



J. R. BEDDING

*THAT I MAY
KNOW HIM*

THE JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

IF ANYONE COMES AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF
AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW ME - MATTHEW 16:24

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PRIDE DEFEATED
2. THE POWER OF THE FLESH
3. EXCEPT A GRAIN OF WHEAT
4. THE BAPTISM OF SUFFERING
5. BEING CONFORMED
6. AGAPE – GOD’S LOVE
7. LIVING IN VICTORY & ANSWERED PRAYER
8. JOURNEY TO THE CROSS
9. REVIVAL BREEDS MIGHTY MEN OF FAITH
10. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, WHAT IS IT?
11. GOING FROM DOING TO BEING
12. TO RECKON – THE BATTLE OF LAW & GRACE –DON’T BEAT YOURSELF UP
13. THE RENEWED MIND
14. CROSS INSPIRED PREACHING
15. A SERIOUS QUESTION & CONCLUSION

Selected -GREAT QUOTES ON THE CROSS

All scriptures references are taken from the NKJV, NIV, NLT & NASB versions of the bible.

Bold added for emphasis only in certain passages

Author: James Robert Bedding

Cover Design: Peter John Bedding

***That I may know him** and the power of his
resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings,
being conformed unto his death.*

Philippians 3v10

DEDICATION

In memory of Peter Moon, dearest brother, loyal friend,
lover of God, Your passing propels us to seek Christ
alone and reach for our own high calling and be the best
we can be– you were my finest example. I miss your
kindness, love, humour, grace, wisdom, but most of all -
I miss your heart. Life is short – let’s make it count.

*“A man is no greater, and nothing more, than what is
in his heart” – Smith Wigglesworth*

COMMENDATION

“There are many kinds of people in this world, but I only know of only two types personally. Those who seek for the price they have to pay to better themselves and others who will make excuses and walk away. Like the rich young man who met Jesus and for all his enthusiasm, he went away sad, if we were to put a name to him, it would be ‘Adam’.

But then there are the few, who *really* see who Christ is and count the cost. They are like Paul the Apostle, who say, ‘I am not *there* yet, but I’m pressing on...watch this space!’ This book is the sum total of ‘a man’ or ‘men’, within whom there is the Spirit of Christ, that have been called to go, with face like flint, to the place, where so few these days choose to go, to the cross and to all that it means!

A pilgrim once said,
“It is not the man, who tells you something you never knew before, that really impacts you , but the man that touches the burning passion that is *already* in your own heart, that thing you were previously unable to utter, but brings it out and into the light, such a man will penetrate and bring change.” This book, I pray will do that!

I am commending the man, the book and notably Jesus, who makes all things to be. Let it be Spirit and life to your heart. May it fulfill the purpose for which it is in your hands, to ultimately lead to the end of yourself and the beginning of HIM, the crucified one, the Christ!” (Galatians 2:20).

Brother Daniel Hamer

FOREWORD

The goal of every Christian is to be more like Jesus
everyday.

We must endeavor to keep our hearts tender.

There are 3 golden words that can soothe and break the
most stubborn of heart's when we hear them,

I love you

1 Corinthians Chapter 13

*“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,
but have not love. I have become a sounding brass or a
clanging cymbal.*

*And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand
all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all
faith. So that I could remove mountains, but have not
love I am nothing.*

*And though I bestow all my good to feed the poor, and
though I give my body to be burned, but have not love it
profits me nothing*

*Love suffers long and is kind love does not envy: love
does not boast nor is proud:*

*Does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not
provoked, and thinks no evil or keep records of wrongs*

*Does not rejoice in iniquity but rejoices in the truth;
Bears all things, believes and trusts all things. Hopes all
things, endures all things, without resentment*

Love never fails, but whether there are prophecies
they will fail: whether there are tongues they will
cease; whether there is knowledge it shall vanish away.

For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

*But when that which is perfect has come, then that
which is in part will be done away
When I was a child, I spoke as a child; I understood as
a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man,
I put away childish things.
For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.
Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also
am known.
And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; **but the
greatest of these is love**".*

This love is **Agape**. The un-conditional, God kind of
love.

The love of Jesus.

Sincere blessings to "Brother Jimmy" as he breaks down
the truths that will help us get closer to *Agape* in our
own lives and be a genuine reflection of our Lord and a
taste of heaven on earth to all those we come across.

***Brother George Parker – Queensland,
Australia.***

INTRODUCTION

It was stated in the Gospel of **John 2:23-25**

“Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and believed in his name. But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all men. He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was IN a man”.

Jesus knew how **unpredictable** man could be. We need to **understand** and learn this for ourselves and never forget it. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” and continue to do so. (Rom 3:23 & 1 John: 10).

Then we won't **take offence** when we don't get our expectations met. We will then find ourselves **reacting** in the right way, knowing only the Lord can be totally relied upon. Anyone who thinks they know themselves **completely** is mistaken (**See Jeremiah 17v9**). We must be careful of our own shortcomings before we are tempted to judge others. (**Romans 2:3**) & (**Luke 6:37**). The bible teaches us to make **“Our calling and election sure” (2 Peter 1:10)**.

This is a journey about **dealing with self**.
It will touch areas otherwise untouched.

The 17th Century believer Madame Jeanne Guyon of France, who some have cited as being one of the greatest Christians who has ever lived; saw it as a

privilege when the Lord moved upon her to go deeper.

The army of the hungry and the thirsty will rejoice knowing this is the process they must go through to become, “***More like him***”.

Let this message penetrate, meditate on it, let it get way down in your gut, where “**deep calls unto deep**” (**psalm 42**).

This message will include the “***how to***” on the road to real ***apostolic church restoration***. What was needed to get the “***job done***” back at the very beginning. What God requires of us to be the people that he is coming back for. The bride without spot or wrinkle. (**Ephesians 5v27**)

What you read will probably make you ***mad, sad or glad*** depending on where you are in him. *Convicted, (mad) dying to sin, (sad) alive to Christ (glad).*

The Apostle Paul said.
“***Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me***” (**Philippians 3v12**).

This is for those honest enough to make that radical change and remove the mask of religion, willing to lay down their lives and carry the ***genuine*** fragrance of humility into ***true apostolic ministry***.

True liberty awaits these precious ones and genuine followers who are willing to *allow* God to take them through the process.

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.”
(Romans 8:19)

That is what a lost and dying world is looking for in this late hour.

The clock is ticking and the church in these last days is going to go through some serious shaking and the remnant will be revealed.

“That is the way it will be on earth among the nations. They will be like an olive tree which has been shaken or like what's left after the grape harvest.” ***(Isaiah 24:13)***

As we enter into this, I want the readers to be fully aware that the truth of the **“Grace of God”** is always the basis for everything we are in Christ and is never superceded.

Freely we have received, so feely we give, whatever we become in him has its **foundation in grace**.

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this GRACE IN WHICH WE STAND; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. (Romans 5:2)

This book is not to be rushed; you will come back to it again and again. Many of the principles and even scriptures here may be **repeated** over and over as you read its pages. This is to make sure you have not missed anything and will help bring things into “sharp focus”. We learn by repetition and we have a tendency to forget!

Not only will it highlight areas in our lives that need re-visiting, but these chapters will be the tool and instrument to help us all to “**get there**”.

Not just raising the question, but offering “an” answer. With the goal that “Christ is formed in us” (Galatians 4:19).

This will be fresh manna & revelation to some. I advise you to search out and meditate on every scripture quoted, be a Berean and you will be rewarded. (**Acts 17:11**) , (**Hebrews 11:6**), (**Proverbs 20v5 & 21v2**)

So, Let us **allow** God to make us into such a people. You have in your hands **Spiritual dynamite**, so handle it with care!

As we look to assimilate, and absorb into the mind, what God is requiring in this hour. He that has ears to hear let him hear. Just as Jesus spoke in parables, the gospel and its divine message is for the truly hungry and thirsty who strive to unlock its mysteries. This message won't be for everyone at this moment, but it will be for those who are now willing and ready to go to that place of full surrender.

The place where Jesus eventually wants us all.
Let us pursue the glorious **journey to the cross!**

Chapter 1

PRIDE DEFEATED

***“I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
I will be like the Most High.” (Isaiah 14:14)***

Jesus said from the days of John the Baptist until *now* the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence and the violent take it by force. There has ***always*** been a resistance to the advancement of spiritual progress, and it appears things will only get more intense as the ages pass.

There is no doubt biblical truth is being restored and the ***“Spirit”*** has been poured out as predicted by the prophet Joel (***Joel 2:28***). Millions in the last century have been brought into an experience with Jesus and sporadic revivals have broken out in certain areas of the world.

But many including myself are sensing that that a ***new wave*** of the Spirit is coming. There is going to be a restoration coming that will take us back to the ***“original Prototype”***.

But the ***worship of self*** will have to be ***removed*** first. It is the ***“beast”*** that will have to be slain.

The worship of self has its ***root in Pride.***

PRIDE IS SELF LOVE

When we exercise pride, we exercise three things:

Physical, emotional, and spiritual.

The physical pride is when we exalt ourselves, what the world would call “***boasting***”.

The emotional pride is when ***we won’t admit to anything***, and refuse to take responsibility for our actions.

The spiritual Pride is when we rebel through ***spiritual stubbornness*** and reject Godly discipline.

Pride is a constant threat; we need to guard our hearts against it. ***God hates it.***

“.....clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5)

From the very beginning the Bible tells us in heaven there was a beautiful angel, who was basically second in command. This lofty role wasn’t enough; he wanted to be number one. Because of this he was thrown down from his position, he was cast out from the very presence of God. The scripture declares that a third of the heavenly host (angels) went with him. ***(Rev 12:4)***

"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor." (Ezek 28:17).

This “angel” known as Lucifer became “the Devil” or “Satan”.

He that is the accuser and opposer of mankind.

He wanted to be worshipped.

He wanted to be God.

In essence, his “fall” came about through the one thing that seeks to destroy many of us, ***THE SIN OF PRIDE.***

The bible tells us ***“Pride goes before destruction and an arrogant spirit before a fall.” (Proverbs 16:18)***

It is inevitable that calamity awaits those who cling to it.

Pride is the first of the deadly sins because ***it is the key*** to all other sins. Let us be clear from the outset that not all pride is a sin, like when taking pride in one’s home or appearance.

It is the variety that produces ***unreasonable self-esteem*** and that one needs crushing. Pride makes people believe that they are much better than everyone else, they are above the rules.

Pride has been described as an inflated ego – some say ego means, ***“edging God out”!***

It is a tendency to exalt oneself above others, and in its most extreme case as previously mentioned, even over God himself. The Bible is clear in Paul’s words

“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith God has assigned...” (Romans 12:3).

Pride in all its forms will hinder every child of God – it must go. It will keep you far from God.

***“In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.”
(Psalm10:4)***

Various dictionaries describe PRIDE in different ways, but the chief, explanation would include the following:

“A high or immoderate opinion of one’s own dignity, importance, or superiority, whether as cherished in the mind or as displayed in conduct”.

Pride was the first sin committed.

It was the sin of Lucifer.

The fall began when “Satan” started looking at his own God-imparted glory. When pride entered, he turned to his own way and carried with him all who were prone to live lives for ***themselves*** rather than their Creator.

It was also the root of the ***original Sin*** committed by Adam and Eve. Pride is one of the greatest of all sins because it is the summit of self-love and is directly opposed to submission and surrender to God.

It is the attitude that says **“I can do this alone, I don’t need anybody”**. It is, therefore, the sin **most hated by God**, and the one He punishes most severely.

The punishment of the Angels and of Adam and Eve, prove this. There are aspects of pride in every sin, no matter what may be the individual nature of the sin itself. We find their **root** there.

Pride is the most dangerous of sins, because it blinds our understanding. Unless something or someone finally **makes us realise the truth**, we are liable to go on, day after day, in a self-deluded fashion, imagining our acts to be ever so virtuous when **certain habits actually may in fact be extremely harmful**.

When we are blinded by pride, we do not consider our talents and abilities as God’s gifts to us, but attribute our good qualities to ourselves, with the right to use them **as we see fit**. Searching into **our “type” of pride** is very important for obtaining a true knowledge of ourselves, and for making a fruitful effort to dig it out.

Pride of superiority makes us want to **control** the lives of others, to impose ourselves on them, to **“domineer” “manipulate”** and **“intimidate”** them. This is sometimes known as the “Jezebel Spirit” in church circles.

The pride of ambition leads us to seek positions or offices of honor and dignity by which we prefer ourselves over people, despite others being better qualified and more suited.

It makes us dream up schemes and projects, and undertake things through presumption, even when we are ignorant of how to go about them. Excessive confidence makes us overestimate our abilities.

We seek after vainglory, fame and the desire for praise, even falling into the trap of “delusions of grandeur”. We seek out those ***who can massage our ego*** or make us feel good about ourselves, ***avoiding*** those that offer a word in season or those that may ***“burst our bubble”***.

We may have a pride which makes us cynical. We speak sarcastically and use cutting and hurtful words.
(Ephesians 4:31)

We ridicule others, and misjudge them. There is a form of pride that refuses to associate with those ***we believe*** to be inferior.

Our pride makes us ***fester and brood over imagined wrongs*** and ***does not easily forgive others***. Pride may be centered on our ***wealth and prosperity***, our station in life, our fine clothes, our cleverness, our beauty or strength.

Pride may even grow out of our ***supposed*** piety and good morals, and charitable deeds. The proud person is ***capable of any sin***.

Therefore it is most necessary in the spiritual life to fight this vice in whatever guise it presents itself. ***If we permit it to enter our heart, we soon find ourselves a slave of Satan***.

We must be aware of being ensnared by it, for the end of the proud the so called “**self righteous**” or “**unrepentant sinner**”, as revealed by God, has eternal consequences.

"For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the proud, arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch." (Malachi 4:1)

SPIRITUAL PRIDE

Spiritual pride is the major, but often very subtle underlying root of ***much deception***, and the fall of many once-promising ministries and laborers in God's harvest field.

They have crashed and burned because of it. The sands of time are strewn with the wreckage of many, who were once used of God, but who suffered shipwreck upon the rocks of spiritual pride. Their impact was eroded.

The placing of pride in “***their gifting***” and ***neglecting character development*** was to be their downfall.

"To whom much is given, much is expected." (Luke 12:48).

If Satan cannot destroy us from without, he will destroy us from within. It is usually through our thoughts - ***through our mind*** - that such attacks come. The devil will happily take a long-term approach with such

attacks, slowly building on what he has been feeding into our mind until he can **sway us** into making bad decisions and judgments.

In the Old Testament, after 52 years of serving God faithfully King Uzziah thought he was **above reproach** and he paid the price for it.

“But after King Uzziah became powerful, his pride led to his downfall. He was unfaithful to the LORD his God, and entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense” (2 Chronicles 26v16).

Because of **his pride** he was struck with **leprosy**.

The great prophet Isaiah wept for him who knew that no-one, even a mightily used man of God like himself, was a man of **“unclean lips.”** Even the best can be infected, and we must never lose sight of it.

We must all be aware that we are to remain humble at all times. Our so called **“good works”** can lead to pride thinking we have finally **“arrived”**, even spiritually, and we think we **“deserve”** to do things our own way.

The enemies object is to get us to **'believe the lie'**, and in that process this prideful deception travels down from our mind into our heart, where it is **much harder to dislodge**. Like a seed, it will then grow, and begin to manifest itself in our lives, until eventually, if it has not been dealt with, God may be forced **to remove us from effective ministry**.

We are told in the Bible that we are to have the "***mind of Christ***", and that we are to bring "***into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ***" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

We are to be full of His Spirit, so that we may have a mind ***controlled, a mind directed, and a mind fixed on God***, without the poison of pride wreaking havoc and contaminating our goals. (***Ephesians 4:23-24***)

DEALING WITH PRIDE

I have found personally that such 'roots' or strongholds of pride, or anything else in our lives, can be dealt with very effectively by ***renouncing them***. From the very depths of our heart and soul, casting them away from ourselves as ***hated things***.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4).

We must not let the devil or ***the flesh dominate*** any area of our lives in this way. Those who are involved in powerful or successful ministries are particularly susceptible to pride entering in, because of the amazing things that they see happening every day. Temptation to begin ***taking some of the glory*** for themselves or to start to think that they are something '***special***' is always at hand. But we must remind ourselves.

Whatever is good and perfect comes down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a

shifting shadow (James 1:17). These include all “gifts” of the Spirit.

Such pride can be incredibly subtle, and the devil delights in placing such ministries under ***as much ‘pressure’*** of this kind as he possibly can. However, it is important to remember that God will not allow us to be.....***“Tempted more than we can bear” (1 Corinthians 10:13).*** He will provide an outlet ***if we humble ourselves***, and take the edge off it for us.

A man of God named William Branham, an evangelist, used mightily and regularly in the gifts of the Spirit was truly a humble man in many ways right up until the time of his death. But even he managed to be subtly deceived by pride in a couple of crucial areas towards the end of his ministry.

He came to believe ***“inflated revelations”*** about himself, and proclaimed these to his followers. Pride was the cause.

His ministry of which was extremely genuine ended tragically in a car crash. It is also important to remember that it is often when we have won our greatest victories in God, that we are most susceptible to attacks from the enemy. Like a football team that scores a goal. They suddenly relax their guard and more often than not, pay the price and concede a goal themselves soon after. We must keep our feet ***firmly on the ground*** at all times.

As the apostle Paul wrote, ***“let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed in case he falls” (1 Corinthians 10:12).***

We see this particularly in the life of Minister John Alexander Dowie. It was when he had won through into a period of comparative success and prosperity in his ministry that he became sloppy. He became deceived into **"being convinced of the lie"** that the devil was trying to sell him.

He **deluded himself** into believing he was the Prophet Elijah of old. In comparison, humbly, John the Baptist was satisfied in declaring himself **'a voice crying in the wilderness'**.

When the people asked John if he were Elijah revisited, he said he was not. No doubt John the Baptist did come **"in the Spirit and voice of Elijah"**, with a similar unique anointing and authority, everything except the miracles (**John 10:41**).

It must always be left for others to conclude about ourselves, not us. Jesus commended the humility of John, who said,

**"None born of women was greater than he."-
Except those born again ones (Matthew 11:11).**

It is often when such self declarations of being a 'last-days apostle' or some other spiritual giant that things begin to go off the rails. Only disaster can result.

However, one of the alarming things about such deception is that the gifts, the power and the calling of God already operating in one's ministry up to that point will usually continue to operate just as powerfully, often right until death.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).

A gift can remain – but God has no part in it. God will often honour his word regardless of the vessel. But we should all take note of the Lord's words.

"Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, and done many wonders in your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness." (Matthew 7:21-23).

This does not ***always infer*** you will lose your salvation – as some believe to be possible. The truly regenerated will simply ***lose their rewards***. In any case it is extremely foolish to mess about with any of God's gifts and anointing. The sons of lawlessness and perdition do abound. (***Ephesians 2:2***) & (***2 Thessalonians 2:3***).

What it does mean is that God is more concerned with ***your methods***, and not so much ***your results***.

The right Spirit is what he is after. Someone developed in his image. Someone who *looks and sounds* like Jesus.

Pride has to be dealt with on many levels, and can help save so many aspects of our lives. It can help save

your ministry, your job, your marriage and even your ***very life!***

As mentioned the Christian scene has suffered many casualties over the years, with prominent ministers unable to neither admit nor confess to their sin. Some have believed their own press and have surrounded themselves with “yes” men and so called ‘advisors’ who massage their leader’s already bloated status and ego.

How we need ***genuine brothers and sisters*** who are ***willing*** to point out to us when we fall into error. We can ***speak the truth in love*** and sometimes offer ***“tough” love*** without seeking to destroy or humiliate - and thus hoping it is received in the right Spirit.

“Rebuke a wise man and he will love you” – (Proverbs 9:8)

We must check our motives for being in “ministry” and look to develop a strong inner man. Ministry is about serving people. It is NOT about a platform. A place to show off.

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

Too many have chased riches and as the bible states ***“pierced themselves with many sorrows”*** – a distorted “prosperity message” has made many ***spiritually bankrupt*** as they strive to make things happen. They ***end up*** seeking the gift and not the giver. Even though their original motive when they began may have been pure.

Many ministries place being on TV more important than actually preaching the gospel. Their endless appeals for money show where their heart has now currently settled.

God surely knows them that are his. (2 Timothy 2:19).

For sure “***another***” ***gospel*** has held sway and caused much greed and self pleasing to enter the church. This has caused many saints to trample over each other in search of blessings.

God is not looking for an army of the “mighty”, and “prosperous” at the expense of others. (***Galatians 6:2***) (***Romans 15:1***) (***Philippians 2:21***)

He is looking for ***an army of the broken***. The true crucified ones. Those who will go on to be sold out living sacrifices for the Lord.

Psalm 51:17 reads,

“The sacrifices of God are a broken Spirit, a broken and contrite heart. O God, you will not despise”.

Pride has no part or lot in all of this. What the world is desperately looking for is ***someone*** who has ***nothing to prove*** and gives ***God all the glory***. There are enough prima donna’s parading there wares in the world, so those of us “***called by God***” should display a different stance – that of humility.

This is a rare commodity even in Christian circles, where success is gauged by how big our 'church' is and how many are coming through the doors.

More pride!

Many claim they know the book, but clearly they ***do not know the author, nor his heartbeat*** and what he was really all about. They lack grace, love, mercy and forgiveness. Many are harsh, cunning and ruthless. Oh how wonderful it is when we meet truly humble believers and the fragrance of the Lord pours forth from them ***so naturally*** and abundantly. ***It is rare to find someone so pure in Spirit.***

They will scarcely tell you of ***the price they had paid*** to reach such a level of Spiritual maturity. We can be sure it didn't happen overnight. But one thing we do notice, ***pride appears absent from them and their demeanour.***

So, what is the remedy? We come back to that word, humility. The best way to get the better of pride ***is to practice humility.***

The humble man realises that he is proud, and earnestly strives to ***overcome*** the manifestations of pride in his life. In striving for humility, we must always have before our eyes the example of Our Lord Jesus. We must keep in mind ***His promises in favor of the meek*** and the vengeance and consequences he reserves for the proud.

We must resort to ***spending time with the Lord in prayer, reading and meditation.*** We must live in the presence of God, ***practice self-denial*** and all the

other Christian virtues, especially patience, forbearance, submission, sympathy, and modesty. As previously mentioned we must also learn to walk in **love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness** at all times. Whilst at the same time learning to despise sin.

Pride must be defeated.

Pride resists *the cross*.

The fruits of the cross are a laid down life.

As The apostle Paul stated.

“For many walk of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ” (Philippians 3v18).

Those who want God’s best will eventually find themselves at the foot of the cross - that is a guarantee. We are to embrace pride, with the aim to crush it. All that attaches itself to it will eventually be dismantled and made ineffective.

Chapter 2

THE POWER OF THE FLESH

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18)

Understanding and applying the facts of the cross is one of the most difficult things for a believer to grasp. Our Lord saves the most vital and best things in store for those who truly mean business though.

This old man (the flesh) needs to be dealt with once and for all. We can spend year after year going around in circles, finding ourselves – yes born again believers, sinning, confessing and then sinning again.

Eventually, we get ***sick of defeat*** and we start to want to do something about it. Only the ***born again man*** realises after a time that he ***possesses the nature of a sinner*** – especially now that the light of God has come into his life. ***God shines his light so deeply***, but at a steady pace to expose the flaws within us and the bits that he wants us to remove. We will ***start to desire complete deliverance*** from what we are. Did we ever think we were as bad as all that?

Well frankly, yes we are.

We can never by self effort, keep at bay the things of the flesh. It will manage to rear its ugly head from time to time and we wonder if our experience of regeneration (being spiritually birthed) **will ever nullify the raging fires within.**

If you attempt to go down the self effort route you will only struggle and surely fail and crash out. You cannot reform the flesh! It is what it is, rebellious.

The Apostle Paul stated

“Oh wretched man that I am who will deliver me from this body of sin and death” (Romans 7:24).

This statement, whether referring to his pre or post born again state, or both! discovered **that the flesh nature is still there**, looking to burst out. What a frustration!

The prophet Jeremiah was not far out when he said the **“heart of man is desperately wicked” (Jeremiah 17:9).**

People **without** the Spirit however, know no better. They are just being what they are. Resistance is slim.

Jesus himself said **“forgive them for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).** Unbelievers are only doing what they know to do. They possess no alternative.

We can sometimes come across an apparent “**temperate type**”, but even the most well behaved sinner among us – with “**enough squeezing**” - will have his or her breaking point. And bang! Not a pretty sight.

The **sin nature** is truly alive within us all.

Sometimes we meet people who may appear ever so humble, quiet and non offensive. But we discover that many of these people keep themselves to themselves; they lead **selfish lives** and have **multiple internal problems**, like depression, bitterness and other mental issues often brought on by themselves and founded in self-indulgence.

They are not all that they seem. They are masters of the cover up. However, we Christians are meant to be different, we have got a “**way out**” of this dilemma – a reliance on the Holy Spirit, but only **if** we choose to be led by him. We are supposed to be those that are **constantly in motion**, a **light to the world and the salt of the earth**, loving people and exposing darkness wherever we go.

The church has seen enough of the flesh parade itself for many years, **masquerading as spiritual**. Preachers and musicians have been almost hero worshipped. Many have relied on their own talent or natural gifts and the people have responded in kind with carnal adulation.

But remember Inspiration can come through many sources, but **the true anointing only comes through the Spirit of God**. That is why we can attend the Hollywood style gospel services and come

out un-changed simply because the ***imprint of the Spirit is not imparted from the pulpit.*** We leave these events entertained, but unaffected.

Remember, ministry is supposed to be ***an outpouring of a life.*** It costs much, but is entirely worth it. Natural ability will not do and carnal living short circuits the blessing.

What sets us apart from the world?

We who are soon willing to walk away when somebody hurts our feelings and we shut the door on them. Our marriages come to an end in much the same way? How fickle and shallow we appear and have become.

We have spawned a generation of ***feel-good, quick fix merchants,*** with ***neither substance nor the character*** to handle life's trials.

