, "Now we get Manna." Fresh daily, just enough, made special for each individual.



I understood from the dream that we're just recycling 500+ year old theology. Repeating over and over what other men believed ages ago.

It reminded me of this verse, "*For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*" Jeremiah 2:13

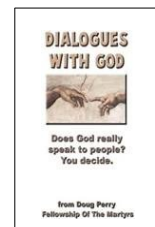
All of our churches are cisterns that we built, that are supposed to be full of HIM – but they're not. We have to learn to get our **own cups full daily** from "The Source" Himself, not rely on Luther or Calvin or whoever to fill us. We really can stick a straw in the River That Flows From The Throne of God.

Other Titles by Fellowship Of The Martyrs



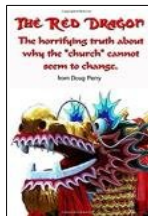
The Open Letter of Apology to the World – from Doug Perry

This book spun up as a response to the responses from other people to his original letter. Talks about all the horrifying statistics of “churchianity” and waste and fraud and just stupid decision making.



Dialogues with God – from Doug Perry

The first half of the book are transcripts of conversations with the Almighty. Not big revelation, mostly daily instruction, but showing the reality of the personal relationship you can have. The second half of the book is the Spiritual Tuneup workbook to find out what might be clogging you up.



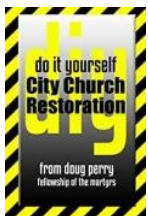
The Red Dragon: the horrifying truth about why the ‘church’ cannot seem to change.- from Doug Perry

The Bible says that if you go your own way God may turn you over to a strong delusion. Well, He’s done that all over. Things are FAR worse than you realize. (Audio book available)



Who NEUTERED The Holy Spirit?! – from Doug Perry

The Gospel always spreads best by miracles and martyrs. So who benefits most by convincing everybody that God doesn’t do miracles anymore? Yeah, the snake. This book goes through where the Holy Spirit showed up in the Old Testament, the New Testament before Jesus, during His ministry, after His ascension, in the early church, through church history, and today. (Audio book available)



Do It Yourself City Church Restoration – from Doug Perry

This lays out the justification for why City Church is the only proper Biblical model for church, how far away we are from that, and some discussion about how to get back to it. (Audio book available)



Rain Right NOW, Lord! – from Doug Perry

This book has an in depth discussion about spiritual gifts, how they are imparted, what blocks it and what God told us about how He is waiting on the Church to pour His Spirit out on all flesh. (Audio book available)



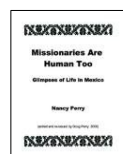
The Dad Filter – from Doug Perry

One of things that we have found can stand in the way of a healing or deliverance is a filter, a lens, that limits God. If you grow up with a dad that is against you, is never proud of you, never says he loves you – you end up seeing God through a lens that puts Him in a box shaped like Earth Dad. The book includes some prayers to pray to flush it out and break it off so that God can be Dad to you in whatever way He wants. (Audio book available)



DEMONS?! You’re kidding ... right? – from Doug Perry

God said to write down everything we had learned, seen and dealt with at that time. It goes through lists of different kinds of demons, what they look like, what they do, how to get them off. It talks about shields, cloaks, generational curses, It includes the Jezebel book and The Red Dragon book.



Missionaries Are Human, Too – from Nancy Perry

Doug’s mom wrote about their first four years as missionaries in Mexico. A very sweet book.

More than 12 albums of original Jesus music FREE on the website, including Country, Rap, Metal, Acapella, plus our remakes of powerful famous hymns from the 1700 and 1800s.

There are also over 2600 teaching videos on our YouTube channel at FOTM1.

Visit our website at www.FellowshipOfTheMartyrs.com or email to fotm@fellowshipofthemartyrs.com .

So what's the deal with the little cow?

Well, we created Tabasco for the story in the Hubris chapter but she was so cute we thought we would keep her around. Originally Tabasco was a bull and was spotted. But once we did him in color and he was reddish, we figured we'd go all out and turn "him" in a red heifer "her."

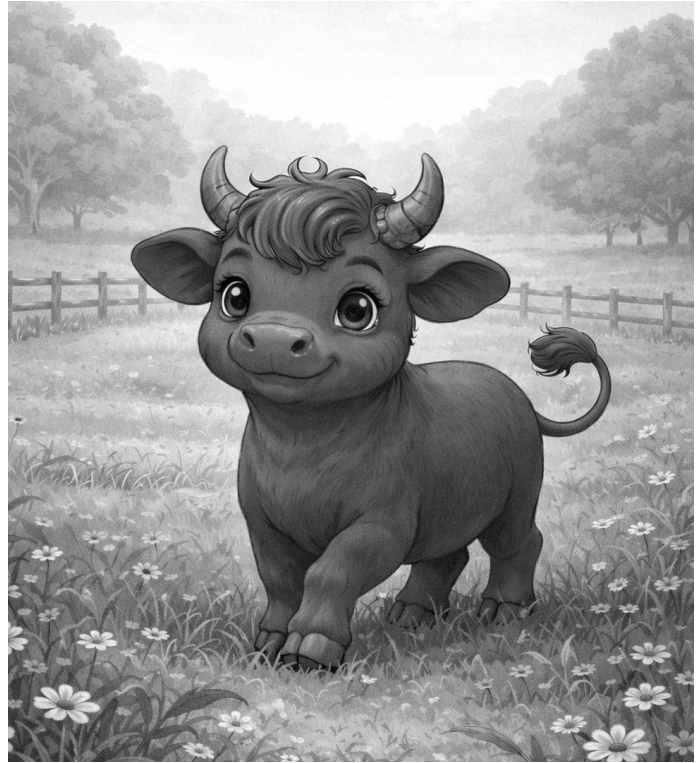
The red heifer is really important in Jewish religious tradition. You have to find one perfect red heifer – without a single white hair – in order to use its ashes for the "water of lustration" that's needed to cleanse the temple and to sprinkle on anything unclean.