The songs of Christian musician Keith Green stirred the church. His music poured forth from a heart that wrestled for God's best and that's what often separated him from the other so called 'talents' of his day. He too struggled with the flesh, but he came to the place, where like Jacob he said,

"I will not let you go until you bless me"
(Genesis 32v26).

He wanted to deal with it. He wanted God to change him, and make his life a prayer to the saviour. We believe God can do such a thing, if we ***really*** believe his promises and want to. Faking it won't do.

“He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

This flesh must die, and God’s way is best. The process is not by making us stronger, but by making us weaker! The way up is down. It may seem like a contradiction or paradox, whereby he has to remove “us” from “us” first.

Jesus knew that only a ***fully surrendered life*** would get the job done. He told the rich young ruler what would be the cause of his reluctance to follow him (***Luke 18:18-23***).

He got straight to the point, he exposed his heart.

His idol was riches – what is our idol? Sport, food, constant pleasure seeking, TV, Money...etc

The flesh is to be abhorred, pitied, rejected and with God’s help via his pruning – ***put to death***.

Then and only then can the true life of God within you pour forth in waves of blessing and abundance. The rivers of ***“living water”*** (***John 7:38, 39***) can be released without hindrance and the world gets to benefit from our consecration and progress.

The bible puts it this way.

“So death works in us, but life in you” (2 Corinthians 4v12).

There is ‘stuff’ deep within all of us that can manifest at any time. In many cases we didn’t even know it was there, it could have been lurking in our subconscious. Past hurts, pet sins, stubbornness, etc,

but God will help to highlight it to us, and help to pluck it out; we only have to be **willing**. **He never overrides our will.**

We must get ourselves positioned to be able to give up our rights to it.

Then as we allow him to **shine his light closer still**, he can continue to nail all new **“discoveries”** and remove them from our lives. The result? Spiritual progress!

Chapter 3

EXCEPT A GRAIN OF WHEAT

“Except a grain of wheat full into the ground and die, it abides alone” (John 12:24)

We have heard the term “the full” gospel, and have been led to believe that this involves receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, ***In the Pentecostal doctrinal sense (Acts 1:8)***.

Some agree with this experience, some don't. Others of course have a different take on it. But whatever your viewpoint, Jesus only spoke of one all encompassing type of gospel.

“And this gospel shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:14).

So what is it? What is ***“this”*** gospel?

Paul said He had ***‘fully’*** preached the gospel in ***(Romans 15:9 & Acts 20:27)***.

Friends, it's time to stop soft soaping people and dodging the inevitable – we have to tell it how it is.

We all have to face things as they appear and let people know what **“this gospel”** truly means and involves.

Well, here it is.

We ALL have to go to the cross in total surrender.

It’s unavoidable.

When people leave out or ignore the teaching of the cross and try to join the self help treatments put on display as an alternative, it only leads to further emptiness and disillusionment.

The “full gospel” is the cross.

There is no getting away from it.

So exactly ***what is*** this cross we are talking about?

The cross is ***DYING TO SELF!***

Dying to self is what Jesus meant when he said ***“we must deny ourselves and pick up our cross” (Luke 9:23).***

Dying to self daily is what Paul the Apostle spoke of so often. Guidance is found in ***Romans Chapter 8*** and ***Galatians Chapter 5***, on how we ***“walk in the Spirit”*** and not in the ***“flesh”***. The whole issue of dying to self daily is an absolute key to living a successful Christian life.

So many people love the Lord, but also live in constant turmoil.

This is how people who know Jesus as saviour end up doing some crazy things, including adultery, cheating, pornography, and **anything else we should be free from**, but end up being enslaved to.

All these can become a habit forming lifestyle unless tackled. These are the results of walking in the “flesh” and not the “Spirit”.

So, do old habits die hard?

It need not be so.

Maybe you are wondering yourself how you can be praising the Lord one day – even in your spiritual language (tongues) and then **sinning against God** the next soon after? The question needs to be asked, **how do you die to self?**

The first step is an action. You must do this. Nobody can do this for you. **It is the act of completely surrendering your life to Jesus Christ.**

It is critical to make dying to self a 24/7 situation.

Each and every day.

In dying to self via surrender, we are reaffirming that **our lives do not belong to ourselves anymore.** Our life is in his. When we are born again – we are literally indwelt by the life of God.

This is to empower us and help us on a daily basis, but ***we must yield to this leading.***

It is interesting to note that some who do not believe in a Pentecostal “baptism in the Spirit” ***seem better*** at this yielding than those who do. Maybe they are not so hung up on experiences.

When God is allowed to have this passage into our lives, it is literally then a trading of our thoughts and desires for ***his thoughts*** and desires. It is no longer you that is living, but Christ is living through you.

“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

This process needs to begin each and every morning.

Sadly some people go days and even weeks without really dying to self. It usually takes a few blunders and crashes before we get back to the Lords way of doing things. God’s way works best!

God will often draw us into a desert experience with Him to give us the opportunity to grow and learn to trust Him or to gain more insight into His ways. Dying to self is never fun. But it is necessary. The sooner you realise this the easier it will become. The peace and joy that follows will be the indication that you are back on the right track.

There is no hiding the fact that there ***a price to pay*** and ***that price is a surrendered life.***

Remember, you don't do this once and forget about it.

It must be done DAILY! Choose to walk in the “Sprit” and not in the “flesh”.

You don't need to waste time and money listening to motivational preachers (the fashion of the day) who tell you that you can do it ALL on your own. That will only leave you defeated.

They work only on your senses. It's a cheap substitute for the real thing that simply doesn't last and leaves people frustrated.

That is the world's technique.

We are not of this world (1 Corinthians 2:12).

Preachers need to get back in line and teach their people to go down the biblical route. Becoming a poor copy of a secular motivational speaker such as Tony Robins won't get the job done. Besides he is far better at it than you.

You have the Spirit of God on the inside and you have been called to a ***spiritual ministry***. If you genuinely want to see a change, a revival and a visitation of the Spirit - only God can give you this. Once he gets in your boat, things will take off – but you must preach it boldly and with confidence first. We must believe it and get others to believe it. We must start to seek his face again, not his hand.

Seeking him for ***who he is*** and not what we can get out of him. ***That is a true relationship in any sphere.***

The way of the cross is God's way.

It will be a place of stripping down – getting a new wineskin to replace the old.

As the pilgrim said.

“A type of wilderness where men allow themselves to be cleansed and purged in order to be fit and ready for God's good purposes”.

We must surrender and let God have his way. Or as is commonly heard ***“Let go and let God”.***

Lets not feel under any pressure now, Jesus said his yoke was ***“easy”*** and his burden ***“light”***. I remember reading volumes and volumes on a very similar subject to this and came away feeling exasperated and barely able to remember what I had read. It took me all of 3 months to get through it all. What stood out for me was that I was shown I could not do any of this in my own strength.

It was impossible. God's way is far different from our way.

Man's way is by trying to suppress sin or weaknesses. ***God's way is to remove the sinner.***

We are taking up room that only God should have a place in.

We think that if we could only become stronger and more resilient, this “thing” or “problem” would

go away. We plead for more self control to deal with such instances of bad temper and inner rage.

God's way is to make us weaker and weaker. He says we are made perfect in weakness, (2 Corinthians 12v9).

This may seem like a peculiar way of doing it, but it is the divine way. ***God sets us free from the dominion of sin not by strengthening the old man (flesh) but by crucifying him.***

By removing ***“him”*** from the scene of action.

God will indeed finish the work he has started in us (***Philippians 1v6***).

So there we have it – he is working in us to do of his will and good pleasure! (***Philippians 2v13***).

So, after time spent in meditation, burning the midnight oil and experiencing the rumblings and groaning's of the Spirit that cannot be uttered (***Romans 8v26***) – he spoke to me!

He said ***“it's all by my grace son; you can do nothing about it – except surrender”***. It is by my grace in which you now stand (***Romans 5v2***).

What a relief. What a breakthrough. In other words, ***“I got you in this and I will get you out of it”***. For sure the word declares that he has chosen us, we have not chosen him (***John 15:16***). All we did was respond to the call when it came. Grace is our bedrock.

Keith Green wrote this very song with the lyrics.

“Nothing lasts, except the grace of God by which I stand”

Things in life change. Circumstances, Jobs, people change and we change. God never changes – that is a promise we can all hold onto.

Heaven and earth will pass away but his word will never pass away. **He has put his word above his name (Psalm 138v2).**

God probes deeper and deeper into us to make those “spiritual” changes that make us become more like him. People assume that because we are saved by grace (**Ephesians 2v8-10**) we have a positional salvation that is based on the righteousness of God alone (**2 Corinthians 5v21**).

Although this is true, the reality is that the **“inner position”** must come manifest in our **“outward walk”**.

It is not the great cop-out of “its all been done for us, so I can live as I like”

NO!

The positional teaching of **who we are in Christ** has done wonders for so many in the body of Christ. However because it has not been balanced with the teaching of the cross (the laid down life), it has left multitudes living in mediocrity and delusion. There is no real outworking and power in their lives. It is like a false faith that lulls us into complacency and mediocrity.

As Paul the Apostle stated. *In Romans 6v1-2*
“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death”?

That was straight after what he had said in ***Romans 5 about grace!***

So let's reconcile this.

There is no pressure – we walk in grace – no doubt about it.

But don't let that lull you into a false sense of security and responsibility.

Let's use that grace via appreciation to get our act together and show the world we are different!

What we have appropriated is now ***OUTWORKED.***

We ***REVEAL*** to the world what God says we are.

That's what makes our experience genuine.

When we have settled this once and for all within ourselves, our walk with Jesus becomes a joy. Anything we do for him in obedience can only lead to true peace. This peace comes not because of the outcome of any given situation that is immaterial; it comes because we have obeyed the Lord.

We have done our part and we must let the cards fall as they will thereafter, but we ourselves are unaffected.

What a glorious realm to live in!

A place of real and true peace.

“For the mind set on the flesh is (spiritual) death, but the life set on the Spirit is (Gods) life and peace.” (Romans 8v6).

When our outer man is smitten, dealt with, and humbled by all kinds of misfortune, the scars and wounds that are left behind will be the very places from which the spirit flows out from within. I am afraid that some brothers and sisters are too whole; they have never suffered any dealings and have never changed in any way. May the Lord be merciful to us and set a straight course before us. May we see that this is the only way. May we see that all of the dealings that we have received from the Lord during the past ten or twenty years are for achieving this one goal. Therefore, we should not despise the Lord's work in us. May the Lord truly show us the meaning of the breaking of the outer man. Unless the outer man is broken, everything we have is in the mind and in the realm of knowledge and is useless. May the Lord grant us a thorough dealing.

Chapter 4

THE BAPTISM OF SUFFERING

But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared." (Mark 10:38-39)

There are four notable baptisms in the bible, and three of them have been debated for decades if not centuries as to their role and significance.

The fourth one has been avoided and for good reason, for it is certainly the hardest to come to terms with.

They are the following.

- 1) The baptism into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12v13)
- 2) The baptism in water (Acts 2v38)
- 3) The baptism in the Holy Spirit (Matt 3v11)
- 4) **The baptism of suffering**

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not

laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permits” (Hebrews 6: 1-3).

The writer of Hebrews covers a lot of ground here, and takes for granted what was written as being compulsory. We find nowadays that whatever the bench mark was back then is now being slowly restored. It was only a few centuries ago that Martin Luther discovered the revelation that the ***“just should live by faith” (Habakkuk 2:4).***

Truth is applied ***“line upon line, precept upon precept” (Isaiah 28:10).*** But it is the baptism that is rarely mentioned, ***the baptism of suffering*** that I want to focus on.

Although the title of this chapter is directed at the disciples of his day, we as modern day versions need to realise it is our portion to. If we are to go where Jesus went and do the ***“greater works”*** - we will also have to face our trials head on without complaint and share in what our Lord had to face.

Sometimes suffering and being used of God is a mystery, but those that have taken that ***“narrow road”*** can attest to its reality. A friend of mine sent me a text one day and brought home to me the need of the hour.

“In reality we are created to contain the holy one, but the condition is excruciatingly painful because we have to be what no one wants to be and sometimes be treated how no one wants to be treated.

We in effect become nothing. A servant to all, to be sacrificed on a daily basis and raised up again to let him live out his death and life of suffering, despised and glorified, what a mystery that has been made known to us, this is the sum total of all things”

So true! The church in the main has shunned it. Preferring to live in comfort. It does not seem attractive to them. So Christ is denied. They will not let Christ work in them. To have the place cleaned where Christ should be living. ***Hardly anybody is willing*** to go through the process and ***suffer*** with him.

If the Spirit of God were given free reign through believers and was poured out on the uproar and debauchery of this present world, the world would have no excuses. They would know without a shadow of doubt. God is in their midst.

But Christ is hidden and concealed.

So the world is not convicted.

Jesus will ***only let himself be seen*** in those who are willing to partake of this road – yes the narrow one. Here a person ***becomes one with the person of Christ***, the crucified son of God, purified and wholly united into one body. That means sharing in his

suffering. A severe character building exercise, whereby we learn to **endure tough times in order** to build such a vessel that can contain and keep the ‘divine nature.’

What comes along with this includes being misunderstood, misquoted, and misrepresented and becoming like Christ - a man of **“no reputation”**. In the book of revelation only 2 churches out of 7 knew about this baptism. **The church of Smyrna** was the forerunner, the other was **Philadelphia**. Let’s look at Smyrna.

THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA

Smyrna had an excellent harbor and still does today. It is a beautiful seacoast resort town in Turkey called Izmir. The city is the oldest of the seven churches mentioned in revelation and the city was probably established not very long after the great flood.

Smyrna came under Roman control about 27 BC. The residents of the ancient city worshiped many pagan gods including Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, Aesculapius, Cybele, Poseidon, Demeter, and later Caesar.

Each year a Roman citizen had to burn a pinch of incense on the altar of Dea Roman, the goddess of Rome. This became a test for the Christians and **many who refused were burned at the stake** or killed by wild beasts in the arena.

Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna in 169 AD., refused to recant and was burned at the stake at the hands of Jewish leaders.

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write; these things say the first and the last, who was dead, and came to life: I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but you are rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:8-9).

Jesus Christ is the first and last who was dead and is alive. Jesus says this assembly had works, tribulation and poverty but He assures them that ***although poor physically they are rich spiritually.***

In those days, there were many Jews in the city that said they were Jews but they actually persecuted ***the true Jews*** who found Jesus to be the Messiah. Jesus tells us that that these false Jews are the synagogue of Satan.

When Jesus was in the flesh on earth, He also said many of the leaders of Israel were ***of their father the Devil*** when they rejected Him as their Messiah. They later enticed the nation to have Him crucified.

Paul tells us in ***Romans chapter 9*** that true Israel is not those descended from Israel (Jacob) by the flesh but only those descended from Jacob and that were elected to the promise.

“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some you in prison, that you will be tested and have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

The tribulation and suffering that would last for ten days spoken of in this passage is often cited as most likely the times of persecution under the ten Roman Caesars since the birth of the new covenant Church. They were: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian and Diocletian. The last of them had the most believers slaughtered.

Bible scholars do not dispute that the ten days of tribulation that Jesus spoke of actually happened. What they dispute is which persecution literally fulfilled it.

There most likely was a fulfillment to the local church that was at Smyrna as well as a fulfillment through the prophetic timeline.

The ten Caesars probably fulfilled the prophetic timeline. During the rule of these ten Caesars, it is estimated ***that five million believers were killed by the Romans*** as well as by the Jews that rejected their Messiah.

Jesus told this church that those who held on to their faith in spite of losing their physical lives would be given a crown of life. After these ten evil Caesars, it seems that Satan concluded that killing the Christians ***could not defeat Christianity.***

He then changed his approach and ***infiltrated the leadership*** of the churches by mixing the church with state political appointees. Under Constantine in 312 AD, Christianity was adopted by Rome. At that time, Satan began the process of corrupting the church from within by joining the church with the pagan world political system.

“He that has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death” (Revelation 2:11).

Only those with spiritual ears can hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Those that overcome will not be hurt by the second death. Later in this book, we will find out that ***the second death is the Lake of Fire. It is where all will go who are not written in the book of life.***

No one who overcomes by washing their sins away with the blood of the Lamb will ever take part in this second death.

This persecuted church is one of ***only two churches*** that Jesus has no message of criticism for. The other church as previously mentioned is Philadelphia. Jesus in general is well pleased with the people who make up the Churches of Philadelphia and Smyrna.

They knew about the baptism of suffering.

It was the type of church Jesus would have associated himself with. A church full of strength, perseverance and substance. Willing to take a few hits along the way.

As the writer would say ***“a church without compromise”.***

A prophetic application of this type of church is now sought here on earth. As the days grow nearer to Christ’s return, ***the birthing of this radical organism is a must.***

We can look to the house churches of China, the underground churches that suffer persecution in North Korea, Sudan, Eritrea, Iran, Somalia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and parts of India. ***These people are really living and in some cases dying for their faith.***

We hear news of affluent Christian doctors leaving their lucrative posts and salaries abroad and returning to their homeland where they can suffer together with their brothers. Many ending up in prison for their faith and are happy to do so. They have kept the main thing. The main thing – their faith! Oh what sacrifice!

This is not the “glamour gospel” we often see. The Western churches have it easy in comparison. We have been numbed into submission with our comfortable lifestyles and seeker friendly services. Our mindset is one of ***rather “them” not “me”***. Maybe sending the ‘dollar’ to ease the conscience.

Missionaries are sometimes frowned upon as radicals and cranks. If we lose our “seat” in church or our handkerchief, or our position we would class that as a really “bad day” and we would sulk about it. How fickle and weak we are in comparison. We have created a Christian Disneyland without backbone, substance nor depth. This is the pitiful state of our churches, our priorities, and “self” on display.

If we avoid the baptism of suffering, we are deceiving ourselves. Suffering is mentioned in virtually all the New Testament books. Jesus said we must be willing to give him preeminence in everything.

"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple (Luke 14:26).

We can't come to him with our conditions of allegiance. We have to count the cost and conclude – its all worth it!

We have taught for too long that if you accept Jesus, you get this and that in return, and after a ***“desperate sales pitch”*** we say ***“now will you take him”***. Jesus never taught like that.

He said deny everything. He said follow me and you won't be guaranteed a bed even! We must stop preaching this gospel that says you can ***add*** Jesus to your life – the deal is actually, ***you will lose your life! No gimmicks!***

We have been accustomed to preachers using obscure passages and allegory to prove a point or even attempt to make a doctrine. These usually come from the Old Testament, but one thing we can be totally sure of is the following passages of scripture.

They show what ***“this gospel” really involves***. Sufferings, persecutions and hardships. I humbly ask you to meditate on them.

“They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name” (Acts 5:40, 41).

“Now if we are children, then we are heirs-- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory” (Romans 8:17).

“For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ” (2 Corinthians 1:5).

“Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ”. (Galatians 6:12).

“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him” (Philippians 1:29).

“I am glad when I suffer for you in my body, for I am participating in the sufferings of Christ that continue for his body, the church” (Colossians 1:24).

“In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know” (1 Thessalonians 3:4).

“All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. (2 Thessalonians 1:5).

“Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:3).

“Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution” (2 Timothy 3:12).

“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, and discharge all the duties of your ministry.” (2 Timothy 4:5).

About Paul the apostle.....

“I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.”(Acts 9:16).

And finally our ultimate example....

“That is why Jesus, in order to sanctify the people by his own blood, also suffered outside the city gate” (Hebrews 13:12).

Outside the city gates where all the scum was thrown.

Read about Ezekiel, Daniel, Jeremiah, Job, and the faithful in

Hebrews Chapter 11.

“And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; ***whose weakness was turned to strength***; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. There were others who were tortured, refusing to be released so that they might gain

an even better resurrection. ***Some faced jeers and flogging***, and even chains and imprisonment. They were ***put to death by stoning; they were sawed in two***; they were killed by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, ***persecuted*** and mistreated— the ***world was not worthy of them***. They wandered in deserts and mountains, ***living in caves and in holes in the ground***.

These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised, since God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect (***Hebrews 11:32-39***). These people lived on a different plain – how much more we who ***“have the Spirit”***. False prophets will not suffer. They are often loved. They preach a message that avoids hardships.

The word of God says it’s to be expected.
“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you” (1 Peter 4:12).

You may say, I don’t want to go through all this.

But you will if and when you start preaching the “true gospel”, when the Lord leads you to confront people in love and the powers of darkness.

A tall tree gathers much wind.

But Jesus is worth it.

“For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God” (1 Peter 2:19)

Many Churches have become, fat, blind & lost. “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—***I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.***

Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches?”

After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” ***At once***

I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under its wings. Day and night they never stop saying:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 3:14-22, 4:8).

Folks, how can ***we ever compare*** with what awaits us.

This world has ***nothing to offer*** in comparison.

How God’s heart ***must break*** when he see’s the junk that we hold onto.

To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the

nations— that one will rule (Revelation 2:26-27).

What a promise!

WHAT THIS BAPTISM OF SUFFERING REALLY MEANS

It means to follow him in giving up our privileges, our time, and our own pet pleasures, in order that somebody else may **“come to life” (2 Corinthians 4v4)**. No real life will spring forth from or to anyone until that kind of death is **“accepted”** without complaint.

To eat of his body and drink of his blood is to be totally consumed with Jesus – and like many of the disciples, they walked with him no more. This is the sort of commitment that many run also from today.

This is something we have to come to terms with in our own lives. We have to count that cost.

The decision to enter into this is our’s alone. Like a tried and trusted precious metal, there has to be something in us that will allow us to go through the fire of suffering which has its roots in obedience, and come out refined and perfected.

Our effectiveness is limited until then....

Chapter 5

BEING CONFORMED

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren”(Romans 8:29-30)

It's never nice to hear disillusioned comments from hurt brothers and sisters. As one dear lady I came across put it.

“In 44 years on this earth and 28 being part of the Christian faith, I have not met one single follower of Christ who has truly and consistently embodied his likeness and character in their person.”

She added, ***“I have noticed also the ones most hung up on “living right “often appear to be the most toxic!!”***

WOW! No mincing of words there. What an indictment. This was HER experience. The fact is people. No one is perfect. Keith Green said in his lyrics,

“You know it isn't any use, banging your head, up against that cold stone wall, Cause

nobody's perfect, except for the Lord, and even the best are bound to fall

God's ultimate purpose in our creation was that we should ***finally*** be conformed to the image of Christ. Christ was to be the firstborn among many brethren and his brethren were to be like Him. All the discipline and training in our lives is with this end in view.

“My one and only goal – his image in my soul”

Paul wrote in the book of Galatians to his converts that he had been travelling in prayer

“That Christ be formed in you” (Galatians 4:19).

To be what we *claim to be* is something that must be taken seriously. Too many rest on the grace of God to excuse themselves of partaking in the process of change. There is nothing worse than seeing someone as carnal as they were when they first became born again 20 years ago.

Quite frankly it's embarrassing and a slap in the face for what the Lord has supposedly done in our lives. Basically, he loves us way too much, to see us stay the way we came in. He wants his nature shining through us in everything we do.

He wants people to see Jesus in us.

Our Destiny is NO less than being changed into exactly what Christ was - however long it takes.

***He will complete what he has started in us
(Philippians 1:6).***

He'll keep chipping away at us.

Consider carefully these first few scriptures regarding the plan of God.

“And God said, Let us make man in our image and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping “And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so” (Genesis 1:24).

“And God made the beast of the earth after his kind and cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good” (Genesis 1:25).

Animal life on this planet was created "after its kind" (Genesis 1:26).

You see, this creation of the "kind" called man (male and female) was different than the creation of animal "kind."

The genetic work done was patterned, not after the animal kind, but after the very image and likeness of God. However, before we jump to conclusions prior to getting the whole story and time elements, Mankind, as he is now, is not fully created after The God kind . . . yet. Let me explain further.

God created mankind to be "head" over the earth and all things on it. The earth is the Lords; we were to rule over it (caretaker).

"And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth:" (Genesis 5:3).

Man, as a physical being, creates after his own kind, according to how God set up the reproduction processes. God is doing nothing less in creating us, but in stages.

"But now, O LORD, you are our father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; and we all are the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8).

We are being fashioned, after our first coming into being as flesh, at our birth, into an image only God can form. God is creating something He desires, something that is His own work. Let us see some more of his plan.....

"For whom he (God) did foreknow, he also did predestinate [to be] conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29).

"My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you" (Galatians 4:19).

"Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

Our purpose in life is to be conformed to the same "image" fullness, mind and nature that Christ Himself is NOW.

"The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with that we be also glorified together" (Romans 8:16, 17).

Notice that? We are JOINT heirs with Christ! What does Christ have? . . .

John 3:35 "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand." inherit life that never ends, and that life is as a member of the God

Rom 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Christ has ALL things... the entire universe is His. WE will inherit that as well, along with Christ. However, it doesn't stop there . . .

Romans 8:17, last part of the verse. . . "That we may be also glorified together."

Not only does mankind inherit ALL that exists, but we Kind... the God Family. Remember above what the "glory" Christ talked about receiving back was, and later DID receive?

It is having the "glory" of being a divine being.

Hebrews 12:10 "For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

How do you partake of the Holiness of God without being LIKE God?

"Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4).

Partakers of the Divine Nature... What is that Nature? It isn't just eternal life... That nature is Spirit, Holy, Divine, and Eternal.

"And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (1 Corinthians 15v49).

It is best summed up.

"But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18).

TRAVAIL AND THE MALE CHILD

In Revelation chapter 12, John sees a vision of a woman travailing to give birth to a child while a fiery dragon waited to devour it. In the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was travailing.

'Being in an agony he was praying very fervently; and his sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.' 'My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death.'

(Accounts in Matthew, Mark and Luke)

Jesus travailed for his own resurrection as well as ours.

“Who in the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him out of death, and He was heard because of His reverence” (Hebrews 5:7). We see the same principle of travail for birth in the Exodus from Egypt. For at least 80 long years the Egyptians afflicted the Israelites.

God said to Moses, ***“I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt”***

(As we fast forward centuries we see 6 million Jews perished in the Nazi holocaust, 3 years later Israel took its place among the nations of the world)

Moses had fled to the wilderness, there he was to spend 40 years in preparation to return and bring deliverance to his people.

Moses came back like Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit and stood before Pharaoh with all the authority of God. Egypt could not stand before him. So Israel came out of Egypt; and Moses used almost the same words as Jesus: ***'Let my people go'***. Truly God's people do not weep and travail in vain.

At the appointed time God acts.

Paul says in the New Testament in ***Romans Chapter 8*** - "***that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth until now***". Secondly he adds that we ourselves groan within ourselves; and thirdly he adds that the Spirit also intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

What will be the fruit or answer of this present travail?

The scriptures go onto tell us that the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing or manifestation of the true sons of God. The creation is utterly sick and weary of human mismanagement and present state of things in the world.

It awaits its rightful rulers. Only the righteous rule of Jesus and those who share the throne with Him can rectify its endless wrongs. Scripture continues, "***We ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body***"

What is this adoption? Has it not already taken place?

In a sense no doubt it has. John writes, '***Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when He appears, we shall be like Him***' (1 John 3:2).

At the same time it appears that there is a much greater fulfillment yet to come. '***The sufferings of this present time***', says Paul, '***are not worthy to be***

compared to the glory that is going to be revealed to us' (v 18).

Verse 29 makes this adoption clearer:

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.”

The fullness of sonship is nothing less than conformity to the likeness of Jesus Christ.

His many brothers must not be perpetually brought low by their Older Brother's stature, the old nature, as still many sadly exude. They must grow up into his fullness. That is the hope for which we have our inward travail. That also is the desire of the whole creation.

No one else is fit to rule the creation other than Jesus Christ and those who have become conformed to his likeness. It is for this immense transformation that we travail within our souls. How do we participate in this travail?

“The Spirit also helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express; and he who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because he intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will' (v 26, 27).

The intercession of the Holy Spirit is inside us. We cannot stir up spiritual travail. Rather by emptying ourselves of worldly trivialities, human ambitions and

other distractions, we become available to the Holy Spirit to use as He pleases.

BIRTH OF THE MALE CHILD

Chapter 12 of the book of Revelation describes the birth of a male child. ***'A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head; and she was pregnant; and she cried out in pain as she was about to give birth ... and she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.'*** (Vv 1, 2, 5).

We see here a link with Romans 8. In both we see travail. The birth of the male child exactly parallels the revealing of the sons of God. A birth is not the creation of a life. it is the revealing or manifestation of a life *already* present. The baby inside the mother's womb is as complete and alive as the baby after it is born.

It is just hidden from view waiting till the time comes and the birth pangs make it visible to the world. This male child is snatched up to the throne, as he is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron. It is for this righteous rule that now the whole creation groans and travails.

Joseph, as most Bible students know, is the clearest of all the Old Testament types of Jesus. He was the much loved son of his father. His Mother was Rachel. He was rejected by his brethren and thrown into the pit and then into prison before he was exalted to the right hand of Pharaoh.

Many other details of his life correspond to and foreshadow the life of Jesus.

The male child of Revelation 12 can clearly be identified with Joseph or Jesus who we know is going to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Those who **'overcome'** and **'keep his deeds to the end'** will 'receive authority over the nations' and 'rule them with a rod of iron'. **(Revelation 2v26).**

James and John one day asked Jesus, 'Grant that we may sit in your glory, one on your right, and one on your left.' Jesus immediately asked them, 'Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptised with the baptism with which I am baptised?'

Those called to sit at his right hand and share his throne must also share his sufferings. This they said they were able to do. Even so Jesus told them, 'To sit on my right or on my left is not mine to give; but it is for those for whom it has been prepared.'

The call to sonship is also a call to suffering. Even of Jesus it is written that 'Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which he suffered' (Heb 5:8).

If we aspire to share his throne how much more must we first learn obedience. The essence of sonship is being led by the Spirit of God. This implies an obedience which has been learnt through suffering and death to the self-life. 'If we suffer', Paul wrote to Timothy, **'we shall also reign with Him' (2 Tim 2:12).**

Two further witnesses testify to the travail that precedes the birth of the male child. 'Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth ... Let the day perish on which I was to be born, and the night which said, **'A male child is conceived'** (**Job 3: 1-3**). Jeremiah in very similar language says, 'Cursed be the day when I was born; let the day not be blessed when my mother bore me! Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father, saying,

***'A male child has been born to you.'* (Jeremiah 20:14-15).**

We must return to Revelation 12. In verses 3 and 4 we read that a fiery dragon stood before the woman, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. The birth of this male child is accompanied both by inward travail and by outward conflict. It was the same in Egypt at the birth of the nation.

There was a Pharaoh to destroy each male child as soon as it was born. It was the same when Jesus was born at Bethlehem. Soon Herod was killing all the male children under two years old. The manifestation of this male child means the end of Satan's dominion. He will oppose it to the limit of his power.

The catching up of the male child to the throne is followed by war in heaven in verse 7. In verse 9 the great dragon or Satan is thrown down. In verse 10 a loud voice in heaven proclaims that the kingdom of God and the authority of His Christ have come. No wonder Satan resists the birth of this male child.

Jesus sat on the Mount of Olives His disciples asked Him, 'Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming, and of the consummation of the age?' (Mat 24:3). He warned them of false prophets, wars, famines and earthquakes and then added, '**All these things are the beginning of birth pangs' (24:8).**

You only need to buy a newspaper or switch on the news to discover that the whole creation is groaning and travailing at this very moment! The time is now. Even now, if we are not caught up with the affairs of the world, and the lusts of the flesh and the works of Babylon (Satanic system), we will know the inward groaning and travail of the Holy Spirit interceding within us. We will know that God has something infinitely greater than the religious meetings we have attended, something far beyond our own meager experience, something much more than creation has yet seen of his manifest power.

Secretly and silently as the child is formed in the womb, so God is preparing sons. The great day when they will be manifested to the whole creation cannot now be far away.

We will see and feel the travail of their preparation in the coming years till they come to birth. We see the world's turmoil all around us, but the sorrow of its travail will soon be turned into joy when Jesus comes to set up his righteous kingdom. Let us lift up our hearts in anticipation and rejoice and pray with confidence let your kingdom come. "**Oh Lord Conform us and let us be of that company**"

Chapter 6

AGAPE – GODS LOVE

“Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love” (1 John 4:8)

The anointing (presence of God) works in harmony with the fruit of the Spirit operating in one’s life. The anointing is the power of the Spirit to accomplish a specific purpose.

Even if one has a gift, if they are not operating in love and the other fruit of the Spirit, then that gift is useless according to the scripture. Instead of seeking for an anointing or a gift or a ministry, we are to be seeking for the nature of Christ to be produced in us. Many people have this back to front and it is evident within their ministry, any witness is diluted. We are to speak the truth in love. That’s our main priority.

And as a result of this – of living how he lived – we will walk as he walked – in power, victory, strength, character and true anointing. Most times we associate the anointing with the gifts of the Spirit, miracles or especially inspired preaching. But to have the required impact it is more directly connected to the fruit of the Spirit.

That’s what it really means to be anointed, anointed to live right, rather than wondering if I am anointed

to perform a healing. Spiritual gifts are the *result* of the anointing. But the fruit of the Spirit being displayed in your life is what really proves you are anointed.

As far as ministries go Jesus said you would know them by their fruit, not by their gifts. That's why it is important we operate primarily in the fruit of the Spirit, before we even attempt to move into the gifts, often times the order is reversed, and is highly noticeable.

Nothing is worse than moving in the gifts without the fruit, it displays a lack of character – our gifts will then become ineffective to the body of Christ and people will dismiss us as frauds. The devil can imitate many things, but he cannot imitate the fruit of the Spirit. That is the *one thing* that belongs to the born again child of God.

That is the thing that sets us apart from the world. They will know we are Christians by our love for one another.

Love is the glue that keeps all the other fruits together. We cannot even operate our faith properly, unless it is backed up by love. (Galatians 5:6). That's how powerful love is. Love NEVER fails. If we are not walking in love, we are not walking in genuine faith and most certainly not walking in the Spirit.

There are many types of love spoken of in the bible – the Greek language is rich in explaining what each of these mean.

We usually don't have much problem with the type called *phileo* as this type is based on what we can get out

of people. “I can love you if somehow you can bring me pleasure” or “I will love you but I want something back in return”.

So most of us know how to love people with *phileo* love.(the friendship show of affection) But we haven't done very well in walking in *agape* the God kind of love. It is a self denying love, the kind that has only the other person's interests at heart.

If marriages were based on this type of love – there would be no more divorces. Basically, without agape we are just playing Church. Many are in love in our churches, they love the preacher, the music, the church building, and they love their doctrine, they love their denomination. But ask them if they love their brother and sisters and you may be in for a surprise.

A WORD ON AGAPE BY A SAINT

Over the last few months, I've been sharing how God saved our marriage twenty years ago by His supernatural Love. I made the statement that had we not found God's way of agape; we would not be together today.

I really mean it! God's Love not only salvaged and restored our marriage; it has turned it around to where it is now a hundred times better, sweeter and more passionate than it ever was, even when we were first married. There is hope for families. God's Love is the answer. Agape is the answer!

"Okay," you say, "So what's the big deal about God's Love? How is agape Love any different from natural,

human love? And, why on earth is this agape love so important?" What is God's Love? Well, the Bible tells us that agape is a Person.

God himself is love (agape). This is what makes Christianity so totally different from all the other religions in the world.

Christianity is the only religion where ***God Himself comes to dwell within each of our hearts.***

There's a precious story that exemplifies this: Art Katz, a brilliant Jewish philosopher, was a teacher at the University of California at Berkeley. After years of seeking truth, he decided to travel around the world in search of the real God. As he traveled, he took time to painstakingly explore all the religions that he encountered.

One day, while riding a train to Frankfurt, Germany, Art happened to sit next to a young Christian girl who had only a few days previously become a believer. They began to talk about God. A few minutes into the conversation, the learned Art sarcastically turned to the girl and asked, "What makes you think your Jesus is any different from all the other religions of the world?"

The young girl paused a moment and then lovingly looked Art straight in the eye and said, "Because Jesus is God, he is Love and He lives in my heart."

Well, this was not at all the response that Art had expected. In fact, it caught him totally off guard. He never saw that sweet girl again, but for months he could not get her simple answer out of his head. Over and over

those words echoed in his mind, "Because Jesus is God and He lives in my heart." Whoever heard of a religion like that, Art thought.

Finally, at the end of his trip, Art found himself in Jerusalem, Israel, his homeland. He befriended a man there that secretly was a Messianic Jew (a Jew who has found Jesus to be the true Messiah). After a series of lengthy conversations with his friend and some "God-orchestrated" circumstances, Art finally found what he was looking for.

And the God of the universe, who is agape Love (just as that young Christian girl on the train had said), came to dwell at the core of his being.

Ephesians 3:17-19 tells us, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you...may know the Love of Christ which passes knowledge..."

God's Love is a supernatural love that is poured into our hearts the moment we invite Jesus into our lives. It's God Himself by the Holy Spirit who comes into our hearts at that moment, and He is that Love!

Our next job is let him out – set him loose on the world! (Many still have him locked up) One of the reasons so many of us have problems finding real love is that we have been looking in all the wrong places for it.

Rather than looking to the author of real love, we have been looking horizontally to our spouses, our families, our friends and our relatives to meet our need for love. And, they simply are not able to do so. It's simply one on

one, you and him. Everything else will disappoint or let you down.

Real Love is a Person. God's Love can't be found in a church building, or in a religion or in different philosophies, real love can only be found in a Person. Jesus Christ is the embodiment of real Love from the Father to us. If we allow him he will initiate and maintain that love relationship.

It's a love that focuses all of its intentions and abilities on the one being loved-by putting their will and their desires above its own. It's difficult for us to even fathom a love like this, let alone produce it in our own strength. And the reason is, this kind of love is supernatural. It originates in the heart of God and just keeps on coming no matter what the one being loved does or doesn't do is irrelevant.

This kind of love never stops flowing. In other words, there are no conditions or stipulations which would cause real love to cease. A precious example: In the mid 1930s, a dear, sweet German (Protestant) pastor was abducted from his church. He was suspected of harboring, abetting and aiding Jews.

He was immediately taken to prison and put in a five-foot cell. There was no hearing, no trial-not even time to let his family know what had happened to him. For weeks, this gentle pastor asked the prison guard outside of his cell door if he could use the pay phone at the end of the hall to call his wife and family and, at least, let them know he was alive.

The guard, however, was a contemptible man who hated anyone and everyone that had to do with Jewry. He not only wouldn't let the pastor use the phone, he determined in his heart to make this man's life as miserable as possible.

The guard purposefully skipped the pastor's cell when meals were handed out; he made the pastor go weeks without a shower; he kept lights burning in the pastor's room so he couldn't sleep; he blasted his short wave radio hoping the intolerable noise would finally break the pastor; he used filthy language; he pushed him; he shoved him; and, when he could, he arranged for the pastor to have the most difficult job in the labor gang. The pastor, on the other hand, prayed continually not to let hate consume him. He prayed instead to be able to love this guard with God's love.

As the months went by, whenever he could, the pastor would smile at the guard; he would thank him when his meals did come; when the guard was near his cell, the pastor would tell him about his own wife and his own children; he even questioned the guard about his family and about his goals, ideas and visions; and, one time, for a quick moment, he had a chance to tell the guard about agape Love.

The guard never answered a word, but obviously, he heard it all. After months and months of unconditionally loving this sadistic guard, God's Love finally broke through.

One night, as the pastor was again quietly talking, the guard cracked a smile for the first time; the next day, instead of the pastor's cell being skipped for lunch, the

pastor got two meals; the following evening, he was allowed, not only to go to the showers, but to stay as long as he wanted; the lights began going off at night in his cell and the radio noise ceased.

Finally, one afternoon, the guard came into the pastor's cell, asked him for his home phone number, and the guard personally made the "long awaited" call to the pastor's family. A few months later the pastor was released. The guard was totally transformed. ***Love never fails.***

IT'S A "GIFT OF LOVE"

God's Love is a gift because there are "no strings attached" to it. There are no conditions to fill-nothing to earn, nothing to do and nothing to be.

Agape Love just loves unconditionally, spontaneously and continually. Another beautiful example: Many years ago, there was a nine-year-old girl flying with her parents from England to the United States to have a kidney transplant.

The child's condition was very precarious, so the operation was essential. The cost of the procedure was going to be £20,000. The parents had done all they could in Britain to raise the huge sum of money. However, they had only managed to raise £7,000, far short of the total needed. But they made the trip anyway, hoping for some sort of miracle.

And, they certainly found one! When some of the passengers aboard that jetliner heard about the little girl's plight, they spread the word. People all over that

plane began to personally involve themselves in this little girl's life.

Unconditionally they began to give of themselves. Some men gave their expensive gold watches and whatever cash they had. One man wrote a check for £6,000. Ladies gave their fur coats, their jewelry and any other valuables they had.

The precious people aboard that 747 jetliner raised an amazing £13,000 towards the little girl's operation. That, plus the £7,000 that the family had raised on their own, made the exact amount needed.

The beautiful thing about this story is that the little girl's nationality, her religion or her social status had nothing at all to do with the decision those people made on that plane to love her unconditionally.

They just gave of themselves-all they had to give - "with no strings attached." When I think of this story, I think of God's Love, because agape does the exact same thing.

It's an unconditional giving of oneself for another with no strings attached. The Spirit of God had intervened.

In more recent times during rioting in London in 2011, an old Jewish barber who I know personally was given £30,000 by various sources after his tiny shop was ransacked.

He told me he was "speechless" and "humbled".

A GIFT WITH “NO STRINGS ATTACHED”

Agape is a one-sided love because it doesn't have to be returned in order to be kept alive. In other words, it's not, "I will love you, if you love me."

This kind of love not only frees the one loving from expectations and presumptions, but it also frees the one being loved to respond from his heart and not his defenses.

In other words, agape is a love that truly lets us be who we really are. God's Love is a gift that gives itself to the poor and the rich, to the needy and the full, to the ugly and the beautiful, to the maimed and the whole. In other words, it gives itself to everyone, not just those who seek and embrace it. The whole Bible is summed up in this one word, Agape-God's Love. Jesus himself said the whole law was summed up in this.

***“Love God with your heart, mind , soul, and strength, and your neighbour as yourself”
(Luke 10:27).***

The Bible defines it like this: Love (Agape) is patient and kind, never jealous, envious, boastful or proud, never selfish or rude. Love doesn't demand its own way.

Love is not irritable or touchy. Love doesn't hold grudges and will never even notice when others do it wrong. Love is never glad about injustice, but rejoices when truth wins out.

If you love someone with real Love, you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost. You will always believe in

him, always expect and ***look for the best in him.***
God's Love is a gift from the Person who created us, who loves us and who desires for us to have an abundant life.

TOUGH LOVE

Something else that is very special about agape love is that it has two distinct sides to it. One side is a long-suffering and merciful love; the other side is a strict, firm, and disciplinary love. Therefore, God's love can manifest itself either mercifully in our lives when appropriate, or it can manifest itself in strictness and firmness when the occasion demands.

So, in those particular situations where "tough love" is needed, God will show us exactly what guidelines to use and what restrictions to put up. In other words, God will not only give us the love we need, He will also give us the wisdom to know how to love "wisely."

NATURAL, HUMAN LOVE

God's Love, therefore, is not a human love, but, in fact, is completely opposite. Our natural, human love (the love we were born with) will always be a conditional love that is dependent upon three things: how we feel; what our circumstances are; and how that other person responds to us. In other words, natural love will always seek the good of itself and not the other person and will always be based upon certain mutual expectations,

"I'll love you, if you'll love me, but, if you stop loving me, I will stop loving you."

Now, there are three different types of human love: Our natural, emotional love, our natural, sexual love and, our natural, friendship love. The one thing that all three of these human, need loves have in common, is that they force the one loving to look horizontally (to the person being loved) to meet his own need for love. And therein lies the problem.

There is no way that any of us can ever completely satisfy one another's built-in need for love. Our deep need for love can only be fulfilled by looking vertically to the Person who created us in the first place. Thus, natural, human love (by itself) will always let us down and will always continue to fail us. It's important, however, that we don't completely negate all the natural loves, because they can be beautiful and they can be fulfilling,

So, God's Love and natural love are not the same at all. They are totally opposite and it's vitally important that we understand these differences because confusion in this area is one of the reasons why so many of us are having problems in our marriages and our relationships.

WHY IS GOD'S LOVE SO IMPORTANT?

Receiving and passing on the gift of love is the whole meaning and purpose of our lives. It's essential! We were not created simply to be happy and contented within ourselves, we were designed to be open and cleansed vessels, not only receiving God's love for ourselves, but also passing it on to others.

Without learning "how" to do this, our lives will always be empty and meaningless, no matter what we do or

how we try to fill them. ***As 1 Corinthians 13:2 says, "If I have not God's Love, I am nothing."***

As an example: Many years ago, there was a newspaper article that told the story of a very famous and wealthy industrialist. Throughout his whole life, this man thought love and love relationships were a nuisance and just "in the way" of what was really important—success and financial independence.

Thus, he set out to make a name for himself, to amass a fortune and to achieve the power and recognition that comes with these things. And, He did all three. But in the process of spending his life on his own goals and his own ambitions, he missed the real meaning and purpose of his life, *which is to love and be loved*. In the end, when this millionaire was too old and too feeble to work any longer, he sat night after night, alone and lonely, in his huge, empty mansion, filled with priceless—and yet worthless—possessions.

His name was Howard Hughes.

God made us and only He knows what it will take to satisfy our needs. Therefore, if we don't learn to love and be loved in the way we were created to from the very beginning, we really will have wasted our lives, no matter how much success and financial independence we have! The three natural, human loves are loves that we need from each other in order to get along in this world. But God's love is a love that we desperately must have in order to survive at all. Agape is the only love that can make us whole, meet our needs and give our lives the meaning and purpose that we are all seeking.

AGAPE AND THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Love is the way to the gifts “pursue love” actually precedes “desire earnestly spiritual gifts” for love is the way, the path along which the gifts should operate.

Remember God says in the book of 1st Corinthians a MORE EXCELLENT way not a better way, the gifts are needed.

Let us not misinterpret. The NIV version of the bible says I will show the ***most excellent way*** – it is the best literal translation.

Not setting forth this love as an “alternative” but as an accompaniment – so the combination becomes super excellent.

The gifts have to be exercised in genuine agape love for thorough edification. The Corinthian church had all the gifts working – but much lack of love. The result, chaos!

Friends, we all need to be told once in a while that we are loved. Nat King Cole sung about it - the greatest thing we will ever learn is just to love and be loved in return.

You may think you don’t get enough, you may think you don’t get the recognition and appreciation you deserve. But we are faulty human vessels and we don’t respond as we should sometimes.

If we learn to love without any strings attached, then we will never be disappointed, everything will be a bonus and you will walk in total peace. Only God can provide that most consistent type of agape that we crave.

It is interesting to see that the love between parents affects how children believe in God, not what is taught at church, the main influence is in the home.

Josh McDowell an expert on youth and ministry to them says that is what sticks – otherwise you will lose them down the road of life, they won't buy the God stuff if it doesn't work in the home and your doors are shut to the outside world.

“Perfect love casts out all fear” (1 John 4v18)

The reason there is no fear in love is that there is no thought for punishment for being a loving person when you love someone genuinely. You will never hear a warning signal saying you are going to get punished for this. Fear is what you feel when you have done something wrong, or have fear and suspicion as part of your mindset. Those that “love” are free from this.

The bible teaches us we do not have a spirit of fear, but of love, power and a sound mind. Agape is a feeling of the mind as much as of the heart it concerns the will as much as the emotions – statistics prove that 75% that witness a loving home never turn to drugs, alcohol, pregnancy etc

People have said they don't care how much you know until they see how much you care.

WE MUST LEARN TO LET GO

Christians who sulk and hold grudges do so for the same reason as anyone else—it is an ***immature*** and a weak and misguided attempt to get a little attention.

We have to learn to get over hurts and situations and get over ourselves in the process.

For those on the receiving end of such treatment it is best to ignore such behaviour and go on with what you know to be right.

Set the example, ***walk in agape***.

The accusing party will eventually see the silliness of their action after a while and give up trying to rile you as it isn't getting the response they crave.

Finally,

“But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection” (Colossians 3:14).

FEELING AGAPE

There is no mixture in these types of people.

They have gone through the process, and the ***pureness*** is there for all to see. They are Approachable, kind, patient; when these people speak we can sense the release of the very person, their life, their ministry.

We feel God around these people. They have guarded their heart. ***We feel agape around them.*** We feel the actual presence of God. That is how it should be. The late David Wilkerson said when he confronted the gangs of New York, “if you cut me in 10,000 pieces – every piece will still love you.

KNOWING HIM

A bible teacher once explained the following:

Christianity started in Palestine as a fellowship; it moved to Greece and became a philosophy; it moved to Italy and became an institution; it moved to Europe and became a culture; it came to America and ***became an enterprise.***

Some of the students in his class were only 18 or 19 years old—and he wanted them to understand and appreciate the import of the last line, so he clarified it by adding, ***“An enterprise. That’s a business.”*** After a few moments Martha, the youngest student in the class, raised her hand. “Yes, Martha.” She asked such a simple question, “A business? But isn’t Christianity supposed to be a body?” She continued, “But when a body becomes a business, isn’t that a prostitute?”

The room went dead silent. For several seconds no one moved or spoke. They were stunned, afraid to make a sound because the presence of God had flooded into the room, and they knew they were on holy ground. God had taken over the class.

Martha’s question is relevant more so today than ever. “When a body becomes a business, isn’t that a

prostitute?” There is only one answer to her question. The answer is “Yes.” The “Church”, and not just the American Church, tragically, ***is heavily populated by people who do not love God. How can we love Him? We don’t even know Him; and I mean really know Him.***

Many Christians do not know God—much less love Him. The root of this condition originates in how we came to God. Most of us came to Him because of what we were told ***He would do for us.*** We were promised that He would bless us in life and take us to heaven after death. We married Him for His money, and we don’t care if He lives or dies as long as we can get His stuff. We have made the Kingdom of God into a business, merchandising His anointing. This should not be. ***We are commanded to love God,*** and are called to be the Bride of Christ—that’s pretty intimate stuff. ***We are supposed to be His lovers. How can we love someone we don’t even know?*** And even if we do know someone, is that a guarantee that we truly love them? Are we lovers or prostitutes?

It’s worth thinking about.

LOVE BY DEFINITION

The Agape type of love makes us open to every hurt and pain under the sun, love is not the absence of pain, but this kind of love is the greater thing that swallows it up. We must keep on drinking of it. Pushing the barriers back ever more – ever enlarging our heart, living on the edge of glorious possibilities without fear.

THE WORLD IS WAITING

If we accept God's love for what it is, the that love will be shed abroad in our hearts and when that happens we will no longer want to sin. Instead we want to love, hence we do what is right, it becomes natural or second to us, it is no longer a great discipline or effort, but works through the power of Gods love. We have to realise the simplicity of what makes a relationship valuable, we then see what it means to truly walk with God. We stop trying to live for God and instead to allow God to live through us. Then we will walk in the Spirit and his love will shine through. When people around you see the fruit of the Spirit of love in your life and see the compassion of Jesus in your heart and believe that you are a true servant of God, they will be attracted to the God you serve.

Lets do all we can for this Agape love to flow out from us and may it be DEMONSTRATED to a lost a dying world. They will accept nothing less and why should they.

We must be full of the love of God.

So deeply was the commandment to love engraved on the heart of John the Apostle that in his extreme old age when they carried him to public assemblies his constant saying was "little children, love one another". His disciples wearied with his constant repetition of the same words – asked him why he did it. He replied "It is the commandment of the Lord, and the observation of this alone is sufficient."
(Galatians 5v14) & (Matthew 22v37)

There are other types of love mentioned in the bible, these being Phileo – which means having tender affection towards someone – like a friendship would have. Storge is another which is the physical show of affection which may result in a hug or a kiss. Eros love is the physical sexual desire type of love.

All three go towards making for perfection, but even if you have Agape, Phileo and Storge working harmoniously, a relationship without Eros can do fairly well.