When this whole ride started the Lord said that Romans 12:1-2 was the simple three step plan for what we needed to be doing to turn this ride around.

Romans 12:1-2 - "1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

It's really simple, you're the dopey little cow. YOU are the sacrifice, so get up on the altar naked (and don't bring your baggage or religious nonsense) and lay there surrendered (which does NOT conform to the pattern of this world) and wait until Jesus, the High Priest, comes at you with a big knife, chops your head off, grafts His head on – and then you will know what is the good, pleasing or perfect will of God! Presumably so you can go do the perfect.

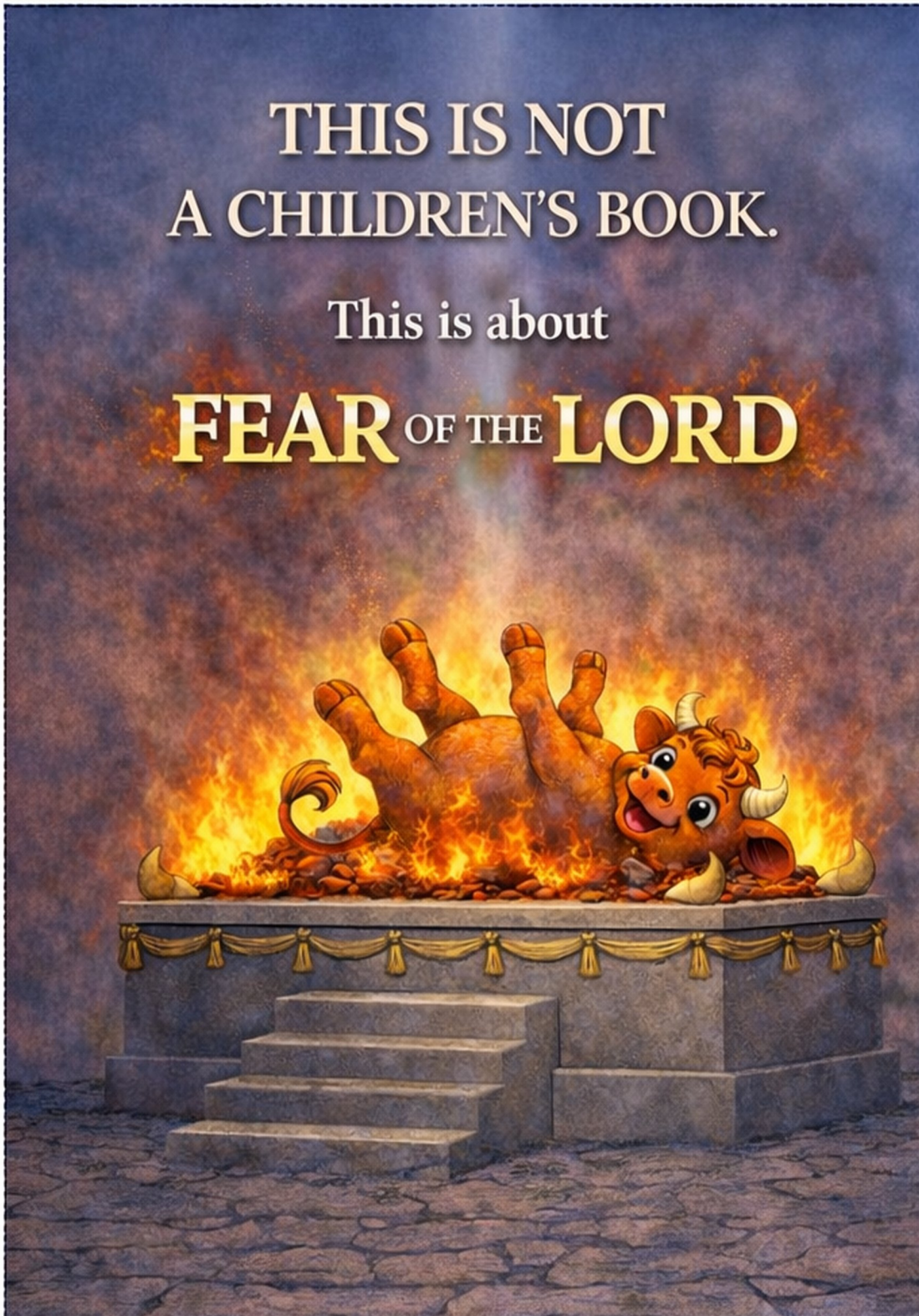
So the cute little cow is you. Whether in a pasture or a nice pond or in prison or headed for a slaughterhouse, or laying on the altar – just keep smiling. Everything is going to be just fine.



THIS IS NOT
A CHILDREN'S BOOK.

This is about

FEAR OF THE **LORD**



Romans 12:1-2