In marriages especially, when phileo is missing, the selfless committed love of Agape will still be intact, but there will be a lack of friendship. Storge will be absent and Eros will simply be done out of duty. In any case men are told in Ephesians to Agape their wives. As with any doctrine that has been hotly disputed, especially divorce and re-marriage, God's main concern is the well being of his precious ones.

Our relationships should always have its foundation in Agape. That is love that overlooks faults and makes us love the un-lovable. That is the love that we have been talking about here. The love that goes the extra mile, The love that endures.

“Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another, for he who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law” – (Romans 13:8)

Chapter 7

LIVING IN VICTORY & ANSWERED PRAYER

***"Yet, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."
(Romans 8:37)***

The solution of the flesh is ***not trying not to sin***, but rather living in service. Christianity is about becoming a living sacrifice.

Trying not to sin activates the flesh and perhaps this is so because we put the focus on ourselves.

Serving others deactivates the flesh – this is because it takes the emphasis away from ourselves – then we get the victory.

Take smoking.

You recognize and accept (without resisting) your desire and enjoyment of smoking.

You don't try to change yourself or stop smoking.

You simply say, "Christ, in me, will do the stopping in his own way and time.." If then, the habit grabs you again and you smoke, you don't take condemnation (Romans 8:1), but again just reaffirm that He is the real you, and that He will naturally cut off the smoking in his own way and time.

Then go ahead with your daily living - without condemnation, but with faith.

It looks daring, and looks like license to do as you please, but it turns out to be the only permanent liberty – he will free the temple he now owns in his time and in his way.

A Christian man had a terrible pipe smoking habit. He was being used by the Lord, but continued to light up.

Then one day, at the appointed time, he threw all his tobacco and pipe away. The hold on him had been broken. No pressure, simply in God's time it went.

Old school preachers would say.

Do you mortify sin within? Do you make it your daily work? Be always at it whilst you live; cease not a day from this work; be killing sin or it will be killing you."

Personally for me though, I try not to fight the "the old man"

I personally, have found that by faith, I appropriate the new man, I try not to fight with the old man, and try to stomp him out, because that makes him get worse.

I stand on verses that include **Romans 3:25**

"Whom God sent forth as propitiation (sacrifice) by his blood, through faith....."

I realise that I have been saved by grace and grace alone and by applying my faith to this fact, keeps me on an even keel.

I can do nothing of myself that will change this fact, so I cease striving.

PRAYER AIDS THE VICTORY

This leads us to prayer and how to make a connection.

Prayer is the fuel that ignites and brings down God's blessing.

We need to reconcile some passages, so it all fits neatly together.

There is nothing more satisfying than putting together the puzzle of God's word.

It's called revelation. It's called illumination. Something that was previously hidden. Do you realise we can answer our own prayers? This is not blasphemy – read on!

Here we compare two passages of scripture

1 John 5:14, “Now this is the confidence we have in him that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us” (John).

&

Ephesians 3:20, “Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us” (Paul).

So John asserts that God answers prayer according to his will. Paul asserts that God answers our prayers according to the power at work within us.

How do we reconcile these two statements?

Romans 8; 27 helps us here with the explanation.
“Now he who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because he makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God”

This simply means that God’s saints can be so controlled by the Holy Spirit in thought, word, and deed, that he will control all their prayers , making these harmonise with God’s will.

John was so controlled that he was confident to declare.

“And whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight” (1 John 3:22).

What is the commandment?

“And this is the commandment that we should believe on the name of his son the Lord Jesus Christ and love one another, as he gave us the commandment.” (1 John 3v23).

There we have it.

God has specified certain conditions before ***“he wills*** “to answer our prayers in one way or another. By doing this answered prayer will become automatic.

We really can answer our own prayers as we fall in line with the mandate.

We can be so Spirit led that when we rise above the ceiling of our flesh in prayer – we strike oil!

You activate the promises of God by believing them.

From a natural perspective prayer make's little sense.

Why waste time talking to ourselves or to the air? It is our belief though that God will empower prayer and that makes it worth the effort.

Fasting is even more silly from a natural perspective.

How is me not eating going to change anything?

But we know from scripture that throughout history, fasting has been very powerful to change situations.

But in the natural it makes no sense.

***“ Who through faith subdued kingdoms,
wrought righteousness, obtained promises,
stopped the mouths of lions,
Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge
of the sword, out of weakness were made
strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight
the armies of the aliens” (Hebrews 11v33,34).***

I don't think the speculated author of Hebrews the apostle Paul was recommending going outside in the winter without a coat so that we could get sick and be really weak.

The weakness comes all by itself as a part of the struggle of life.

We take hits in the battle.

We also carry with us the natural weakness that comes with being human.

I think what Paul is ultimately saying is that it is God's strength which gets the job done.

We still have our part to play though.

You only get out of life what you put in - the same in Spiritual things.

Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be open.

God is looking for those hungry and thirsty souls.

Too many want God to move and not get involved.

It won't happen. He needs our co-operation.

We need to stand in the gap. He loves to work with us and through us.

Anything else is just excuses and laziness.

Yes, we are saved by grace, but most Christians have been stuck in this "***positional***" state for decades.

We need to apply what we have been given, make it a reality for us and those around us.

We need to get a hold of God.

I have been fortunate enough to have met such people.
They are different.

They look and sound like Jesus.

I want to be around them.

PRAYING THROUGH

There will be seasons where you will experience some plain desert.

That dry place. When the heavens are as “brass”

What prayer there is has to be forced and is sometimes dropped off altogether for months at a time.

Everything seems to add up to nothing.

We think that God is through with us and finished working, but actually he is preparing us for the next stage.

I have been there, as have many others.

It is not the end; in fact it is just the beginning.

This came in my life after witnessing some incredible things.

The term “***praying through***” means to keep going until you get an assurance that God has heard your prayers.

Peace will be your umpire.

You will know it.

It is what was present in virtually all of those historic revivals from church history.

This is one of the core truths which is at the *heart* of any revival or awakening.

It houses the precious gift of unrest that provokes our inner man to not find satisfaction until we find God.

Having the guts and fortitude to stay *“in there”* until “he” shows up, for he surely will.

It is the fire that burns on the inside that compels a saint of God to poke and prod and preach and stir up unrest in the hearts of those who have not yet entered into it.

Several seasoned veterans of prayer, in their seventies, eighties and even nineties have spent hours daily praying for souls.

It’s amazing what strength God gives to a praying vessel regardless of age.

To keep praying until we know on the inside that God has answered.

Like those of the Hebridian revival in Scotland, two old ladies in their eighties and a handful of others *“went at it”*.

The Holy Spirit fell on whole towns and revival came.

What a wrestling!

God brings the release.

At the end of the inner wrestling is a peace.

I am talking about the peace which passes all understanding that God imparts and the scripture promises.

And so we go from Faith to Faith.

We continue humbling ourselves and praying until we receive an inner witness from God's Spirit

Until then our heart has not entered into the "rest" of Faith that the Bible speaks about where we cease from our own works.

Until then it is this mix of spirit and flesh which must be purified in order to be an acceptable offering.

This process is extremely difficult on our mortal bodies that naturally craves a quick answer and does not want to be patient.

We will know **only** when God lets us know.

Not before.

He desires to work that inner work in us.

This is not a fleshly work.

It is Spirit induced.

A response to his drawing.

When the work is done, the peace comes.

This Peace, this Shalom, is what Guards our hearts and our minds.

Ceasing from our own works and watching the Holy Spirit do his wondrous works in front of our very eyes.

For some of us one of these burdens is Revival for our generation.

For some who have had the Holy burden of intercession placed within them, you understand this. *Conversion is the operation of the Holy Spirit and prayer is the power that secures that operation.*

Spiritual giants like Wesley, Moody & Finney recognized it and tapped into it

We have all received substance from God at one time or another in our life.

We then believe, we act on it, we get the green light.

Then it is positioned to become a reality.

Faith is born. This is birthing prayer.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11v1).

God wants to do it again in our Generation

God says that he "***gives us the desires of our heart***"

God actually puts it there. They are his prayers.

He gives us the impetus.

Basically if we want God centered results it has to be based on his ***needs*** and not our ***wants***.

It is on this higher plain that he will answer our prayers automatically.

Selfish prayers according to the book of James will not get answered because we ask amiss.

We have to pray ***his*** prayers - then we will ***always*** get whats required.

I look back to a time when my own father was in a coma and God told me to wait 5 days before going to pray for him.

I did just that, even though he could have died in the mean time.

I followed the Lords instruction, I was creating ***substance***.

When I finally felt led to go to the hospital, I was 100% sure my Father would be healed. He was utterly and completely

Yes, it is God's will to heal; it is also true some people die.

All we do is follow his leading, ***that's all we can do.***

There have been other times where I have just prayed the prayer of faith, and people have died. I felt nothing. There was no substance.

Was it God's will for that person?

He knows ultimately.
We just do our part and leave the rest to him.

There is a promise for those that continue to trust God and press in, I call it Holy Spirit radiation.

***“Arise and shine; for your light has come,
And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
For behold darkness will cover the earth.
And deep darkness the peoples;
But the Lord will rise upon you,
And his glory will appear upon you.
And nations will come to your light.
And kings to the brightness of your rising.
Lift up your eyes round about, and see;
They all gather together, they come to you.....”
(Isaiah 60).***

This is what awaits us if we are willing to ***pay the price*** in prayer. You will be ***a beacon of light*** in a troubled world and no man can stop it.

You will know when you are approaching that place in God's own time where he requires ***total obedience and consecration.***

If you are willing, everything that has ever bothered you will fade, it will evaporate.

That's when real victory (over sin) and answered prayer will become a consistent reality in your life.

We must be honest and admit that this sort of commitment is what has been sadly lacking in this present microwave generation. That is why we haven't experienced all that we should have, but that is beginning to change as people get a hold of God again – and push on and in until the answers come.

Chapter 8

JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save (Luke 9:23)

Denying self requires us to give up anything that we would want or seek that would hinder our doing the will of God. This does not mean that, if we want something, it is necessarily wrong.

It means we must take our wants and desires down from the throne and place Jesus and His will as the governing power in our lives.

There is room in each life for only one master (Matt. 6:19-24). If God is to rule in our lives, then our will must be made subservient to His.

We must be willing to give up anything in life in order to please God. **(Romans 12:1, 2; Matthew 6:33; Luke 14:25-33; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15).**

Many think this means bearing burdens and suffering hardships for the Lord.

Surely such hardships will at times be required, but there is a fuller meaning if we consider the context.

What is a cross for?

It was not just a burden to be borne. Far more than that, it was an instrument of ***death and total sacrifice***.

Jesus said take up our cross and *follow Him*. He bore a cross and we must bear our cross and follow Him. But where was He going with His cross? He had just said He was going to *die*.

In the next verse Jesus said we must give our *lives* for Him.

Then He asked what good our lives would be to us, if we are unacceptable at the judgment.

Hence, "***taking up your cross daily***" (***Luke 9:23***) refers to *giving your whole life to God*, as Jesus was about to give His life for us.

This involves bearing burdens, but it is deeper than that.

It is a *total dedication* of life.

Our whole life is given to His service in anything He says. This will lead us to willingly deny self. Following Him then requires us to live as He lived His life (***1 Peter 2:21; Matthew 10:34, 35; 1 Corinthians 11:1***).

There is a sense in which Christians must give their lives to God every day. This is not necessarily a physical death as Jesus died for us (though such might be required), but a daily total sacrifice of self to do the will of Jesus.

Whatever He wants with my life is what must be done with it. What I want no longer matters, but I give myself for Him, just as He gave Himself for us despite the fact His human nature did not want to have to do it.

(Romans 12:1, 2; Galatians 2:20; I John 3:16-18; Matthew. 6:19-33; Galatians 5:24; Romans 6:6-23; 2 Timothy 2:11; 2 Corinthians 4:11; Ecclesiastes 12:13)

The determination to give our lives to God's service is called "**repentance.**" In repenting we determine to turn away from our own will and live our lives to please God.

We cannot be saved without this, and that is why repentance is so important in salvation.

It also explains why so many people are not truly Jesus' disciples (whether or not they may claim to be His disciples): because they are not willing to make this total sacrifice.

The next verse then helps us understand Jesus' point and strengthens the application.

If a person holds his life so dear to himself that he wants to use it to please himself, do his own will, and accomplish his own purposes, rather than denying self and serving God, that person will in the end lose his life eternally.

But anyone who loses his life for Jesus' sake - gives it in service and sacrifice to God by denying himself, as described above - such a man will save his life by gaining eternal life.

There can be no greater or clearer teaching anywhere of the meaning of being a disciple. This is how our Master lived, so this is how His disciples must live.

We must live lives of complete and total submission to the will of God.

When the believer begins to really see the cross for what it is - a place of death, he will shy away.

This type of fellowship is not desirable in the natural. It will strip you to the bare bones; it will leave in its totality an imprint of Jesus. That's all the world will see, nothing of self will be left.

That is the goal for every Christian, That is where God want to get us, but in reality, few find it.

I can guarantee that persecutions, misunderstandings, rejections and suffering will be the order of the day.

Just as the scriptures predicted.

".....Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."(Acts 14:22).

God is looking not for an army of the gifted, but an army of the broken. The kind that have been termed as ***dead men walking***, totally sold out.

What a glorious death!

Until our hunger level rises and we begin to hate our own life, we will never enter into God's heavenly winepress.

When we are open enough to recognise God's seed of dissatisfaction that he drops into us, only then we will realise there is so much more than simply being saved and "active" for him.

Except the Lord build the house – we labour in vain.

If you arrive at the required place, you will finally plead to be made fruitful at any cost. You will then be willing to completely lose your life to gain his.

As Paul said.

“Death works in us, but life in you” (2 Corinthians 4:12)

What this means friends is that the very life of God will be so oozing out of us that people won't fail to be touched.

They will be coming into the very presence and fragrance of God. How wonderful it is when we meet people who have thus yielded to such a level – it's like being around Jesus.

A word of warning folks.

Never push other folks down this road indiscriminately

We must not forget the time it took us to reach this place.

Remember the scripture said at the “**appointed**” time.

That goes for all of us.

Be wise; be gentle, here a little, there a little.

He knows the death march that lies ahead of us. He also knows the barren, bleeding hearts **that he must minister to** through us hence he must bring us to a place where we don’t care what happens.

Sonship is something more than being born again – it represents **a growth into fullness**.

Death to self is no mean feat.

This won’t be achieved in religious social clubs that have no real desire to get a hold of God.

The cross isn’t trials, a bad husband, un-paid bills etc – it’s **laying aside all your own desires** full stop.

Then the divine flow can filter through without blockage.

The true “**abundant life**” that the Apostle Paul wrote about means **Laying down your life or losing it. Having all that is of self and the flesh brought to nothing**.

Only then will you really begin to live, a fascinating and wonderful journey – the journey to the cross.

Chapter 9

REVIVAL BREEDS MIGHTY MEN OF FAITH
Wigglesworth, Finney, Grant, Moody and Lake

“Many concoct their own fire and put a religious flavour on it, but there are others who have paid the price, and got a hold of God” – James Bedding- Exam paper on revival -1994

I had first used the above phrase back in 1994 whilst writing a thesis on the ***“move of the Spirit”*** over the years whilst at bible college. It is amazing what insight God can give to a babe in Christ as I was at the time.

It is commonly known ***as hype?***

It refers to those who create their own climate based on what is perceived as a genuine “stirring” of spiritual waters.

But it is a hoax.

Those sensitive to know different, detect “mixture” and this combination of the semi-pure and profane is found in the scripture in Timothy

“Having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them”

Many Churches produce this “event” on a weekly basis.

“Deceiving and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13).

But there are those that have genuinely sought God so fervently, that this simply does not apply to them.

They got a hold of God and tapped into the real thing.

Those that have put themselves on the altar of sacrifice.

Many have ventured into this type of seeking, and more than a few have seen God show up.

Sadly, just as many have **failed to remain there.**

For those who are apprehensive.

It’s not that God won’t show up – he surely will, but as I have mentioned previously we have to **“hang on in there”** until he does?

The Greek words for "Be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Eph 5:18), should be translated, **"keep being filled with the holy Spirit.**

In other words, we are to be constantly seeking God and remaining **obedient** to his voice so that we will become **more and more full of his Holy Spirit.**

Some people believe that we Christians only receive one major infilling of God's Spirit in our lifetime.

Scripture tells us otherwise. We are to have many.

“And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31).

This chapter is about men and women of God who were not satisfied with ***an initial token*** of God's grace or presence in their lives.

They were hungry for more, and in their desperation for greater and greater depths in God.

They smashed through every barrier and overthrew every obstacle to experience an ever-greater measure of God's holy presence and glory.

This pursuit led them to gain ***an anointing*** the like of which has rarely been seen since the days of the apostles.

It was ***more of Jesus*** that they were hungering after, and He did not disappoint them, the road was often narrow and winding.

It was a path that few cared to travel.

But it was simply not enough to be ***Spirit- baptised and speaking in tongues. They had to be endued with power from on high***, baptised with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

They went after this so called “***kingly anointing***” with great gusto.

And they had to see God glorified in their day, in the most profound way possible. They could not bear to live any longer, the way things were.

The status quo was a bore to them.

They wanted God to show up. Where was the power, where was the glory of apostolic days?

They took it upon themselves; they were almost driven onward by God - to find out if it were possible.

And the history books show us that it was. There is more.

In the bible a man called Enoch was actually taken due to his close walk with God! (Genesis 5:22-24).

And so, with fastings and prayer they continued.

With agonizing travail and wrestlings such as Jacob had with God, they rided their lives not only of their sins, but of their fleshly, soulish "ways" also. The ways of man's strength and man's power.

They battled on, eventually right into the very throne room of God.

And by the time they got there they were ***truly broken*** and ***humbled men*** and women, true possessors of

'clean hands and a pure heart'. God is looking again for that man with a "limp".

And He met them there in the most profound way.

Tell me, friend, do you hunger and thirst after more of God?

Is it your one desire to love Him with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and all your strength? (Spirit, Intellect, will, emotions & being).

And do you desire to see ***Him glorified*** on the earth to the highest possible degree?

"And you shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

"He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11v6).

THE LIFE OF SMITH WIGGLESWORTH

Smith Wigglesworth was without doubt one of the most anointed men of God that has lived in recent times. He was known as the Apostle of Faith, and if anyone deserved to be described as ***"full of faith and of the Holy Ghost"***, it was him.

He lived and walked continually in the presence of God.

And the miracles that accompanied his ministry were of the sort that have seldom been seen since the days of the apostles.

People born blind and deaf, cripples - twisted and deformed by disease, others on death's door with cancer or sickness of every kind, - all were healed by the mighty power of God.

Even the dead were raised.

Born in 1859 into poverty, Smith Wigglesworth was converted by the **Methodists** at eight years of age. Even then, he was hungry for God and hungry for souls. He was in the choir of the local **Episcopal Church**.

Wigglesworth said,

"When most of the boys in the choir were twelve years of age they had to be confirmed by the bishop. I was not twelve, but between nine and ten, when the bishop laid his hands on me. I can remember that as he imposed his hands I had a similar experience to the one I had forty years later when I was Baptized in the Holy Spirit".

(Wigglesworth was 50 before **he claimed** this experience fully).

My whole body was filled with the consciousness of God's presence, a consciousness that remained with me for days.

After the confirmation service all the other boys were swearing and quarreling and I wondered what had made the difference between them and me."

Later, Wigglesworth was fully-immersed in water by the **Baptists**.

All this was in his early years of ministry and before the 'Azusa Street' Revival and the early **Pentecostal movement**.

Smith had a hunger after God, and he experienced many breakthroughs into **new levels of anointing** even well before he experienced **the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues**.

He was **already** renowned for his healing ministry, and had seen God move in great power, even well before the **new Pentecostal experience was being talked about**.

There is much to be said of the **authority of the believer**, here was a person who knew about it.

Unlike us today, who basically begin with Baptism in the Spirit as **our first real anointing**, for Smith this was the culmination of years of seeking and hungering after God.

Smith Wigglesworth said: "I had the grounding in Bible teaching among the **Plymouth Brethren**.

I marched under the blood and fire banner of the **Salvation Army**, learning to win souls in the open air.

I received the second blessing of sanctification and a clean heart under the teaching of Reader Harris and ***the Pentecostal League***.

I claimed the gift of the Holy Spirit by faith as I waited ten days before the Lord.

Wigglesworth did not relent – he went after God at every opportunity.

But in Sunderland, in 1907, he knelt before God and had an Acts 2:4 experience...He described this experience as follows:

"A minister's wife laid her hands on me and then had to go out of the room".

It was then that the fire fell.

It was a wonderful time as I was there with God alone.

He bathed me in power.

I was conscience of the cleansing of the precious blood, and I cried out:

'Clean! Clean! Clean!' I was filled with the joy of the consciousness of the cleansing".

I was given a vision in which I saw the Lord Jesus Christ.

I beheld the empty cross, and I saw Him exalted at the right hand “

“I could speak no longer in English, but I began to praise Him in other tongues as the Spirit of God gave me utterance. I knew then, although I might have received anointing previously, that now, at last, I had received the real Baptism in the Holy Spirit as they received on the day of Pentecost.”

As Bible teacher Howard Carter would say, he had received the ***“like pattern”***

After this experience, there was no stopping Smith Wigglesworth.

He was a flame for God, and the fire fell wherever he went. He said: ***“I believe God's ministers are to be flames of fire.”***

Nothing less than flames.

Nothing less than mighty instruments, with burning messages, with hearts full of love.

They must have a depth of consecration that God has taken full charge of the body, and it exists only that it may manifest the Glory of God.

It was not uncommon for Wigglesworth to announce in his meetings:

“Every sermon that Christ preached was prefaced by a model miracle. We are going to follow His example. The first person in this large audience that stands up, whatever his or

her sickness, I'll pray for that one and God will deliver him or her."

His boldness was rare.

And the first person to stand, even if they were the most deformed cripple, would be healed!

On another typical occasion, a man came forward for prayer for stomach pain, and, commanding the pain to be gone, Wigglesworth punched the man in the stomach so hard that he was sent half-way across the room (completely healed)!

This kind of thing happened more than once.

An un-orthodox technique that produced results !

Wigglesworth believed in commanding the sick to be healed in Jesus' name.

He had an aggressive, holy faith. He was a "violent" man, taking ground from the devil by force.

And yet he was also a man of ***great compassion***, as well as of great authority.

The devil certainly felt it when Smith Wigglesworth hit town.

A number of people were also raised literally from the dead under Smith's ministry.

Here is his own account of one occasion.

You may think that what I did was absurd, but I reached over into the bed and pulled her out. I carried her across the room, stood her against the wall and held her up, ***as she was absolutely dead.***

I looked into her face and said, ***'In the name of Jesus I rebuke this death.'***

From the crown of her head to the soles of her feet her whole body began to tremble. ***'In the name of Jesus, I command you to walk,' I said. I repeated, 'In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus, walk!' and she walked.***”

Not only was this woman raised from the dead, but she was instantly healed from a terrible illness also.

She began to testify to people of her death experience and restoration.

It has been recorded that Smith Wigglesworth ***raised 23 people from the dead in total***, over the years of his ministry.

One time when Smith was waiting at a bus-stop, a woman was having trouble getting her small dog, which had followed her, to go home.

First she tried sweet-talking it, and asking it to please go home. But after awhile of trying this to no avail, the woman suddenly stamped her foot and said severely: 'Go home at once!'

The dog immediately took off home, with its tail between its legs.

'That's how you have to treat the devil', said Wigglesworth, loudly enough for all those waiting at the bus-stop to hear. And this was his style and attitude toward the devil, every moment of every waking day.

He literally travelled the world in the 1920's and 1930's, and thousands were saved and healed everywhere he went.

Often he would arrive in a place almost unknown and unheralded, but within days there would be thousands thronging to hear, the power of God demonstrated in his meetings was so great.

God was truly glorified everywhere he went.

He was a man who walked and lived in the very presence of God.

And yet, in many ways he was a ***very natural, down-to-earth*** man.

And neither was he afraid of issuing the odd stern rebuke. His object and goal was to be in constant, ***unbroken communion*** with the Father.

He had spent hours and days fervently seeking God in his early years, but later, "Although his life was a combination of incessant prayer and praise, and every word and work was an act of worship, ***he was not*** given to protracted periods of fasting and prayer."

Instead, he had learned ***the secret of being in continuous, intimate communion with God***

(sometimes withdrawing quietly into himself for this purpose), even when he was in a crowd of people.

He walked by faith, and he was "***in the Spirit***" at all times. This was one vital secret to his success. He said, "There are two sides to this Baptism:

The first is, you possess the Spirit; the second is that ***the Spirit possesses you.***"

He had counted the cost, and everything was God's.

He was a man who truly understood godly authority, and he walked in it by faith. He said, "***Be filled with the Spirit, be crammed with the Spirit, so filled that there will be no room left for anything else.***"

That was the way he lived.

Full of audacity, full of daring, "full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."

On one occasion, he recalled, "I was travelling to Cardiff in South Wales. I had been much in prayer on the journey. The carriage was full of people whom I knew to be unsaved, but as there was so much talking and joking I could not get in a word for my master.

As the train was nearing the station, I thought I would wash my hands... and as I returned to the carriage, a man jumped up and said, '***Sir, you convince me of sin,***' and fell on his knees there and then.

Soon the whole carriage of people was crying out the same way. They said, '**Who are you? What are you? You convince us all of sin'...**'"

This episode reminds me very much of another bold, forthright and anointed evangelist - **Charles G. Finney**, who had found after a mighty Baptism of the Holy Spirit some years before, that even **passing comments** that he made pierced people to the heart with conviction of sin, and his very presence ushered in the presence of God wherever he went and changed the atmosphere. It is worth noting that his prayer general Father Nash paved the way for an open heaven wherever Finney went with his prayers. He was a true unsung hero and mighty man who had such penetration in the heavenlies in prayer that when he died Finney's ministry was never quite the same. They had 7 years of constant real and tangible revival together. It is documented that 80% of their converts stayed true to the end. Finney had gone on to become one of the greatest Revivalists of all time by the year of his passing in 1875.

D L. Moody was another of similar stature, who we will look at later.

Smith Wigglesworth placed great emphasis on purity and holiness, like all true Revivalists.

He said, "You must every day make higher ground, **deny yourself** and make progress with God"

You must refuse everything that is not pure and holy.

God wants you pure in heart.

He wants you to have an intense desire after holiness.

Two things will get you to leap out of yourselves into the promises of God today.

One is purity, and the other is faith, which is kindled more and more by purity."

This one statement contains what is probably the key secret to Smith Wigglesworth's outstanding success in God.

And it is obviously a key that is well worth remembering for us also. Another point to remember is that Smith was very aware of the ***dangers of money***, and guarded himself carefully against the possibility of covetousness entering in.

He was truly beyond reproach in this area also.

It is my belief that ***Smith Wigglesworth*** was a kind of direct "forerunner" of the kind of ministries that are about to arise in our day.

I believe that the coming apostolic ministries, who will be bearers of ***true Revival*** in these last days, will combine the daring, miracle-working faith of a Smith Wigglesworth ***with*** the deeply convicting 'repentance' preaching of a ***Charles Finney***.

And they will move under a mighty anointing that combines the ***best of both*** of these types of ministries. What glorious days these will be!

Smith Wigglesworth himself died in 1946 at the ripe old age of 87, a flame of God to the very end.

May he be an example to us all?

W.V. GRANT, SNR.

A number of great healing evangelists have been led by God to "fast and pray" for quite long periods in order to break through into greater realms of anointing and communion with God.

W.V. Grant Sr, who was a mightily used and anointed man of God from mid-way through last century, was one such evangelist.

Before coming into his full ministry anointing, he was one who spent all his spare time with Jesus in the secret place.

This man constantly sought God, and fasted on the weekends. He read many books of God's servants in the past and studied his Bible day and night.

He would pray for a couple of days until he got answers.

He would not leave his prayer room until he got an answer from God. This and Christian work was virtually his lifestyle for fourteen years.

He had already received the baptism in the Holy Spirit fourteen years earlier, and he spoke in tongues as evidence.

"Yet, I felt like I had a bow without an arrow, a car without a battery, or a boat without a paddle. I read how Peter did it, but I could not do it. I had the highway map. I was on the right road, but on the wrong side."

"I prayed around the altar. I fasted three days at a time. I testified about a supernatural God. I told people that I had the Holy Ghost. I spoke in tongues to prove it. All the time my heart was crying out, where are all the miracles the Bible tells us about?"

"I was a director over 13 churches... I saw people saved, filled with the Holy Ghost with other tongues.

I saw a few people healed. I preached that we had the Pentecostal power.

But where were the results we saw in the early church after Pentecost? ***I read about 200 books*** written by Godly men.

I read every word in the Pentecostal Evangel for years... After I fasted three days I still felt empty.

That longing surely can be satisfied in some way? Who was putting that longing and searching in my soul?"

"What was I waiting for? Nothing else mattered to me. ***I wanted to see His Glory.*** I wanted to see His Miracles. I wanted to see the dead raised.

I wanted to see the devils cast out.

I wanted to see the deaf, blind, and the mute made whole.

Did not God say in the last days the lame man would leap as a hart, the tongue of the dumb would sing, and the eyes of the blind would be opened? (Isaiah 35:5)... John the Baptist said In ***Luke 3:16, 'He shall Baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire'...***

It was fourteen years after I received the Holy Ghost and tongues before I received the Holy Ghost and power."

"If God has called you into a full time ministry of healing the sick and casting out devils he usually gives you time to give yourselves to fasting and prayer...

Then one night to my surprise the Lord appeared to me and told me to go on a seven day fast, which I was willing to do.

After the fast was over the Lord appeared to me. I heard the angels singing a song I had never heard. I wrote it down. It was beautiful! It was like heaven.

Then an angel just above my head spoke these words, 'In My name shall ye cast out devils, ye shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover.'

As I began to eat I felt something like an electric current run out at the ends of my fingers and down to the bottom of my feet. The fire of God was all through my body!"

"But on the last day just about break of day, the Holy Spirit began to speak to me. **Mark 16:17-18 - 'These signs shall follow them that believe.'**

In My name shall you cast out devils, they shall take up serpents, if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover'... I got up, and walked, and my feet were burning like they were connected to a high voltage wire.

The Holy Spirit and Fire was running all through my whole body from my head to my toes. It seemed like all my strength had been drained out of me, and the strength of Christ had taken its place. For several years since, devils have been cast out, and people healed.

"I had the Holy Spirit for years, but it seemed that now; ***I was not only filled, but baptized with zeal, compassion, and with the divine nature of Jesus, with virtue, and with the fire...*** If you feel like the Lord has called you into a special ministry of casting out devils, then remember this: There are many more things which are just as necessary as fasting.

Fasting within itself will not be sufficient... But when I was called to fast, it was just as real as being called to preach.

I was conscious of the fast, that it was the Lord's doing and not my own... It takes a longer fast for one man to be brought to the place where he is yielded to the Lord enough to receive certain gifts in his life than it does for other men.

It took a certain amount of days for me to fast and to become so yielded to the Lord; it seemed that all my strength left my body, and the Lord's strength came into its place!

Then I felt the virtue and divine nature, and the fire of the Holy Ghost dwelling in my body, which gave me power to meet devils and to cast them out.

"But I still have to be led by the Lord when and how to do it. It is not myself that does the works but the Father that dwells in me.

God will not trust you with a ministry if you do not know the leading of the Spirit.

Jesus said to His disciples: "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:7-8). And He also told them, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19). "He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." (John 14:12).

It is interesting to note how the Lord leads his servants differently and how they interpret their experiences in the light of God's word.

We can never put God in a box, nor is he a formula.

As the Scriptures and also Revival history clearly show, a man or woman of God must often **spend years** in a "**wilderness**" of **obscurity** before they **truly** come into their ministry.

This will often be a place of barrenness, **"waiting"** and **preparation** where they must **overcome and endure** - all the while being **molded and trained by God** - if they are ever to reach their godly potential in anointing and **empowerment from 'on high'**.

While others concentrate on their careers, or busy themselves with building tidy little ministries along the usual predictable lines (which often need little of God to succeed), these men and women are **called away into the secret place** with God, from whence they will emerge **broken** but fired with an unshakeable resolve, **humbled** but never cast down.

There have always been many called, but few chosen.

As the apostle Paul wrote: **"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."** (Philipp 3:13-14).

God often prepares such vessels for many years, largely hidden from view, before **unleashing them upon the world**.

And then suddenly they appear, as if from nowhere, to bring glory to their God, and to raise his standard in the earth once again.

From such 'mighty men and women of valour', true Revivals are born.

It is my belief that our Almighty God is **now looking** for men and women whom **He can entrust** with such an anointing.

He is looking for a people who will truly **"love not their lives unto the death"**, who know the dangers but who are willing **to risk all** to see God glorified and His standard raised in the earth in our day.

We are still surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses - men and women who fought a glorious fight and ran a peerless race.

And God is now looking for men and women of this same ilk, who hunger and thirst after Him, who press forward into the deep things of God, **and who have willingly paid the price and spent much time alone with Him.**

Like Elisha, who would not let go of Elijah until he had received a double portion of that great prophet's anointing, they will never let go of God until He blesses them with a similar enduement.

Such seekers will be opposed by the Devil and the Church!

As the apostle Paul wrote: **"For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life." (2 Corinthians 1:8).**

As David, king of Israel declared, **"My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (Ps 42:2).**

And it was clearly the Apostle Paul's great desire, "***That I may know him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death***" (Philipp 3:10).

Again, **Charles Finney** declared: "Revival comes from heaven when heroic souls enter the conflict determined to win or die..."

"The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force."

Some years ago, God shared with me the secret of becoming part of the new move of God. It is simply this: - "***who dares wins***".

And "daring" will be one of the most important qualifications. Tell me, friend, will you be one of these... "***But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high***" (Luke 24:49).

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND MATURITY?

When a person grows spiritually there is a process he goes through that will bring him closer to God.

During that process there is a ***change in the nature*** of the believer where the believer will end up sharing the nature of God.

Also, through the spiritual connection, the believer will receive a great wisdom which will bring him into a place where he will actually think like God.

God wants all of us ***to be like him*** and that can only be accomplished through spiritual growth.

Theological growth is knowledge. That has its place.

Spiritual growth is the manifestation of that knowledge into a new nature.

A spiritually mature person is a person who has reached the pinnacle of the perfect relationship.

Giving oneself to God must be love-based, or it will mean nothing to God.

It can be for no other reason.

Anytime you make a commitment that is love based, it requires action. Otherwise, it is only words.

If you tell God that you are giving yourself to him, and then sit and wait for him to either change you, nothing is going to happen.

It is wasted seed on wasted soil. If you make a verbal commitment to God it is only verbal.

God needs and deserves a spiritual commitment.

How do you give yourself to God?

It takes ***focus and total commitment on a daily,*** even hourly, basis.

You have to make his purpose, your purpose.

You do that by looking for ways to bless him every day.

How can we love God?

Praise and worship him in word and song. Every time you think about him, tell him that you love him.

Share your daily life with him by talking to him often throughout each day. I don't mean always praying. Be natural, simply talk to him.

God wants to be your father and best friend.

You can talk to him verbally; you can talk to him mentally.

Whenever you can, tell people about your friend and father.

You don't need to quote scripture.

Just tell about his love and kindness.

Tell about what he has done for you.

Make him feel loved and welcome.

How do we trust God? First, know this: If you love God with all your heart and are really living your life for him, God will take care of everything for you.

That is, he will take care of all your problems. He will deal with anything that is causing turmoil or pain in your life, whether it be financial, health or family.

So, the way you trust God is you go on with your daily lives of self giving ***without worrying about anything.***

You don't have anxieties because ***you absolutely know*** that God is there in the background, dealing with all your challenges and problems, and finding solutions.

How do we love each other?

Simply giving yourself to others and once you do that, the love remains and is always there.

There is no way to turn it off because it has become part of you.

It becomes automatic.

Filling your heart with love can only be accomplished through a spiritual closeness to God.

We learn to tolerate and understand people better.

We have all carried "***shadows***" from our past, some worse than others.

And the incredible possibility is that love can change such a person's life, behavior and direction in a positive way.

That is part of the process of filling your heart with love – ***acceptance of people the way they are.***

Understand that it could have been you that went through that terrible thing.

We much see through the eyes of Jesus.

Our desire is to be like Jesus – filled with his love.

If a person has to consciously ***turn on*** their love, kindness or generosity, then there is ***no real dedication or focus.***

It is merely ***play-acting*** to appear as something other than he really is. In other words, they are doing it because it is ***the Christian thing*** to do, not because love and kindness is the ***essence of their nature.***

They are phonies, what the world would call fakes.

This is what is known as ***doing*** compared to ***being***, which will be looked at in the next chapter.

Dedication and focus to God must be constant – every hour of every day. If you have to turn it on, that is not good enough. It must be embedded in your soul.

That is focus, dedication and purpose.

When you are able to do that, ***God's attention will be on you.***

You must be willing to turn everything over to him – ***not just in words as many do***, but by turning your attention from your own problems and challenges to being an everyday, constant blessing.

Spiritual Growth is about becoming like God (Jesus) – possessing his nature and wisdom.

What good Father does not want his child to be like him?

You can do it. It is his will for you.

HUMILITY

The progression of spiritual growth requires a spirit of total humility. One of the predominant hindrances to spiritual growth is scriptural knowledge based arrogance - ***an attitude of "I know it all"***.

You must understand and accept that ***mastery of the Bible*** only means that you have accumulated that much knowledge.

Even then your interpretation of it may be wrong, no matter how convinced you are. The many hundreds of different denominations tell us that.

You must understand and accept that the Bible doesn't tell us **everything** about God, his kingdom, Jesus, and the history of man.

The bible allows us to see up to a point.

If you think you know it all, then the lid has been put on, and your learning and growth ability has ended.

REVIVAL

A blessed Brother of mine Benjamin from Canada, kindly shares these thoughts following on revival.

“This was the bottom line that God gave to me ***in my search for revival.***”

He gave me the story of Jacob wrestling as my path to Revival.

I have studied this ever since God spoke to me that this was my key for finding personal revival.

Gen 32:25 “And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

Gen 32:26 And he said, Let me go, for the dawn is breaking. And he said, I will not let you go, except you bless me”.

Here is the first truth God showed me.

That I needed to set my heart like Jacob that I will grab a hold and not let go until He blesses me.

That I needed to establish that in my heart.

To set my heart that no matter what it takes, I will grab onto God and his promises and to not let go no matter what.

This is what takes a person from a Jacob to be named Israel which means one who has prevailed with God.

To pursue that one passion which is God with **relentless desire** no matter what?

Now in the story, Jacob names the place Peniel which means face of God.

Gen 32:30 And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved.

Gen 32:31 And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

Now let me lay some background, I began to see that sometimes the scripture uses the word Jacob and sometimes it uses Israel.

Israel means one who has prevailed with God. Jacob means one who is trying to wrestle and get **someone else's** blessing or promise. (We are all to seek God for **ourselves**).

Now remember that the name Jacob can be translated

supplanter and remember the story behind it. Jacob grabbed his brother's heel.

Jacob means to grab by the heel.

In other words to wrestle for someone else's blessing.

Gen 25:26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.

My first experiences with Revival were as a “passenger” though. It was through someone else's praying through and me partaking of the visitation that came through someone else's experience.

My first revival experience was the Argentina Revival. Then there was Brownsville, Toronto and Rock City Church in Baltimore which were kind of revivals but not the full blown thing.

But enough to get me hungry. There were several other smaller lesser known touches. And of course there is my reading of hundreds of books on revival.

One of my favorite is a revivals was a among ‘holiness’ people.

The thing I discovered is that God will bless all kinds of different people if they set their hearts like Jacob to grab a hold and not let go until he blesses them.

But each one of those people or groups has their own issues - some good and some bad. They are in every “denomination” as well.

Some revivals were much more short lived and some were deeper and more far reaching.

Of course, as I realised this, I wanted the best and not just a touch.

God began to show me that the "impartations" or **second hand** blessings that I was receiving would wear off and not last.

They were meant to instill in me a hunger to pray through and get my own blessing directly from God.

Not that I didn't pray and receive at these revivals. But I was experiencing beyond where I was at - based upon what **someone else had pressed through to receive.**

For a while I got in with a group of revival hounds who would take road trips and "refuel ". This was legitimate and sincere but God began to show me that there was a key difference between grabbing someone else's heel to partake of their promises that they obtained through faith and perseverance and pressing through **obtaining my own promises** from God.

A call to grow up.

I am speaking of sanctification and also about walking out our calling or destiny.

Many people get saved and never obtain their full calling.

They are like the children of Israel.

They make it out of Egypt but not into the promised land and so it passes to the next generation to fulfill those promises.

Unbelief is much more than just a feeling and so is faith. Biblically speaking, our faith is always tested and we have to add to our faith action but also we need to add patience and a determined steadfastness or we will not lay hold of the promises.

People can start in faith or as I have been describing , grab a hold of someone's else's "coattails" for a while and move forward and then fall into unbelief when trials come or time passes and they no longer have that other person or group to lean upon and it gets more difficult.

I have a bunch of friends who had very real experiences at places like Toronto **but are not doing so well now.**

So what I am saying in this first post on seeking Revival is the first thing we need is a holy determination.

But a focused determination that will not settle for someone else's crumbs under their table.

We need to have our own blessing.

It is good to partner together, but we need our own desire to diligently search for God with all of our heart.

We need to consecrate ourselves and get a hold of it.
(Isaiah)

When I study Wesley, Finney, Moody, As much as I love

what I have learned through them, I am after my own blessing from God.

Our generation needs to rise up and seek God for our own blessing.

Our own revival, our own awakening.

We need a fresh move of God.

Even though God determines the particular nature of revival or awakening, ***we still carry the responsibility to pray for it***".

A WORD ON DWIGHT L MOODY

It was during this first visit to Britain that Moody heard the words which set him hungering and thirsting after a deeper Christian experience and which marked a new era in his life.

The words were spoken to him by Mr. Henry Varley, the well known evangelist, as they sat together on a seat in a public park in Dublin. The words were these:

"The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him."

"He said 'a man'" thought Moody, "he did not say a great man, nor a learned man, nor a 'smart' man, but simply 'a man.' I am a man, and it lies with the

man himself **whether** he will or will not make that **entire and full consecration.**

"I will try my utmost to be that man."

This included being the following.

A fully surrendered man

A man of prayer

A deep and practical student of the bible

A humble man

A man entirely free from the love of money

A man with consuming passion for the salvation of the lost

A man definitely endued with power from on High

A man who fasts, as this helps release the power of God

*The secret of why God used D. L. Moody was that **he had a very definite enduement with power from on High, a very clear and definite baptism with the Holy Ghost.***

*Moody **knew** he had "the baptism with the Holy Ghost"; **Not just tongues, he had the power that came with it.***

Not all today can say that.

Many have the formula, but they do not have the substance.

In his early days he was a great hustler; he had a tremendous desire to do something, but he had no real power. He worked very largely in the energy of the flesh.

But there were **two humble Free Methodist women**

who used to come over to his meetings in the Y.M.C.A. One was "Auntie Cook" and the other, Mrs. Snow.

These two women would come to Mr. Moody at the close of his meetings and say: "We are praying for you."

Finally, Mr. Moody became somewhat rattled and said to them one night: "**Why are you praying for me?** Why don't you pray for the unsaved?" They replied:

"We are praying that you may get the power." Mr. Moody did not know what that meant, but he got to thinking about it, and then went to these women and said:

*"I wish you would tell me what you mean"; and they told him about the **definite baptism with the Holy Ghost.***

He got it and the rest is history.

Some have claimed he was the greatest evangelist of the 19th century. He preached everywhere and to thousands.

Not bad considering his Sunday school teacher said.

"That I have seen few persons whose minds were spiritually darker than was his when he came into my class, still less to fill any extended sphere of public usefulness."

But God had other ideas.

Even in adversity the devil could not stop him.

The great Chicago fire destroyed Moody's church, his home, and the dwellings of most of his members.

His family had to flee for their lives, and, as Mr. Moody said, he saved nothing but his reputation **and his Bible**.

He came back stronger and more powerful than ever.

Evan Roberts the great leader of the Welsh revival realised that God had chosen him and went away weeping. He knew that he had the sentence of death on his life. He knew then he would have to sacrifice everything. His whole life would have to be surrendered. The fruit that came from his acceptance of his calling was astounding; many thousands were saved and touched by the Spirit.

Years later he was asked, will we ever see a revival like this one again – he answered, it's possible – but who will pay the price?

We all have to decide for ourselves what sort of ministry we want to be involved in.

If we require a **truly** anointed "**spiritual ministry**" – we will have to count the cost.

Bible based Christianity demands it.

AN APOSTOLIC EXAMPLE – JOHN G LAKE

Throughout church history, there have been examples of true apostolic ministry raised up by the Lord within the church. These individuals attained a mature stature qualifying them as a dwelling place for the Spirit of God through whom the Lord was able to function and do His works. They were men and women so thoroughly filled with the Holy Spirit that they exercised the Lord's dominion over demons, disease and death. These saints were true expressions of the life of Christ with His divine nature radiating through them—men and women who were crucified with Christ and lived by the faith of the Son of God. Tremendous lessons can be learned by examining the lives of these spiritual champions in order to determine the secrets of their success with God. One example of true apostolic ministry can be found in the life of John Graham Lake.

An Apostle of Faith

By every biblical definition, the life of John G. Lake demonstrated the nature and characteristics of true apostolic ministry. John G. Lake was a man who experienced apostolic ministry according to first century standards and changed

the world everywhere he went. He was a vessel yielded to God as a habitation for His manifest presence. Through him, the Holy Spirit was able to heal the sick, cast out demons, save the lost, and manifest the very nature and character of Christ, displaying that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). The Great Commission was a reality, not a theory, in Lake's ministry. Careful examination of his life will help the church to prepare for the coming visitation and restoration of the apostolic ministry.

Having the Lord's Potential

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24). When the time came for the Lord to be glorified through the sacrificial offering of His life, He compared His life with a grain of wheat. When a grain of wheat dies, it is for the purpose of bringing forth multiplied grains of wheat like the original grain. The Bible teaches that when the Lord returns, we will be like Him. The Holy Spirit residing in us will reveal the same attributes through us that He did in the Lord Jesus Christ. This belief formed the cornerstone for John G. Lake's life and ministry. Lake believed that the Lord would not have commissioned us to do the works that He did without adequately equipping us to do those works. Lake

commented, “We need to set our sights high and refuse the traditions of men who say that it is impossible to do as Jesus instructed us.”

True apostolic ministry is simply the extension of the ministry begun by the Lord, our ultimate example. The power of redemption is so great that sinners saved by grace and filled with the Holy Spirit are given the opportunity of carrying on the very ministry of Christ, doing the works that He did. John G. Lake is a token of this reality given to the twentieth century. Our sights should be set equally high.

His Definition of the Apostolic Church

During the years preceding and following the turn of the twentieth century, John Lake made a notable and revealing observation. There had been a tremendous outpouring of the Holy Spirit with great manifestations of power, signs and wonders. A generation of Christians was given an extraordinary opportunity of witnessing the return of genuine apostolic ministry. Lake discerned that his generation missed the mark by not realizing the true definition of apostolic ministry. Some attempted to build an apostolic church around the doctrine and manifestation of healing power. Others attempted to establish the apostolic church around the restoration of the gifts and speaking in tongues, while some attempted to create and establish the apostolic order

around the doctrine of holiness. All of these qualities are attributes of the Holy Spirit and essential to the church, yet **not one** singularly sustains apostolic ministry. Lake observed that the people were **absorbed in the phenomena of God and not in the person of God.**

According to Lake, the truest definition of the apostolic church could be

expressed in the awesome and reverential experience known as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He believed that the church did not regard the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the reverence due an experience so sacred and so terribly costly.

In order to secure this gift for His church, the Lord Jesus lived in the world, bled

on the cross, entered into the darkness of death, hell and the grave, grappled

with and strangled the accursed powers of darkness, came forth in resurrection

life and ascended to heaven. **Lake believed apostolic ministry was defined and**

realised through individuals becoming the

habitation of God. The Holy Spirit

literally manifested Himself in the spirit, soul

and body of the believers, taking

total possession of His church and bestowing on her His qualities and attributes.

This process was not merely a reformation—it was a renewal. Men and women

were renewed by the Spirit of God, indwelt by the Holy Spirit and becoming one

Spirit with Him. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was not merely a gift of power,

but of God Himself.

Out of necessity, Lake became acquainted with the healing power of God. During the later years of the nineteenth century, he was miraculously healed of a terminal illness, along with his wife, his sister and his brother. This introduction to God's miraculous power caused Lake to begin a quest to not only know the healing of God, but to know the God of healing. His desire was fulfilled, he describes, when he became the habitation of God in a powerful baptism of the Holy Spirit.

His Baptism Experience

At the age of 16, John G. Lake came to know the saving power of Christ. His salvation experience was very real as displayed by his changed life. Many around him observed this change and said, "You are baptized in the Holy Ghost." While friends around him were saying that he had been filled with the Holy Spirit, Lake experienced an almost unbearable hunger in his heart for more of God. He began to pursue God and came to know ***the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit*** through the ministry of a layman named Melvin Pratt. This precious brother introduced Lake to ***the washing of water by the Word, and this process increased the richness and anointing of Lake's life***. Those around him acknowledged that surely he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Yet, Lake hungered for more. ***He was learning to abide***.

Several years later, Lake was introduced to the healing power of God through Alexander Dowie. After moving to Zion, Illinois to associate more closely with Dowie, Lake received a tremendous impartation of the healing power of God from the Holy Spirit. Many miracles and manifestations of the Spirit followed.

Those around Lake **again** tried to convince him that he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

By the turn of the century, John G. Lake had undergone a powerful salvation experience, an even more powerful sanctification experience, and an impartation of the gift of healing. At each juncture, those around Lake tried to convince him that he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, yet his heart burned for more of God than ever before.

Searching for that which would satisfy the longing of his heart, he began to fast, pray and wait upon the Lord for nine months. At the end of this period of prayer and fasting, Lake had an awesome experience with the Lord. He knew then that he had been immersed in the Holy Spirit and had finally become a dwelling place of God. His heart and soul were now satisfied that the Holy Spirit was residing in him, speaking through him, and saturating every fiber of his being. **Finally his heart was content that he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit which**

would produce the nature and character of Christ within him. Lake believed, , that this experience now equipped him to carry on the ministry of Christ as did the early apostles.

Triune Salvation

During the winter of 1913, Lake presented a teaching to the Church of England entitled, “Triune Salvation.” This teaching revealed a key secret to his power and intimacy with God. So significant was its content that the Bishop of London wrote about this message, **“It contains the spirit of primitive Christianity and reveals the distinction between the Christian soul of the first and twentieth century, the Spirit of Christ’s domain, by which Christianity attained its spiritual supremacy...It is one of the greatest sermons I have ever heard and I recommend its careful study by every priest.”** In this study, Lake revealed the important significance of **our complete redemption on all three levels of human life—spirit, soul (mind) and body.** I Thessalonians 5:23 declares, “Now may the God of peace Himself **sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** Lake taught that it was the **tendency of the average Christian to stop at the redemption of their spirit. He believed that it was equally as important for the believer to allow the Holy Spirit**

to sanctify the soul and the body in order for the individual to become the habitation of God. The sanctification of the soul literally involves the impartation of the mind of Christ. John Wesley defined sanctification as “possessing the mind of Christ and all the mind of Christ.” ***This level of consecration is essential for the believer’s thoughts to be perfectly in tune with the Lord’s thoughts and the Christian’s ways consistent with His ways.***

Complete sanctification of soul and mind also involves the renewal of the emotions. ***Many believers are trapped in the tyranny of grief over the past, not realizing that they are a new creation and that all things have become new (II Corinthian 5:17), past failures erased by the blood of Christ. Grief ultimately*** leads to bitterness, and bitterness will defile many (Hebrews 12:15).

Consequently, it is essential that the Holy Spirit be allowed to thoroughly consecrate and sanctify the mind, and the emotions in order for Christians to become the tabernacle of the Holy Spirit.

This triune salvation also involves the separation of the believer from all that would defile, recognizing that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and should be consecrated accordingly. Romans 8:11 states, “The Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.” This imparted life granted through the indwelling

presence of the Holy Spirit will provide divine health and freedom from the lusts that are a result of man's fallen condition. Lake taught that the genuine Christian is a separated person—separated forever to God in all the departments of life: body, soul and spirit are forever committed to God. This absolute consecration to God, or “triune salvation,” is the real secret to the successful Christian life and essential to becoming the habitation of God. According to John G. Lake, this complete consecration to God makes the Christian a “Christ-man” and reveals the secret of life and communion with God received into the entire being through the Holy Spirit.

Not Without Holiness

“Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). Without holiness, the complete purposes of the church **cannot be fulfilled**. A Holy God can only dwell in a holy vessel. Lake said, “Think not that thou shalt attain the highest in God until within thine own soul a heavenly longing to be like Him who gave His life for us possesses our own heart.” A holy and sanctified condition can only be realized when the fleshly nature is revealed. Once the tares of the human soul are revealed, Christians then can call upon the grace of God to separate from them all that is ungodly,

thereby purging the spirit, soul and body from every worldly tendency. As Lake once put it, “There arises in the heart the desire and prayer for the Spirit of God to eject, crucify and destroy every tendency of the opposition of the Holy Spirit.” The hearts of men and women must be purged by the fire of the Holy Spirit and washed from every stain by the cleansing blood of Christ. Those who desire to be partakers of the nature of Christ must always feel the purging power of Christ within. Once the Holy Spirit takes up residence, there is a release of power through the indwelling Spirit to lift the believer above the lusts and desires of this world in order to live a holy and consecrated life. This desire for the purity of God’s nature reveals a vital ingredient in the life and ministry of John G. Lake. As he stated in 1916, “Holiness is the character of God. The very substance of His being and the essence of His nature is purity.” The purpose of God in the salvation of mankind is to produce in man a kindred holiness, a radiant purity like that of God Himself.

Clothed in a Spirit of Humility

Another important attribute in Lake’s ministry was his commitment to living in a spirit of humility. Lake often quoted I Peter 5:5: “You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one

another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. ” If the church is to “return back to the future” to her true apostolic heritage, Christians must adhere to the qualities demonstrated by the apostolic fathers.

In Acts 20:19, the Apostle Paul acknowledges his commitment to humility in his service to the Lord. That commitment to humility by the first century apostle

burned equally as bright in the heart of John G. Lake, a twentieth century apostle. Lake desired to follow the example set by Moses and sought to be the

meekest man in the land. By virtue of this commitment to humility, he was able to say, “the Spirit of God ran through my person like a river of heavenly fluid.

Cancers withered under my touch, cripples of every type were instantly restored and works of creation in the bodies of men took place as a result of humbling

myself under the mighty hand of God.” Like Moses, he desired to not only see

the acts of an awesome God, but also to understand His ways. As a result, he

discovered that the Lord’s way was through servanthood and a spirit of humility

clothing the believer. It is only through amazing grace that the nature and works

of Christ can be exhibited through believers. God gives His grace to the humble.

Humility is truly a key ingredient to the restoration of true apostolic ministry and

the return of the Shekinah glory to the church.

The Empowering Presence

As with the first century apostles, John G. Lake did not attempt full time ministry until he was endued with power from on high. Even though the early apostles had received an anointing from the Lord for casting out evil spirits and healing the sick, they did not become the dwelling place of God until the day of

Pentecost. It is one thing to receive anointings or gifts from the Lord; it is altogether another to become the literal dwelling place of the manifest presence of God.

Lake knew the reality of the empowering presence of God abiding within him. He was anointed and equipped not only for ministering healing and salvation to a lost world, but also for expressing the radiant presence of a Holy God, or, as he explained it for, “becoming a Christ-man having all the potentials through the Holy Spirit that resided in Christ Himself.” Lake spent a season of prayer and

fasting specifically seeking a special anointing for casting out demons. The Lord graciously responded to the request of His servant by imparting a powerful anointing and the boldness necessary for dealing with evil spirits. As a result, people came from all over the world to be delivered and set free from demonic opposition. Tremendous testimonies are on record as evidence of this ministry.

This empowering presence also carried Lake to a new level of understanding Scripture. Powerful and revelatory sermons emerged from this apostle of faith as he allowed the Holy Spirit to unfold the mysteries of the kingdom. He had the capacity to inspire faith in the hearts of those who heard him. A man without compromise when it involved the Spirit's revelation of the Word, Lake utterly refused to compromise the true revelation of the Word for a false unity which he believed resulted in spiritual weakness. He believed that principle is better than unity, and the ultimate end of right principles would be true unity of the faith as described in Ephesians 4:13. Lake believed the secret to Christianity was not in doing but in being. It is in possessing the divine nature of Christ and His empowering presence that we become the reflection of Christ's character and our message will then be characterized by the demonstration of the Spirit's power. It is by becoming one with the Father that we can know peace in the midst of storms. It is through the Lord's abiding presence that we find the secret place of the most High and abide under the shadow of the Almighty. We should earnestly contend for the apostolic principles found in the first church and demonstrated in the life of John G. Lake. This generation has the opportunity to experience the return of our faith to the apostolic pattern. As we

consider the days of old and the generations of long ago,
we can see firsthand
the application of true apostolic ministry available in the
days to come.

*The power seems sometimes to pervade the
atmosphere, as if generating from a lone vessel. When
Christians humble enough to retain this power – the
work of conversion will go on. EVERY OBSTACLE TO
THE SERVICE OF CHRIST MUST BE GIVEN UP.*

Chapter 11

THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH - WHAT IS IT?

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" I Peter 4:17

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of all generations" (Deuteronomy 32:7).

This admonition, given to Israel through Moses, required the children of Israel to examine their past and gain understanding about the Lord's ways. This same admonition has even greater value today as we challenge ourselves to

understand our Christian heritage and learn about God's sovereignty and His dealings with man. While we do not want to live in the past, we can examine and extract from the past, nuggets of wisdom concerning God's ways with His church.

Since the days of the Reformation, the Lord has brought a progressive revelation of Himself to the church. This revelation has been line upon line and precept upon precept continually unfolding fresh revelation of Himself and His Word. This

process is for the purpose of restoring the church to her former apostolic authority as realized in the first century church. As we consider the prior

generations, we can relish the revelation given to them and also learn from their mistakes in order to avoid those same mistakes in our generation.

True Apostolic Ministry

Apostolic ministry can be defined as Jesus Christ manifested and abiding in His church doing the same works through His church that He did while living on the earth in human form. True apostolic ministry is a fulfillment of John 14:12, with the Holy Spirit performing the same works through the church that He did through the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is a ministry of perfection coming to the church that will prepare her for the return of the Bridegroom. However, before we can begin to move toward this ministry, we must first “return back to our future” and realize the complete restoration of biblical apostolic ministry. This ministry will call out and separate the church from the world so that she can be prepared in perfection for the Bridegroom.

In Joel 2:25, the Lord makes a wonderful promise to restore all that the palmerworm, cankerworm, caterpillar, and the locust have destroyed (KJV).

These four stages of a maturing locust are used to prophetically symbolize the

that the spirit of the antichrist would attack the church. The early apostolic church is like a tree that the Lord planted and nurtured to full fruit - bearing

maturity. The spirit of the antichrist is compared to a locust which devours first the fruit, then the leaves, the bark and finally gnawing into the very heart of the tree in order to destroy it. In church history, this final stage culminated in the era known as the Dark Ages. The Lord's promise to restore the apostolic church began through the ministry of Martin Luther and has now matured to a level so that this generation can expect the complete restoration of biblical apostolic ministry. This is our quest: to return back to the future. When our Lord was on the earth, He chose the 12 apostles to groom and prepare for the birth of His apostolic church. For three and one-half years, He planted the seed of the Word of God within their hearts. When the day of Pentecost had fully come, the Holy Spirit descended upon them and watered the seed within their hearts, producing the life of Christ and the apostolic church. This same process must be realized in this church age as well.

Jesus was very plain – first you seek the kingdom of God and everything that you **need** will be added unto you.

Churches are filled to the brim with promises of '**a better life now**' - a doctrine that is an appetiser to the flesh, hence thousands attending.

I truly believe this style and practice is beginning to see its last days and a new breed are arising who don't have need of **anything!** James verse

That's right, zero needs! Their Salvation alone will be their banner!

In many Churches, terms such as '**seeker friendly**' and '**contemporary**' are draw cards for a non-confrontational meeting with Jesus. A 'message' of sorts is preached and the hearers are neither challenged nor made aware of their condition- **its called sin!** God forbid they ever hear about the laid down, crucified life – they would run out screaming!

Others like the “Mega Churches” have been built not on the Holy Spirit and genuine soul winning, but the smaller Churches closing, so the Christians are simply '**transferred.**'

It is estimated that 98% of mega churches became a mega enterprise at the depletion of surrounding churches. Membership exchange is not growth, revival **nor evidence of God's anointing.**

But as the crucified ones emerge who will simply love God for who he is, rather than what they can get from him, things will change. The word Church as some of us know means , the “called out one's” so if we ask ourselves, what is the Church , we have to know what the word Church really means from God's point of view, (which is the only view that should really matter) and not what man may think or presume it to be!

Let's take the word, “called out” what comes to my mind is cricket. When you're called out, you are no longer in the game, you are now inactive

He is shouting as the great umpire in heaven. By the word and in our hearts, you're out, you're not in the

game, you can't play anymore, there is no room for you on the pitch, and you're not allowed to play!

Now suppose , if after a cricket player was told he was out ,decided he was still going to play, or he disagreed with the decision, would that make any difference, no , play would be stopped whilst the player "came to his sense's" and accepted the decision of the umpire!

The sad reality is, for one, the Church, (Ecclesia) **the called out ones**, have no understanding of what it means to be called out, they think, it's just to not be like the world. But the Church has become worldly. In fact, there is so much of the world in the Church (in us) we don't or can't see where the Church begins and the world ends.

What the world calls success is poisoning God's people whereby they run to and fro trying to be accepted, and applauded, whilst remaining **spiritually barren**.

We have downgraded the word of God to such a degree, that it has become, his "holy suggestion" when in reality, what he says, he actually means!

We are desperate for the world to love and accept us.

Listen , let me tell you, if you make sinners feel at ease in your presence without feeling the need to get right with God, then my dear brother or sister, your life needs to be examined. Jesus mixed with sinners all the time, he loved them, but eventually he won them over, just by being "**who he was.**" Do your part and be natural about it and he will do his.

Have we got enough God in us to have that affect?

Or is there a lack of evidence?

We should be kind and loving of course, but we should also carry the **convicting power of the Holy Spirit in our vessels**.

Jesus did not come to condemn the world but to give “life”, but his convicting power is part of the deal, it’s what **draws** people to him.

Far too much of self has crept in, and so called “message” has been hijacked and poisoned by those that **“have not the Spirit” – (Jude 1:19)**.

Why, because we look to the world and its ways to affirm our identity, rather than Christ and the kingdom of God.

We want recognition, and often **steal God’s glory**, by making people **look to us** and not to him – the one who can truly help them.

The world judges by performance, Christ judges you by allowing you to be yourself in him. (Galatians 2v20).

The world says, you have to become something or someone (other than who you are).

“Go out there and make something of yourself”

Norman Grubb, tells us,

“For many years I struggled with the idea, that I was to become someone, then one day I realized I was created to **contain someone**,

No more struggling and striving, but a resting and trusting, no more giving and doing but a believing and receiving, no more looking outside of us , but a resting within us, The lord is fulfilled in us and through us!

To have the conditional acceptance based on performance, not love of people ,you have to be what they want, which in some way, will mean you becoming someone you are really not, then even when you do, they still cast you out when they are done with you.

Only in him, is there oneness, unity.

We need to encouragement folks, we all have to help each other get to this place whereby his word is celebrated and not hidden. ***“Iron surely sharpens iron.”*** The new wine is in the cluster, not just one individual grape (***Isaiah 65v8***) – we must not isolate ourselves, we must come together and share.

“What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church”(1 Corinthians 14v26).

Where are we going from here?

Most of us could testify that we experienced great joy when we were born again, it was a profoundly life changing experience. The Lord was so near. Then we settled into everyday life of being a Christian

according to Church traditions in which we found ourselves, and then we began to sense ***“There’s got to be more to being a Christian than this”***

And there is!

We are done with the hype that deceived us into thinking we were in the midst of his presence. Now we don’t quite fit in anywhere anymore. The things of the world and of the Church are growing dimmer. We are now leaving Pentecost for the holy of holies; we have left the inner court and are now ***yearning to be conformed***, to come into the fullness of his nature. We are in transition.

The world is watching and waiting for such as these.

There are those who won't believe until they see a ***crucified and resurrected body of believers***, the very witness provided by true believers in the course of this life.

The world is skeptical about us and our message, and they are going to become more skeptical. There is only one thing that is going to put this world back on the track to real revival. There is only one thing that is going to make this hardened world reconsider the claims of Jesus. It will not be some ***confidence trickster*** with big rings and a fancy limousine telling them that God wants them rich.

It will not be people behaving like lunatics in some prophetic ***‘new age’ style manifestation***. What will

make them believe is when we have a response to their request,

"Show me somebody that has been crucified and resurrected, I want to see it!"

Then we can stand up as a crucified body and say.

"Here!" – "Can you see Jesus in me?"

We are living in the days of Laodicea. ***A lukewarm church that is proud, materialistic and oblivious to its true state.***

It thinks that, because it maybe ***well-off materially*** and financially, it is well-off spiritually, but it is not.

It is spiritually barren.

People that will never darken the door of a church building are on the edge of something.

They will see the real deal for the first time– and they will ***fear us (with a holy fear)***. They will witness, some for the first time the living reality of ***what a Christian is supposed to be like.***

"You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." – 2 Corinthians 3v3

In other words when they see people really living it, it will grab their attention and they will not be able to deny it.

The strange thing is the **“Church world”** will hate us for it, because they will know **THAT** is what **THEY** are supposed to be!

They also have the answer to life – being Jesus, but the trouble is they languish with this deception of never admitting to having a problem, and so never really get to the root of things and get healed. On the other hand the world can freely admit to having problems – but fort hem they have no real answer. The ones that venture that way may find themselves some substitute remedy like the hari krisha’s whilst ignoring the true source of life.

The former remind me of what scripture declares.

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in mens faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to.” (Matthew 23:13)

Religion deals with the externals only, there is no inner change, and hence why we say **you must be born again-** the divine transaction must take place. God must breathe his breath **into** you. **It’s the miracle of the new birth (John 3:8)**

Too many who claim this experience as their own are deceiving themselves and others - as there **reflection** of Christ is **“muddy at best”**.

Things have to change, God will start to separate the tares from the wheat. Those that **do not want to carry his image** will be dealt with. This is not a sanctification issue, which is progressive; I am talking of those who are **plainly carnal**.

At the other end of the scale we have others in our midst, **pseudo prophets** who feel it is their duty to take down and correct people and scarper leaving behind a trail of destruction and wounded sheep. These are **Spiritual cowards** that seek to bully people into submission, who lack the character and a biblical mandate to **speak the truth in love**. They have no lasting impact.

They love their **“message”** more than they love the brethren. They are attention seekers.

Living the abundant life John 10:10

Abundant just means **full**. Paul had a full life. But do we equate the life he lived which included stonings, shipwrecks, persecution, etc.as being "abundant"?

It means exactly what it says. Jesus promises life more abundantly, which means that we should have **joy and peace** whether we are **abounding or being abased**, and not be prisoners of sin. In fact Jesus went as far as to say, if seek to save your life you will lose it, but if you lose it, you will save. Live for yourself and it ends in disaster, live for others, then you really begin to live – that is the TRUE abundant life.

SO, WHATS IMPORTANT?

“To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches?” After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and ruby. A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also in front of the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal”. (Revelation 3v1-)

The Lord is saying

“You are trying to find this pleasure outside of me. It is now time to give me your life”. You will sit me on my throne.”

There is no comparison with a promise like that.

The trouble is few today including many Christians hunger to hear the pure word of the Lord instead the majority fatten themselves on various offerings - ***the straw of perverted gospels***. The preachers are at fault. They have created this.

The power is ***gone*** and the people are starving.

But there is a remnant being raised up, who will know what it takes to live and move in the presence of God, ***and it will be those that the hungry and thirsty will seek out.***

"The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine through the land--not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD. Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it (Amos 8-11-12).

God always has a remnant though.

People will no longer be coming to "Church" for the many reasons they do, immigration, fruit of the womb, self inflicted demonic issues, to find a husband or wife, money, good music, padded pews, good coffee, business opportunities, entertainment, and celebrity Christianity.

We will bring the real 'Church' with us instead.

Jesus came to save us from sin not our troubles. Let's not get the cart before the horse.

AN APOSTOLIC MINISTRY- WHAT IS IT ?

Apostolic ministry can be defined as Jesus Christ manifested and abiding in His church doing the same works through His church that He did while living on the earth in human form. True apostolic ministry is a fulfillment of ***John 14:12, “the greater works”*** with the Holy Spirit performing the same works through the church that He did through the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It deals with building, restoring, and governing.
Jesus said,

“I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The Church Christ is building is full of disciples that are “strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”

It is a Church filled with believers ***taking part*** in producing, multiplying, increasing, subduing, and the ***restoration*** of all things.

The anointing will be unlike anything you have ever experienced before. It will empower you for effective ministry and to make a difference in your life and the life of others. You may ask.....

“Is there any way to come into the apostolic ministry without spiritual warfare?”

The short answer to the question is, “No.”

So what does it mean to fight? It simply means to “Submit yourself to God, resist the devil and he will flee.” Fighting can be as simple as “having faith in God.” It’s in the **believing** and moving forward in **BOLDNESS** that the **contending** comes into play. Scripture also says, “**The effectual fervent prayers of a righteous man availed much.**” This type of prayer has an aggressive, even militant sound full of an assurance of victory. I’m sure Charles Finney prayed these sorts of prayers before he plundered an area for souls. Belief and faith are the power twins here (John 6v29 & Hebrews 11v6).

The Apostle Paul taught those in his flagship church in Ephesus, “We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers.” One cannot wrestle without being in a fight. Notice also that the church in Ephesus was founded by an apostle who knew what it would take for that body of believers to grow and influence their territory. Paul was not focused on departing but building the church through an active invasion of the city with the Gospel. He taught the people that they could not afford to ignore their spiritual opposition. They must be battle ready.

The apostolic ministry and those with the vision has much more to do empowering the people with the **authority and power of God**, along with **CHRISTLIKENESS** rather than it getting the people to follow them or their Church.

The emerging generation must have adventure in their lives and true Christian living will provide this.

We will need discipline to walk in these things. Building a “Church” that attracts **GOD** not **NUMBERS**. The

apostolic ministry is devoted to see the church of God become the **temple** of the lord. Too many legacies and great ministries have gone to the grave with no reproduction. This will change; the aim is to duplicate warriors for the Lord. We are building to bring the manifest presence of God back in our midst. These will be the nameless faceless ones, doing the works and having no interest in acknowledgement.

Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you" (Joshua 3v5). When you finally realise what Jesus came to show us about the "church" and the kingdom of God, we will no longer care about certain things. The clothes we wear the food we eat, the house we live in and the car we drive. Who wins or lose the game, whether the stock markets soars or falls. We are blessed when we have these provisions, but we not put our trust in them. We can be content in whatever state we find ourselves. Phil 4:11-12. When change our perception and are not "conformed to the pattern of this world" (Romans 12:1-2). Power, position, reputation, fame, wealth, beauty and success become meaningless.

But be quite sure, This is no "super ministry" it is just a restoration of the **original**.

So what is this Apostolic Church life like, you may ask?

A Church that is stunning, glorious, all consuming, the church magnetic, claiming every moment of your being, the church living and free. Not a place, not a building, but a people, taken up with HIM and blind to all else. The church as she once was, ought to be and can be. A bride passionately in love with her Lord. A people who KNOW and experience him.

***Not as spiritual misers, but sharing together !
The true Church – precious, pure and lovely.
This the remnant the Lord seeks, and he will
surely soon find that bride. “But because my
servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows
me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the
land he went to, and his descendants will
inherit it.”(Numbers 14:24).***

***It is only then we can touch his GLORY, to get
behind that veil (Hebrews 6v19).....to see
what others don't see and swim in the heavenly
realm and walk with angels and the presence
and power of God.***

***His goal is to being MANY sons unto glory !
(Hebrews 2v10).***

Chapter 12

GOING FROM DOING TO BEING

“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;” (Ephesians 3:16)

Have you ever known anyone to fall? I mean really mess up, and mess up badly. It says in ***Galatians 6v1-2***.

“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ”.

I have been one of these people; I have also known others I considered “strong” to do the same. And I can safely say I have read books by people who have claimed to have mastered the area of “falling” only to find the very same ones wallowing in their crash years later.

How remarkable you may say?

Not really, it can happen to anyone.

How do we guard against this happening?

What is the secret to building the necessary character?

The problem is many have not dealt with the soul, the thought life

We have to go from **doing** to **being** – To become the very thing itself, the likeness is in the attitude. Being is more important than doing; **attitude** is more significant than action.

People like the idea of Jesus but will shy away from the reality of him. They don't want him to get too close.

They are like those that have to clock in and out at a place of work. As soon their "shift" at "Church" is over, they can return to carnality.

They put on a mask of Christianity and remove it when it suits them. They are external believers that are without the internal reality.

JESUS ADDRESSED THIS IN HIS FIRST SERMON

The Living Son of God began teaching **his first Spiritual Life seminar**. Having come to earth to build the Fathers kingdom, His followers and even those who followed from afar; the curious, the antagonists, the philosophers, all were **expecting something quite different** than what they heard that day.

The setting was not in an amphitheater filled with

the scholars and religious leaders of His day. Instead, He was seated on a rock on the side of a hill with a gathering of men and women some of whom were homeless, sick, or disabled.

He began with a statement that must have literally blown the lid off their preconceived notions of this kingdom He had come to establish. Jesus said, ***Oh what bliss for the man or the woman who is poor in spirit.***

It is interesting to note that at this point, Jesus wasn't talking to them about what they needed ***to do for God.***

He was talking to them about what God was ***going to do for them.*** And He wasn't talking about ***external behavior,*** but about ***internal attitudes.***

Thus, His message was more abstract in nature and required a level of application that had to come from within. Being poor in spirit, He was saying, is not an activity. ***It is the reflection of a life, and that life must be supernatural.***

You can't fake it. You can't work to produce it, and you can't imitate it.

It is somewhat obscure, and it cannot be understood by the natural mind. (See 1 Corinthians 2v14).

God understands, and He has provided a solution.

We have a perfect pattern. ***His name is Jesus.***

We read in ***2 Corinthians 8,*** these words:

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich”.

We need look no further. Though He was rich, He became poor.

Why? For **our** sakes.

For what purpose? That through the process of His taking on our spiritual poverty, we might actually become the heirs of His spiritual riches.

Could He be asking us to do what He did? Yes.

But didn't it cost Him His life? Yes. Didn't it mean the ultimate in humiliation? Yes. Then, once more, ***why did He do such a thing?***

Oh, yes, *for our sakes*.

We almost forget, dont we?

Our goal for this lesson is to look at Jesus and learn simply from watching Him what it means to be poor in spirit. For the moment, we will begin by looking at ***Philippians, chapter two***, that passage we know so well that clearly defines the steps He took to becoming poor for our sakes.

THE CALL

In verses 1-4, Paul issues a call to selflessness and humility within the body of Christ, and in ***verse 5*** he makes this dramatic statement:

Let this mind be in you which was also in

Christ Jesus.

Paul says that if we want to illuminate what it means to be *poor in spirit*, we need to turn on the projector of the word and flash on the screen a lifelike portrait of Jesus Christ. He says, this is it.

This is what it means to be *poor in spirit*. ***Be what He was.*** Do what He did. Then you will have it.

Paul then proceeds in outline fashion to show us the progressive poverty of spirit we see only in Jesus Christ. He writes, ***Let this mind be in you.*** The word let here means to allow. It isn't something you go out and do. ***It is something you allow to be done in you.*** The work is done in the mind... The word mind means ***internal thoughts***. He is saying; Let your internal thoughts now be transformed.

We need to find out what this transformation is.

He is clearly saying that the mindset that Jesus had on earth needs to be our mindset. In other words, the Spirit of God is now resident in you by virtue of the fact that you have received Jesus Christ into your heart. Therefore, you literally have His supernatural ability to think, be and become.

He is in you.

You are in Him.

John 1:12 But to as many as received Him, to them He gave the power (authority) to become the sons of God.

Galatians 3:26 for you are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God:

and if we are children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ;

Until we realise **who we are and what we have**, we are in no position to give it up or lay it aside.

You have heard the term **“Who we are in Christ”**, well this is it.

The world says that a positive self-image is what you see when you look in the mirror and say, I am good. The problem is in reality; none of us can honestly look in the mirror and say that.

The word, on the other hand, says that a positive self-image is what you see when you look at Jesus Christ and say, He is God.

For you see, that is what God, sees when He looks at you.

Jesus knew who He was, but He didn't clutch at it and hold onto it. The scripture says, remember, **though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich.**

THE COST

This is where Jesus was coming from.

He knew who He was and He called us to do likewise.

He made Himself of no reputation.

The word **reputation** here is the word **kenoo** which means to empty or measure as useless.

It means **he made Himself relatively insignificant.**

Phillips says: **He stripped Himself of every advantage.**

Another translator says: **He emptied Himself.**

One writer paraphrases it thus: **He did not cling to His rights as God, but laid them aside.**

Another says He did not snatch at equality with God but **made Himself nothing.** Still another says **he stripped Himself of all privileges and rightful dignity.**

I'd like to ask you to consider **two ramifications** of what Christ did because they apply to us in the same fashion.

He became vulnerable to failure.

He had to give up his own rights.

He left the security of the throne for the battlefield of the throned because he trusted the Father and He wanted to do the Father's will.

In Jesus Christ, God was willing to become a fool, a failure. He placed Himself in a position to be spit on, laughed at, and gambled over.

You may say, how degrading to God.

I believe that is why more of us as believers do not succeed in spiritual things.

We are unwilling to become vulnerable to what the world considers failure.

God was not afraid by mans standards to fail.

He knew who he was and he emptied Himself and it was through His failure that we found life.

He was willing to become totally dependent on somebody else and not to be his own boss.

Never in 33 years did Jesus Christ breathe a breath or make a move on His own.

John 5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, truly truly I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He see's the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He and that I do nothing of Myself; but as my Father hath taught Me, I speak these things.

Jesus went on to say As the Father hath sent me,

even so send I you. This literally means that you and I can do as much as he did.

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

This is a good verse to memorize.

John 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches, He that abides in me and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, but without Me ye can do nothing.

So Jesus Christ had to be willing to become totally dependant on the father for 33 years.

A reminder of those two things.

He had to be willing to be vulnerable to failure

He had to be willing to give up His own rights to His own life.

I laugh when I remember my own earthly father said, you will become a ***“nothing”*** – a prophetic word indeed !

To accomplish this, Jesus became a servant. He was God and He wasn't ashamed of it. However, He didn't clutch at His rights as God, but instead stripped Himself of His royal garments and clothed Himself with the garments of a slave. The word *servant* here is the same word that Paul uses when he says, Paul, a *bondslave* of Jesus Christ. A bondslave, remember, ***is a slave by choice.***

A bondslave has no possessions, no rights

and no authority.

John 13. This is a familiar passage. The Scripture says that just before the feast of the Passover, Jesus knew that His hour had come. Supper was over.

The devil had put it in Judas heart to betray Jesus. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands got up from supper and laid aside His garments.

Here is a beautiful picture of God leaving His royalty in heaven.

He laid aside His garments and took upon Himself the garment of a slave. He girded Himself and poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciple's dirty feet, and wiped them with a towel. Simon Peter then said, *Lord, You dont know what you are doing. Why would you wash my feet?* Jesus answered and said, ***What I do now you dont understand. You will in time to come.*** Peter said, You will never wash my feet. Jesus answered, if I wash you not, you will have no part of me.

Then of course, Peter said, Give me a bath. Jesus said, You missed the point.

Let's look.

13:12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one

another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

The world isn't looking for arrogant kings; it is looking for **available servants**.

God, then, is looking for men who will humble themselves, **Christians with dirty hands and warm hearts** who are willing to reach out.

I don't mean this disrespectfully, but I look at video clips of presidents and prime ministers and senators as they visit foreign countries, or make trips to the inner cities of this nation. They pick the children up and hug them. They eat the same food the poor folks eat, and walk out into the fields they work in. They are trying desperately **to identify with the common man**, but somehow unconsciously there comes across a political motivation.

Contrast that with Jesus Christ in that upper room and you will see the difference between the way we reach out as Christians and the way Jesus would.

He really cared; He got involved. He was totally genuine. He took upon Himself the lowest possible form of servitude. So we ask the question,

How do we become a servant?

THE PROCESS

He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.

I don't think you can separate humility from obedience.

You can't ***truly*** be obedient without humbling yourself. I don't believe that you can separate the two. He became obedient, meaning ***nothing was too hard***. He humbled Himself, meaning ***nothing was too menial***.

What it says is that ***we are to do nothing from self-seeking motives***, but lower ourselves to a position of importance that is lower than everyone else. ***This means that if you have a need and your neighbor has a need, you do what is most vital and most important. You meet your neighbors need.*** You do this not because God is going to give you a merit badge for it, but because your neighbor is more important than you are. ***To understand this is humility.***

To do this is obedience.

To both understand it and do it ***is to become poor in spirit.***

Jesus was obedient *unto* death.

I think it is important to understand that the passage does not say that Jesus was obedient *to* death. He mastered death. That is why we read: ***O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*** Death is dead because Jesus mastered death, but He was obedient up to and including the point of

death. There were no limits to His obedience. ***Most of us are obedient unto something, but it isn't usually unto death.***

So what was the result? He died.

He could have built a kingdom that would have altered the political climate of the world, but He died.

He could have built a religious system of good works and good deeds that would have satisfied mans need to be worthy, but He died.

He could have been a cohesive influence on the worlds social and economic ills, but He died.

Having become vulnerable to failure by mans standards, He failed, but out of the rubbish heap of failure came the reality of success.

He gave up everything on earth for everything in heaven. He gave up everything in time for everything in eternity.

That is what happens when you and I lay aside our reputation, humble ourselves and obey.

We have to die.

When was the last time you died?

That is what a husband or wife is supposed to do for each other. They are supposed to die for their own selfish ambitions.

That is what parents do for their children.

That is what we are to do for one another.

That is what believers are to do for a lost world.

We are supposed to die.

If the body of Christ at large or we as individuals were functioning this way, ***the entire atmosphere in our churches*** would be different; ***the entire atmosphere in our homes*** would be different; ***the entire atmosphere in the world*** today would be different.

Whatever needs we became aware of would be met.

But we are too busy counting the cost.

So the world sees us clad in garments of religious verbiage.

We want to ride into history on a stallion, not on a donkey.

We want to make our mark as men and women who live like kings, not as ones who wash each others feet.

But Jesus didn't.

He died.

THE TRIUMPH

The Father looks at us and says, Child, one day you *will* reign with me but today I am sending you on a mission. I want you to go out into the kingdom that is ours, not as a king, but as a slave. Your mission is to empty yourself. Humble yourself. Do what you are told.

Your title will be servant of man.

By serving man, you will be a servant of God.

I want you to wash their spiritual feet. I want you to put salve on their spiritual eyes. I want you to strengthen their weak spiritual knees. ***If they are***

hungry, feed them. If they are naked, clothe them. If they are in prison, visit them. When you do this to the least of these, you will be doing it unto Me.

That is what it means to be **poor in spirit**.

One day, you will understand my child, that having become *poor in spirit*, having given up this for that, the *kingdom of heaven will literally be yours*.

For you will have lived like my Son.

So we minister **just by being**.

We are salt and light.

And just by us entering a room **our lights will shine** and we will season the place **even if we do not say a word**.

You advance spiritually by finding out **who you are** not doing or trying to be something that you have not surrendered to.

This is where you **become** the very thing itself.

You operate from **nothingness** to a much higher level in the Spirit.

This is being.

Using our mind, we can stir others by using our emotions, yet if we do not know how to use our spirit, or allow the spirit of God within us to minister; he will not be able to touch people through us.

It won't last, it won't stick. The fragrance of the Lord will wear off.

It seems to me that those who are most productive and creative and have the true riches are those ***that practice being.***

We live in a life of too much strain and too little satisfaction.

Our culture is in crisis due to the gap between external success and internal satisfaction.

So is success a matter of what you do or who you are?
Being or doing?

Many successful doers are ravaged by feelings of insecurity and failure, ***success does not mean happiness.***

How do we lessen this grip on doing and focus on being?

By being as a way of living.

These people seem to be more balanced, peaceful, courageous, strong and not afraid to take risks.

They blend authority with gentleness, patience with dynamism, the capacity for joy and laughter ***with an ability to experience deep recesses of personal pain.***

They are leaders who can follow.

They are their own person, uninfluenced by public opinion, yet capable of deep partnership and companionship.

They are profoundly committed to inspiring causes and able to evoke a sense of commitment in others.

They are mentally sharp, emotionally vibrant and vitally alive.

They make every moment count and they contribute in a big way, because they care deeply.

They can give and receive love, softness and strength – they are comfortable in their own skin

We need to transition from doing to BEING.

All I have done in ***my own strength*** is wood, hay and stubble if I am not allowing the one who has apprehended me to ***flow through me in Grace, mercy and love.***

We need to start over again.

Because it is simply worthless.

It is sacrifice NOT obedience.

Being is obedience. “That I may know him”.

It’s about ***the attitude*** of heart.

Everything else is works.

It does not generate from the divine flow.

It is religion at its worst.

It is looking to results **without** God being on the scene.

A well without water.

The representation is a false one.

It is a “false” witness.

Everyone who comes to Christ has a “right” to see Christ in us

We have thousands of believers who are nothing like him.

Far too long we have offered ourselves.

A poor replica.

We have taken the plaudits and the glory.

We need to repent of this.

We love him for what we can get out of him rather than loving him for who he is and what he has done for us.

What a terrible way to treat a friend.

We must be a (be-er) before we are a (do-er).

We do not carry his servant heart with us in day to day life.

We are phonies.

We have to come to a place where material things will become irrelevant because these things have nothing to do **with a dead man.**

Not merely content to simply do or know, but to have an over whelming desire to **become** what we know.

What we are is more important than what we do!

William Shakespeare..Said it

“To be or not to be that is the question”

But the reality is, that ***is the answer!***

Chapter 13

TO RECKON – THE BATTLE OF LAW & GRACE

Now we come to a tricky chapter, the bit where my head goes all fuzzy as I try to get to grips with the truth of God’s word. Do you ever get that way? You simply can’t seem to grasp something you have read – well maybe it’s just me then!

I have heard many preachers state it takes on average 20 years to make a man or woman of God. This began the process whereby **they ceased trying to ‘work’ for God** and allowed him to become their all in all.

They let go and let God.

These people had gone through the struggles and failure in there walk to find complete freedom and peace with God, as he lovingly moulded them.

The journey of self discovery ended in **“the death to self”** - the only way of truly **“knowing him”**.

This is the revelation that has taken all these years for many to come into focus. The place where the Christian life is **“not I but Christ” (Gal 2:20)**.

The honeymoon period is long gone.

We have all tried the shortcuts - ***the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the endless ‘revival’ meetings, and conferences, declarations and consecrations.*** They last only so long, as we only return to our “Churches” to try out other avenues to deal with “ourselves” and ***the lingering sin nature,*** often wondering ***where the master key is.***

Well here is ***the “heavy revy”*** (revelation) folks, I am going to tell you the answer that has been locked away for decades.

You must simply reckon!

What does this word mean? Well the dictionary tells us that it means to count on or to consider.

Romans 6:11 states
“Reckon yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ”

This reckoning is none other than ***Believing God according to his word.*** All reckoning is done in our ***“thought life.”***

Praise the Lord! It all happened at Calvary.

Our sins were paid for, our sinfulness was dealt with.

We receive the benefits of the Christ’s death by simply ***reckoning or believing in the finished work of the cross. Which is PAST tense.***

Then as we become ***thoroughly convinced*** of the fact and begin to understand it clearly, we are able to “reckon” it true.

As we exercise this fact, things begin to happen.

People, just believe it’s done.

You didn’t get into this by your own choosing, ***God chose you*** and you are “***written on the palm of his hand***”.

Quit the struggle!

Quit the striving!

“He will finish what he has started in you” (Philippians 1:6).

Let him do his part.

“For YOU DIED, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Put to DEATH therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (Colossians 3:3-5).

That’s interesting; in verse 3 he says that our old life died. But in verse 5, he tells us to put to death our works of our old self. To put to death whatever belongs to your earthly nature.

How can you put to death something that is already dead?

Well, in terms of our **position**, we are already dead. But in terms of our **condition**, we are still in the “struggle” with the remnants of sin in our lives.

That’s what Romans Chapters 6-8 is all about!

So what to do?

Read those chapters in Romans slowly and carefully for yourself.

Let God himself provide you with his own revelation on what this means.

Don’t get wrapped up in tiresome mental gymnastics and try and “**beat the system**”, allow the Holy Spirit to do his work.

Rest in his presence. Don’t get all worked up with your “sin” condition” - **simply reckon and believe yourself dead to sin** and he will do the rest.

This will relieve all kinds of pressure.

This is called growth, growth of the mature kind.

Christians – professing ones even – fail in their Spiritual walk if they do not **appropriate by faith** what it means to **be dead** to sin and alive to god in Jesus Christ.

That is what it means to live in victory – **victory over sin.**

Carnal Christians rebel at this idea of obtaining the place of total victory.

The fact is many matured saints have experienced **sustained** victory over the flesh.

Though the flesh still abides, its power is reduced to practically zero.

Its life and its nature and activities have been laid to rest so consistently **by the cross** of the Lord in the power of the holy Spirit that it is **relegated** to a state of existence as if not present.

The flesh can lose all resistance. The power to stimulate is nullified. Such a complete triumph is attainable for all believers.

The more you believe it and do it, the better it gets!

Just accept it is done. Walk in the Spirit. Don't fight yourself.

Reckon or realise yourself dead.

The revelation in your Spirit will be executed in your mind.

Thereafter we offer up our bodies as instruments of righteousness. Romans 6v11-13.

We do Romans 6, to overcome Romans 7, to live in Romans 8.

Is adultery a "bad" sin? We all know it is. What we do not see is that worldliness, a divided heart, pride, unbelief, the self life, all these are on equal footing with it. All are an abomination to a Holy God. The truth is, even our righteousness (which in truth is no righteousness at all) is as filthy rags in His eyes, but most of us simply do not see it, or even want to, for if we do, we are left with a choice. We can continue in sin that grace may abound (which is a mirage only) or, we can fall down before God and tell Him that we are no match for the temptations Satan throws at us, and seek for a far deeper level of grace and being kept from falling than we have ever even believed possible.

Getting back up after one of those sins that "goes before you", one all see as a grievous sin, is difficult, no doubt, for although the Lord forgives, and instantly, we have a much harder time forgiving ourselves, especially if we do not know how to hide ourselves in Him and arm ourselves with the testimony of who were are in Christ. (Colossians & Revelation).

Our hearts listen to Satan's accusations..... you did it this time, buddy. Prepare to be whipped by God into the path of obedience. Did Jesus do this with Peter, the rock? Not at all. He did the opposite, for when Jesus appeared to Mary, He told her to gather the disciples, **and especially Peter**, and tell them to meet Him. What an amazing God we serve!

One of the hardest things to do is to pick back up the testimony that we are new creatures in Christ, we are the righteousness of God in Christ, we are now light in the Lord and sin shall not have dominion over us, **especially right after we have fallen!**

Remember the battle of Ai? The Israelites had just won a huge victory at Jericho and they were full of self-confidence. They expected to breeze thru Ai, but one sin in the camp brought them defeat and humiliation.

Yet what did God tell them. He told them to get up off their faces, to stop feeling bad over their defeat, and to root out the sin, expose it, confess it and ask forgiveness. Then they were to walk back and join the fray again and their mission was to take the land.

No false humility, no self whipping with a confession of "I am just an unprofitable sinner, saved by grace." No, if and when we fall, big or small, we are to ***immediately*** repent and then to do what? Immediately believe again the truth that we are NOW a light in the Lord. A new creation.

To the outer observer, this seems the utmost in hypocrisy, but in truth it is the utmost in pride NOT to do it. He is our only hope in victory, so what will chastising or punishing ourselves accomplish? Nothing, it will just aggravate the situation, amen?

Why did we fall to begin with? Lack of faith, pure and simply. What is the way back? To believe again and replace doubt and unbelief with faith, faith in the TRUTH that when Christ died, so did we and when Christ rose to newness of life, so did we! We are to forsake the unwinnable battle to gain the upper hand over our flesh and do the only thing we can do to attain the victory over it. We are to believe in what our God has clearly told us.

Lets not be one of Job's friends who will tell you how bad you are. We are ALL bad outside of Christ, even on

our BEST days when we think we are truly walking in holiness and obedience, ***if indeed faith is not the foundation of our victory.***

We must be in the new creature, and believe the truth that we are no longer in the flesh and owe it nothing...NOTHING! Oh, that we might truly believe!

I will tell you one thing. Nothing frustrates satan more than a man who slips and then immediately tells God, "The only reason I fell was lack of faith in YOUR faithfulness", and the only cure is not to whip ourselves painfully, but to believe again! Amen? I can concur, he absolutely hates it when someone gets up, dusts themselves down and "goes again". Its so important to know "who you are in Christ" and not only will the world be perplexed by your "soon return" but the Christian brotherhood at times can't make it how you "so quickly" make a return. Its not a lack of repentance, its holding your hands up and saying "ok I blew it" I'm gonna make Satan know by my actions that I REFUSE to be condemned and will continue to make advances for the kingdom. (Philippians 3v 12-14).

Here's a list of apparent failures, most came good in the end.

Noah was a drunk

~ Abraham was too old

~ Isaac was a daydreamer

~ Jacob was a liar

~ Leah was ugly

- ~ *Joseph was abused*
- ~ *Moses had a stuttering problem*
- ~ *Gideon was afraid*
- ~ *Samson had long hair and was a womanizer*
- ~ *Rahab was a prostitute*
- ~ *Jeremiah and Timothy were too young*
- ~ *David was an adulterer and a murderer*
- ~ *Elijah was suicidal*
- ~ *Isaiah preached naked*
- ~ *Jonah ran from God*
- ~ *Naomi was a widow*
- ~ *Job went bankrupt*
- ~ *John the Baptist ate bugs*
- ~ *Peter denied Christ*
- ~ *The disciples fell asleep while praying*
- ~ *Martha worried about everything*
- ~ *The Samaritan woman was divorced (more than once)*
- ~ *Zaccheus was too small*
- ~ *Paul was too religious*

*~ Timothy had an ulcer
~ Lazarus was dead!*

Feel better now?, you are in good company

Don't wallow! Get back up and fight on !

Remember.....

*All Christians started life as sinners the
difference is they have admitted it and made
a move towards God to get help correcting it
Philippians 1v6*

Its called....sanctification!

*We are to believe in what our God has clearly
told us we might truly believe! -Our dependency
is of GOD alone, so we just need to keep asking
in prayer and waiting for that breakthrough by
Him. The road to greater giftings and being
used by God normally take years before God is
ready to operate them through us anyway,
since they require strict obedience to Him and
the denial of our self-life. No one who has been
used of GOD greatly ever had it handed to them
overnight. But remember, the Gospel is all good
news with no mixture of bad news. Right?
So...is the condemning message of the Law
actually a part of the Gospel message? No. It
may precede the Gospel message, to make us*

**aware of our condition but it is not a part of the
good news**

DON FRANCISCO- on GRACE

***I have hope that though today I did not live up
to what God wanted me to be.***

***That he is able one day to cause me to do that,
to live that way***

That's going to happen,

***And you know, no matter how many times you
blow it, how many times you just fall on your
face,***

***Know this – he is not going to forsake you
And that in sometimes despite of you, and
sometimes despite of me,***

***He is going to complete the work he began in
you when he saved you***

***And he will present you before the father,
righteous and holy***

Full of his faith, his hope and his love

Chapter 14

THE RENEWED MIND

***“Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls” (mind)
(James 1:21).***

The number one area for satanic attack is in the mind. This is also the number one area of defeat for most Christians. The Spirit is re-born, but the mind has not been renewed. Changing that, will change your life. The carnal desires thoughts and behaviour. The junk that still whirls around in the mind of the born again believer affects the flow of the Holy Spirit.

It time to deal with the soul! (Thoughts, will, emotions).

As in the previous chapter, real New Testament deliverance is agreeing with Jesus and getting his mind on the matter – when that realisation comes, we can be set free.

The Bible tells us that one of the highest, ultimate goals that God has in store for each one of us is ***our transformation in Him*** – and this transformation is accomplished by the renewing of our mind. It tells us that God wants to sanctify us and transform us into the express image of His Son Jesus Christ. He wants to

make us into a better and more holy people, both on the inside and the outside.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12v2).

The first thing each Christian must know is ***exactly*** what it is that God wants to change about us.

If you do not know exactly what it is God wants to do with you in this sanctification process, then you will have a very hard time in being able to fully cooperate with Him once He does try to start the renewal and transformation process on the inside of you.

The Bible tells us that this sanctification-transformation process is actually done by the Holy Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit will not start this transformation process in you until He has something to work with – and that something is knowledge – ***and that knowledge can only be obtained from the Bible.***

You have to start to get to know your bible!

God wants you to put some quality time in here, and then the Holy Spirit can help with the rest. A Lazy Christian who relies solely on the Sunday morning service will be left floundering. We need to study the Bible for the ***specific points*** that God is looking to target to change you into the kind of person he really wants you to become.

They are scattered throughout the bible.

King David tells us in the Old Testament that we are to **meditate on the Word of God**. *To meditate means to think about, to chew on, to try and figure out what God is trying to tell us in his Word*. Then we try and see how it applies to our daily life and how we can get some of these positive qualities **worked and imparted** into our personalities.

If you will spend some good, regular, quality time really studying and meditating on what is in these specific verses , you will then have right at your fingertips exactly what it is that God wants to start working into your personality.

You have to learn how to develop **“right thinking”** in the Lord, but you cannot develop right thinking in the Lord unless you first know **exactly** what it is that you should be thinking right about. ***The bible talks about positive and negative qualities.***

These two key words are “putting on” and “putting away.”

The Bible tells us that **we are** the ones who are to try and **“put on”** the good and godly qualities and to **“put away”** all of the bad and negative qualities that He will not want us to have operating in our personalities. This step right here is where many Christians are missing it. Some have been walking with the Lord **for years** and they wonder why there has not been many changes in the very cores of their personalities. ***Where is the peace, joy, love, sound mind, and self-control***

that the Bible promises me once I fully commit my life to the Lord?

Why is it that I still have a problem in controlling my temper, my critical and judgmental spirit, my controlling and intimidating ways?, my sullen and sulky reaction when I hear things not to my liking?

Well here we go...

Once you know that the Bible tells you to have self-control over your bad temper and over your condescending and critical attitudes & other things – then it will be your job at this point to make some kind **of concerted effort** to actually “**put away**” these kinds of negative and destructive qualities from your personality. Say you have a problem with a bad temper. The least little thing will set you off.

The first step, as described above, is to find the specific verses from the Bible on this topic so you can see exactly **what God’s Word has to say about having bad and quick tempers. Once you know what God’s opinion really is on the matter** through His Word – then you will have the appropriate knowledge to work with in order to try and tackle this problem. Once you see in God’s Word that **He does not want His people** having bad and quick tempers – Now here is where your part will really come into play.

Now that you know God wants your bad temper removed from your personality – He will now expect you to try and put away this bad and negative quality **when it does want to erupt**. Say someone has just cut you

off in traffic. Your normal response may be to start “cussing” at this person.

Your bad temper as now been fully triggered like it does every time someone cuts you off in traffic. At this point, you have to make the best effort you can to try and control **the release** of your bad temper. You may have to literally bite your tongue to keep all the cuss words from flying out of your mouth.

When your bad temper releases on you, it is like a fire that explodes literally out of your belly.

Once this fire starts to explode, you have to make **a very strong** and concerted effort to **neutralize it** before the fire hits your mouth and causes you to start cussing. You will have to try and put on **the godly quality of self-control** in order to try and **douse the fire – like pouring cold water on a hot fire**. You will give yourself a pep talk **“that you will directly engage with your bad temper”** every single time you find yourself in a situation that will trigger its release.

At first, you may not have much luck, because the release of your bad temper has become such an automatic bad habit. It has become an automatic response to certain situations. But if you keep at it, over the course of time you will start to get more self-control over it, and you will then be able **to dramatically reduce the number of times that you will actually go off. The reason your bad temper triggers so easily is because you are weak in the quality of self-control.**

Self-control is one of the qualities that God wants to impart and work into your personality. ***It is one of the fruits of the Spirit.*** By attempting to put on this very positive quality into your personality, you will have the live ammunition you will need not only to be able to overcome a bad and nasty temper. Other bad and negative qualities such as being too critical or judgmental spirit, unforgiving, too much pride and arrogance. The quality of self-control can really help you “put away” ***many*** of these bad and toxic qualities that the Lord ***really does not want operating in your personality.***

The same approach goes for trying to incorporate ***positive qualities*** into your personality. The Bible tells us that God wants us to be ***loving, kind, generous and gentle people.***

So how can the Lord do this? God’s love.

You cannot feel depressed and unhappy if the love and joy of God is fully operating in your personality through the Holy Spirit. This is not to say we will never get ratty, irritable or down at times. We all live in an imperfect, cursed and fallen world and we are living in bodies that are slowly dying and corrupting. But when God really kicks this transformation process into full gear for you, the down days will not last as long as they used to. True happiness can only be found on the inside of your being and a mind filled and connected to a personal relationship with the Lord.

All you have to do is look around you and see all of the unhappy, depressed and miserable people that are out there.

Ever wonder why so many of the Hollywood movie stars are doing drugs and seeing therapists? They are finding out that all of their material wealth, fame and notoriety are not giving them the true inner peace, happiness and fulfillment they thought that this kind of life would bring them. However, if we are truthful many Christians also are not finding this true inner peace and happiness. God expects you to grow, develop and mature in your walk with Him. Many Christians are missing out on this sanctification-transformation process that is available to them through the power of the Holy Spirit. This sanctification process is what will really lead you into true inner peace, happiness and fulfillment that everyone is looking for these days. However, God is not going to give you a free lunch on this process. You will have to be willing to do your part before God will be willing to do His part. The Bible tells us that “with the measure we use will be the measure measured back to us.” (Luke 6:38). When it comes to this sanctification-transformation process we have to give God our best by reading and studying the Word for the changes that He will want to make with us. This sanctification process is not done overnight. This is a process that will occur over the rest of your earthly life. If you are willing to work with the Lord in this process, God will then gradually and progressively transform and sanctify you to make you into the kind of person that He really wants you to become in Him. Others will eventually be drawn to the light of God that will be shining through you. This sanctification process is available to all believers. God wants to do this with every single one of us.

The problem is that many of God’s people are not willing to do their part in it. As a result, the Body has many flaky, hypocritical representatives for God who are doing

more harm than good. They are turning people away from God and Jesus because they are not truly manifesting God's nature and personality through their own personalities. This is all due either because God could not properly get the sanctification process started in them due to ignorance and lack of knowledge on their part, or possibly due to open rebellion or stubbornness on their part.

They may not be open to admitting to God what some of their problems and character flaws really are. They may be full of too much pride and arrogance to admit that they have any character flaws that really need to be dealt with. We must be open and sensitive to any communication that you may receive from God and the Holy Spirit on any specific areas they may want to work with you on.

God will let you know exactly what these specific areas are going to be and exactly how He wants to deal with each of them. When this starts to occur, it may be a painful. It's called pruning.

***“He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful”
(John 15:2).***

It's hard for many of us to admit to anyone, including ourselves or to God, that we may have problems in certain areas of our personality. **But let God do His inner surgery on you and you will be much better off for it in the long run.**

What are the results?

You will become a positive person. People love positive people – they uplift us, we need people like them. We run to positive people. A person who has awakened to total harmony with the world, even in the midst of storms and trials. We can see in them, a raw injection of Jesus – his values, joy liberty, and wisdom. Life does not get them down too often. They Know God’s word, they know Jesus.

A heart that beats calmly.

But most of all they carry a countenance that is never far away from a celebration of what it means to be redeemed. They have trained their mind to entertain only those good thoughts.

In the words of Norman Vincent Peale.

“Yesterday ended last night, everyday is a new beginning, ***learn the skill of forgetting, and move on***”

“Change your thoughts, change your world”

A mind fixed on God is hard to penetrate. Even after salvation our minds are not instantly transformed. Nearly everything that we think about must be ***over hauled*** in the light of God’s word.

Your mind will be renewed and transformed and strongholds (old thinking patterns) begin to come down... this is vital to your spiritual freedom and the start of thinking “God’s thoughts”.

Renewing our minds requires meditating on the word of God, continually and consistently.

That's how we get the mind of God. It comes no other way.

This is the primary way to defend ourselves against bad or negative thought attacks. I do know that some people have had a difficult past, a rough childhood, things that have left deep scars. That is ***the root*** of their dark cloud.

With God's help, and being "***washed in his word***", we can get over these issues. Life is ***too short*** to be consumed with grief and negative circumstances. It helps to be surrounded by positive people. We can learn from them.

Stay away from those people who take away from you or pollute you. If you are around that type of negative influence, you will soon become one of those negative people yourself!

Stay positive and be the kind of person that people love to see coming their way. ***Bring sunshine don't bring that dark cloud!***

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

Chapter 15

Cross inspired Preaching

They asked each other "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32)

A true prophetic minister is a watchman who warns and protects.

They will highlight things and turn people from sin;
they will glorify Jesus not man or self.

They bring life and liberty. They are not harsh, but speak the truth in love.

In Luke 6:26 Jesus says, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets." The false prophets were loved by everyone, and everyone speaks well of them.

In verses 22-23 Jesus says when they reject you, your reward is great, for that's what they did to the real prophets.

So he's saying that the way people respond to us today should be similar to the way they responded to the prophets of old.

There's going to be rejection.

Martin Luther King JR was a true prophetic preacher.

A prophetic preacher is a man who knows his times and knows what God needs to say to people of those times. He brings the NOW word.

No true message from God will flow through a person who is smug and self-confident.

If you want to speak for Him, prepare to die!

The power of prophetic preaching actually works in the opposite way we assume it should.

If we view things carnally, we believe God chooses gifted orators who shape their skills like a doctor who learns surgery or an actor who learns to perform on stage.

But true preaching is not a natural exercise—it is actually one of the most supernatural tasks anyone can ever be called to do.

It requires an imperfect human vessel to yield himself to speak the very words of God.

Most of the leaders we encounter in the Bible were reluctant to speak.

Moses made excuses about stuttering, Gideon tried to disqualify himself and Jeremiah complained to the Lord about the weighty responsibility of carrying a prophetic burden. Jonah bought a one-way ticket to the other side of the Mediterranean Sea so he wouldn't have to give his unpopular sermon.

Even the apostle Paul, who was a silver-tongued Pharisee before he met Christ, was stripped of his worldly eloquence before he preached throughout the Roman Empire. He told the Corinthians:

"I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:3-5, NASB).

The only one qualified to preach ... is the one who wants to run the other way, like Jonah.

The man, however, who loves to talk, ***loves to be public***, and enjoys being seen and heard, ***the centre of attention***, need not think that a word like this will ever be emitted from his mouth.

The man who sighs and groans when called upon to speak, who does not want to be there, who feels terribly uncomfortable, who knows that he is not going to be mis-understood, is the man out of whose mouth the word of true preaching is most likely to come.

But the world loves to celebrate the smooth and the polished.

We measure the impact of a sermon not by whether hearts were slain by Holy Ghost conviction but by how loud the preacher shouted or how high the people

jumped when the preacher told them what they wanted to hear.

That kind of ***carnal preaching*** may win the accolades of men, boost TV ratings and even build mega churches. But the true kingdom is not built that way .

We need ***God's*** words. We need to hear ***what he has to say***.

The church will live in spiritual famine until broken, reluctant, weak and trembling preachers ***allow*** His holy fire to come out of their mouths.

They will drink the cup of suffering that accompanies the genuine call of God.

Prophetic preaching does not just happen. It does not come automatically with a seminary degree, nor with ordination to the ministry, nor with a call to a pastorate.

It comes by the Spirit of GOD when he ***lays hold upon*** a preacher to deliver a life-and-death message to men.

Sometimes prophetic preaching is abrupt, often it is explosive, frequently it is disturbing, but always it is moving and purifying and refreshing.

It will not return void.

The late David Wilkerson was such.

Prophetic preaching gives power to a preacher's sermon by the ***“anointing”*** of God.

They are forth-tellers. ***A word of God for that moment.***

They are "**seers**," men who knew the condition of their present world.

We need prophetic preachers.

Too many preachers today mishandle the Word of God by telling their people that the Christian life is all about "***living your best life now.***"

Instead, we desperately need preachers who will stand for God and against sin and say, "***Thus says the Lord!***"

In Ezekiel 3:17-19, God told the prophet Ezekiel to speak out and to warn those who were practicing wickedness, or sin. Otherwise, God said that Ezekiel would have their blood on his hands. If the people did not heed the warning, however, Ezekiel knew that he had done what the Lord commanded.

Real men of God who walk the walk and don't just talk the talk. They are not attention seekers, ***nor glory stealers***; they do not operate by a "***familiar spirit***" and mis-use what they have been given. It has been seen before that the true blessing of God can lift, yet the gift remains.

It is an ugly sight. You will sense it in your Spirit that something is not right (***Hebrews 5:14***).

We also need preachers who spend time in humble prayer before God's throne of grace. When preachers

spend plenty of time in God's presence, they will be **full of Him.**

The Apostle Paul said in **1 Corinthians 14:8**, "***If the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself for battle?***"

We need the pure voice of God.

I believe that one reason we're not ready for spiritual warfare in our day is because we don't have the right kind of trumpeters in our pulpits.

We're sick and tired of hearing about "health, wealth, and prosperity."

The world needs courageous preachers who know the Bible, live the Bible, and proclaim the Bible with boldness, conviction, and compassion.

Prophetic preaching often means ministering to believers who need encouragement and direction in their lives. You will sense a surge taking place within.

You may find yourself telling people which way they should go and what God's purpose is for them.

These are all signs showing you the way to a **prophetic calling.**

People have told you that you have helped them, even when at times you have not been aware of it.

Sometimes others can see your ministry more clearly than you can see it yourself.

Solomon said in ***Proverbs 18:16 - a man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men***

If you have a prophetic calling you will not be able to hide it indefinitely.

It will start to show itself in time.

You will feel unqualified to do the work of the Lord and usually feel unworthy to push yourself forward to suggest that you be given an opportunity.

When appeals are made for help you wait for everyone else to step forward first before you offer your services.

Humility is a sure sign of your genuineness.

The Spirit of God always leads gently.

If you are called to be a prophet, then your preparation will span many years and will be one of the most difficult and troublesome processes.

The prophet will be battered and broken and brought to nothing in himself ***before he can be of any use*** to the Kingdom of God.

He will have to learn not to trust in himself or in his own abilities. His knowledge and natural strengths ***will be tried in the fire*** and brought to naught before God can use him.

If your life has been one of intense problems, failures, oppositions, persecutions and pressure, then this could be a sign of preparation for the prophetic ministry.

Prophet's rarely have a life of smooth sailing, easy success and personal recognition.

The prophetic call ***is a call to death.***

The prophet ***must have the sentence of death in himself.***

He must sacrifice all for the sake of the ministry.

He must die completely to self.

The first goal of the prophetic ministry ***is bring the body of Christ to place of maturity.***

The prophets understand more than anybody else because they have been there.

They have been ***facing rejection all their lives***, they know ***what it feels like to be rejected and put down.***

A person with a prophetic calling ***goes through phases of shame and humiliation.*** It is inevitable; ***it is part of their prophetic preparation.***

But this is not all; ***they see the potential in others*** and desire to help them identify their ministry.

This is a major part of the prophetic calling.

Another characteristic of the prophetic calling is that prophets flow naturally into the gifts of the Spirit and most of the time ***they are not aware of it.***

If you dared say to them that they operate in the gifts, they are likely to deny it, because for them it is nothing special, ***it is just natural, they just flow into them.***

They see things ***others don't see.***

They see all that has happened to them and for the sake of the kingdom stomach it. They know this is a glorious adventure.

“Why stoop to be a king when you can be a preacher”.

Prophetic preaching is ***“Jesus in that person doing the work”.***

Barnabas the prophetic teaching Apostle.

I have often been called an encourager and I humbly appreciate that, as we all need encouragement from time to time.

I have never been one to take myself too seriously, so I can laugh at things that sometimes don't work out as planned.

There has been many mishaps along the way!

Barnabas, means "*Son of Encouragement*"

(Acts: 11:24 he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord).

Barnabas seemed to excel at encouragement and exhortation, who was called a prophet & teacher and later became an apostle.

“Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas.....” (Acts 13v1).

Barnabas endorsed Paul’s ministry at Antioch and Jerusalem as they were naturally apprehensive about Paul after he had previously persecuted the Church.

Barnabas also supported Paul by explaining how strongly he had preached in Damascus. Eventually, Paul was accepted within the Church.

But would he have been accepted in Antioch and Jerusalem had he not been "vouched for" by someone with such ***a solid reputation as Barnabas?***

Possibly not.

If you read through the book of Acts, God used Barnabas in a very influential way in the development of the early New Testament Church.

His nickname of Encourager flowed from living God's way of life. How many people came to the knowledge of God's way of life, not only through Barnabas' preaching,

but also (and maybe even more importantly) through his ***example and encouragement?***

But God records the histories of men such as Barnabas to show us what great things He can do through men and women ***who strive to overcome their human nature and yield to Him.***

The gift of encouragement is the ability to inspire, admonish, hearten and support others so that they are strengthened in resolve, faith and spirit.

Encouragement (Greek: *parakaleo*). The spiritual ability to come alongside a person who may be hurting spiritually or emotionally and offer them a word of comfort concerning the past and a word of encouragement, admonishment (truth in love), and challenge so that ***they will be able to walk in the steps of the Spirit in the future.***

Barnabas was a giver (he gave all his land away) and he was also a leader. “The gift of encouragement involves motivating, encouraging and consoling others so that ***they mature*** in their walk with Christ.”

There’s a sort of encouragement that says “there, there, you’ll be alright” but ***there’s a sort of encouragement that leaves a person stronger, better, more robust, more able to follow Jesus and, dare I say it, more able to help others.***

It is an encouragement that carries weight. ***It is prophetic.***

John the Baptist was given a message and mission to prepare the way of the Lord.

You also may be given a message and mission ***to prepare the world*** for the final coming of Jesus.

I have one – ***“Church world get ready for a shaking”! Get ready to give your all! (See Luke 14:33).***

Walking in revelation knowledge

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law - Proverbs 29v18.

We need to cultivate and position ourselves to produce the pure word of God and speak forth ***what God*** says and shows. The manifestations of a prophetic ministry vary from person to person. This can be in the area of

forth telling (immediate) of foretelling (future). In any case, the word will carry weight and substance and the proof of its influence is that ***it will come to pass.***

And the fruit it produces is a balanced message that believers may partake of and be strengthened by.

The message will not thrive in its own shadow, but in the bright light of giving ***God all the glory and drawing no attention to itself.***

If we were stripped of everything we have it may prove to be our greatest blessing. There was once a period recorded in time where among 7000 churches, 560,000 sermons were preached and no one got saved!

The Message and the ministers were BOTH lacking. If no souls are saved something is radically wrong-. Talent, rhetoric, oratory, cleverness, and delivery mean absolutely nothing if the power of God is not behind it.

This power can sometimes to pervade the atmosphere, as if generating from a lone vessel, and often is.

When Christians are humble enough to retain this power – the work of conversion will go on.

He is the true king of the one liners – that is how God speaks to us. Through that SPECIFIC word for that moment.

To do the ‘Greater work’ that Jesus said we would do – means more of the same – but everywhere. Finney – prayed – few words – bang get the 3 scriptures 3 scriptures- power not words- 1st and 2nd cor/ Galatians 3 – inward and outward reality Eph chapter 1 and acts chap 19.

Why so hard to get? God will not pour his spirit out on flesh, he must do his work in us first, and it generally takes a long time, for we will not let him have his way in us. The lover of our own name, love of praise, or some sinful (Isaiah 59v2, hides gods face no matter how much praying we do) obstacle blocks him at every

turn. He cannot humble us, (unless the rock) – all because we do not yield.

the more effective a ministry the more time God takes on a man or a woman the longer the preparation, the more powerful the performance. humblings failure, rejection, abandonment, a nobody like david mores Abraham, joseph, he plants the seed and when it has reached its full maturity in gods time he harvests it by bringing it into full activity and fulfilment then it is manifested to th church and the world we wait patiently void of all worry until this happens 1 sam 15v28 took 24 years to come to pass. It is conceived in your spirit but birthed I your natural understanding by divine illumination you will speak as the oracle of god 1 peter 4v11- it is for that people at that time at that place. Accuracy level currently stands at 20%. Getting it wrong does not make you a false prophet – see Jonah, nor getting it right make you a true one – see Balaam – it is all to do with the heart motive.Go ahead, **hear God**, and **release it** – I encourage you to, people need to hear God and God alone.“and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel” (Ephesians 6:19).

You must tell it without fear or favour There is no real place to be sentimental when it comes to releasing the truth of God’s word as he gives it to you – there are souls at stake! That’s why sharing the word, and evangelism especially is to be our main objective. Jesus is coming back.You have only

one life, it will soon be past, only what you have done for Christ will last.

“When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire. Dealing out retribution on those who ***do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus paying the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of our Lord***”

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

Chapter 16

A Serious Question

***Then Jesus said to the twelve, “will you also go away?”
(John 6v67)***

One of the most amazing scenes in the New Testament occurs when Jesus, who had gathered many followers, eventually lost all of them but twelve.

Scores of people followed Christ, but they followed Him for what they could get out of him.

We all know that feeling, right?

Christ fed four thousand, and then He fed five thousand.

It is no wonder many followed to see what He would do next or find out what he would give them.

He also restored the lame and diseased to perfect health.

But when the teaching got tough, they vanished.

In John 6, they asked Him, ***“What sign will you perform then, that we may see it and believe you? What work will you do?”***

Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'

In other words, they sought after the providence of God, and not God Himself.

It's called seeking his hand and not his face – so common in Church circles today.

He had previously rebuked them by saying, ***"You seek me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."***

They wanted Christ to prove Himself by ***performing*** as God performed toward their ancestors in the desert. Jesus replies,

"Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven."

For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." Then they said to Him, "The Lord gives us this bread always."

But Christ knew they still did not understand. They did not know that he was speaking metaphorically. He said, ***"I AM the bread of life."***

He who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst."

Then, he laid it out for them.

“But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.”

Jesus was the bread of life!

They could not see. He went on to say, ***“He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. . . This is the bread which came down from heaven – not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”***

Jesus popped their proverbial bubble. And John says, ***“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.”***

Stunned and dismayed, the crowd stared at Him in disbelief.

Murmuring began; they slowly backed away, and left.

The complaining and conversation picked up as they all turned away.

In just a matter of moments, the only ones remaining were Christ and His twelve disciples.

An unusual silence hung in the air as the wind wisped across the ground, pushing the dust up into tiny whirlwinds.

Then the Lord broke the silence.

“Do you also want to go away?” And Peter stepped forward with the only answer he could muster.

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also, we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Peter said something profound. In effect, he says, ***“What else can we do? Where shall we go? We have seen a revelation of the holiness of God, and to go back to what we were before is impossible!***

It has changed us! It has revealed who we are in the sight of God, and our lives without you are worthless and wasted!”

We see this very idea in Peter’s life when Christ calls him to be a disciple.

After an unproductive night fishing, Jesus tells him to launch out into the deep and lower their nets.

Peter obliges, and the nets break and the boats nearly sink with the number of fish they catch. Peter, when he realizes whom he is in the presence of, falls to his knees and says,

“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”

Peter caught a sight of His holiness, which only shed light on his depravity.

Such a revelation of God leaves a man changed forever.

It leaves him with an acute awareness of his depravity and inability to stand near the searing, white-hot holiness of one who is not like us.

A revelation of His holiness puts all into proper perspective. But Jesus said to Peter,

“Do not be afraid.” Christ had not come to destroy him but to save him.

So it was right for Peter to say, ***“To whom shall we go?”***

You know what folks Jesus never said the road wouldn't be rocky

He never promised great wealth and a bed of roses.

He did promise us the following though,

Persecution, suffering for our faith every now and again, being despised, hated, and rejected.

If you don't believe me, you need to go and read the book of 1st Peter.

The Lord said we will face persecution & tribulation in this world. ***(Acts 8:1 & Acts 14:22).***

We are in a spiritual battle.

Even Jesus took his own medicine.

***“He learned obedience by the things he suffered”
(Hebrews 5:8).***

There is something about the “fires” of life that will either make you or break you.

We hear the term - You will either become a much better person or a much bitter person.

In life you won't please everybody, so you might as well ***be yourself*** and stand for what you believe in.

If you are standing in and for Christ, you are then standing for something that is worth it – it has eternal consequences.

So, are you going to run at the first sign of trouble?

Or are you going to let your character be so developed that you don't let these trials get you down?

Will you reject your Lord when he asks a hard thing of you?

Will you walk away and say, “Not for me, it's too hard?”

When we face and pass these tests, we develop our character and start to cultivate more fully in the fruits of the Spirit.

We also move from faith to faith and glory to glory

***“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”
(2 Corinthians 3:18).***

Never forget folks, the promise Jesus gave us as you go through the storms that come into our lives from time to time.

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Praise God!

Conclusion

“For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature.....”

(2 Peter 1v4)

The true apostolic ministry ***still*** requires suffering as it is a life of sacrifice. It requires that in everything we live for the Lord and others, and not ourselves.

The apostles of old had the power to impart spiritual life to the degree that the dying of Jesus worked in them.

To deny oneself is almost unheard of in the modern world. It is totally foreign concept to the normal way of things. But that is what we have been called to.

This is probably the one aspect of Christianity that has been most avoided since the first century. And the main reason why we have seen little ***“true”*** apostolic ministry since.

It is also the biggest threat to the kingdom of darkness, but also the greatest witness to the kingdom of God.

Denying self requires us to give up anything that would hinder us doing the will of God.

It means we must take our wants and desires down from the throne and place Jesus and His will as the governing power in our lives.

There is room in each life for only one master
(Matthew 6:19-24).

We must be willing to give up anything in our lives in order to please God. He will highlight in his time, what needs to go.

What is a cross for?

It was not just a burden to be borne. Far more than that, it was an instrument of ***death and total sacrifice.***

Jesus said take up our cross and ***follow Him.***

He bore a cross and we must bear our cross and follow Him.

But where was He going with His cross?

He was going to *die.*

Hence, "taking up your cross" refers to **giving your whole life to God**, as Jesus was about to give His life for us.

It is a ***total dedication*** of a life.

This will lead us to ***willingly*** deny self.

Luke adds ***"take up your cross daily" (Luke 9:23).***

There is a sense in which Christians must give their lives to God every day. Whatever He wants with my life is what must be done with it.

What I want no longer matters, but I give myself for Him, just as he gave himself for us despite the fact his human nature did not want to have to do it (**Luke 22:42**).

The determination to give our lives to God's service is called "**repentance**."

In repenting we determine to turn away from our own will and live our lives to please God.

If a person holds his life so dear to himself that he wants to use it to please himself, do his own will, and accomplish his own purposes, rather than denying self and serving God, **that person will fail God**.

Living for yourself leads to frustration and misery. Many of life's problems would fade away naturally if we ever got hold of this truth. **They would grow "strangely dim"**.

But anyone who loses his life for Jesus' sake – such a man **will save his life**, in this life and in the life to come.

There can be no greater or clearer teaching anywhere of the meaning of being a disciple than what scripture makes plain.

"And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:27)

This is how our Master lived, so this is how His disciples must live.

We must live of complete and total submission to the will of God.

God wants to ***make us like Jesus*** before we can minister to others and a life laid down will bring this about.

Like Jacob who wrestled with God until he had been ***broken and the cross has cut him deeply enough*** to produce a lasting change.

This is the person who will bring revival. This is the person that God will use to cause the next great awakening to spark.

We must look for a man or a woman ***who bears the scars*** of the Lord Jesus (***Galatians 6v17***)

Who carries the marks of one who has been crucified and resurrected?

Who lives in the magnificent passion of being dead to self and fully alive to God?

God says believe it and I will prove it.

To ***be productive*** in God's kingdom there is no other way.

To ***reject the cross*** is to play games with God.

To ***die to self*** is to ***begin to live***.

Without this the ***true anointing*** cannot work through you consistently.

The things of the Spirit grow, they are progressive. We become aware in time ***how powerful self is***. But we learn to give more of ourselves over to him. The pain lessens.

Not too many people have ***paid the price*** for God to visit.

But the most exciting and most beautiful life possible ***cannot begin until self dies***.

It can be a lonely road, and many don't want to go down it.

Death to self means obeying God at ***any cost***.

You are making contact with the ***true gospel*** when you meet such a person. They are different.

People who change the course of history are those who have died to self.

Nothing can hurt a dead person.

They become bullet proof.

They are pure. They understand what other people can do, they can't. It is their calling.

Criticism cannot hurt such a person – they will not even respond if crossed. They will smile to themselves.

They know ***who they are in Christ***. And we will know ***who he is in them***.

If they cannot be in the limelight, it does not bother them.

They are happy to be nameless, faceless, and shun recognition. They are part of God's "***special force***" ready to be unleashed on the world. He is preparing them, ***some for many years***.

Many people want to want to ride with God, but do not want to pay the fare; they want others to pay the price for them. But these types will fall away, when the "***trials come***."

True disciples have ***no time or place for resentment, grudges, criticism or bitterness***.

They walk in ***love, mercy, grace and forgiveness*** at ***all times***.

They are constantly in motion.

They have experienced the majesty of God.

God has a special place in his heart for them.

The supernatural is so natural to them. It is no big deal. They expect it. They experience it. Remember, a man

with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument.

These people have seen God and his heavenly host at work, nothing can sway them.

They have reached the point or place in God that **his presence matters** more than all other things.

Pleasures, securities, materialism, all that this life has to offer are of **no consequence. They are a cheap substitute.**

They are **“content.”** They are secure in him & him alone.

This person is truly blessed. These people are the answers to the questions below. So, how can the attention of men be most effectively drawn to Christ? = Meet a crucified one

How can men be induced to entertain this gospel proposition? = Meet a crucified one

Peoples who display it in their temperament and conduct – they have mastered **the art of being.**

The bible may remain shut to them, they may never open its pages, but they will **not be** able to deny the light that shines out of a **crucified Christian that has died to self.**

So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which

***you shine like stars in the universe
(Philippians 2:15).***

You cannot meet such a person without coming into contact with the truth of the gospel. There is something different about them. That is what the world is looking for, ***the genuine article, those with the imprint of God..*** Those that promote ***JESUS*** and not themselves.

*For too long we have liked the idea, but not the reality,
To enter True Spiritual rest is a paradox, for it comes
by availability, yieldedness and ultimately surrender,
and not by doing (See-Hebrews Chapter 4.)
God is no longer asking people to die to self*

He is commanding it!
If you give yourself to him, you will become like him.

“But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark himself.” - Genesis 8:9, NKJV

Prophetically, the dove is symbolic to Holy Spirit. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, the heavens were opened and a dove came down upon Jesus (Matthew 3:16). With this in mind, let us call our attention back to Genesis 8:9, there is something very profound with this picture. *“But the dove found no resting place...”*

Holy Spirit is looking for a resting place. He is looking for a people where He can overshadow them with the Kingdom, releasing the very fragrance of the

Kingdom into the atmosphere. He wants us to become a habitation of the Glory, a dwelling place for the Presence of God. We are the temple of Holy Spirit. *“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”*(1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

When will we surrender our lives fully for Jesus and provide a place of habitation for the Holy Spirit? Surrendering is an ongoing process, something we do everyday. We have a choice to make, either we can pursue the King and the Kingdom or we can choose to live how WE want to, neglecting the very person of Holy Spirit who lives in us. The Lord will only give us the measure of His Presence of that which we are willing to surrender for. The more we're willing to say "YESSSS!!!" to Jesus, the more He will entrust us with a greater measure of His Presence. The question remains, how much of our lives are we willing to surrender?

We live in a chaotic world. Let's not get caught up with all of the chaos. With every step we take, we must keep the Dove in mind. We need to be aware of His Presence so that we are readily available to release the Kingdom on the earth. Holy Spirit is looking for a resting spot in our lives. He overshadowed Peter in the Book of Acts (see Acts 5:15, KJV). The Greek for “overshadow” in Acts 5:15, means to “envelop in a haze of brilliancy”. Peter's shadow was releasing the superior reality of the Kingdom into the atmosphere.

Just imagine the things the Lord can do when we

become a habitation of the Presence of God . . . the impossible will bow down at the name of Jesus. Even when we step into a room, when we are filled and aware of Holy Spirit, His Presence is instantly released into the atmosphere. Miracles, signs, wonders, deliverance, and, most importantly, Salvations will become more common in our lives, when we become a resting spot for Holy Spirit. It is up to us to surrender our lives to Jesus. We have a choice. Will we become a resting spot for Holy Spirit?

You will then qualify to be a carrier of his glory.

Now it's up to you friend...How much of Jesus do you want and how much of yourself are you willing to give?

It is ***never*** too late to start.

"For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it" (Luke 14:28).

He that will be a true disciple of Jesus Christ shall require no less than the mighty power of God to support him. The birthing of the "***Apostolic ministry***" depends on you. It boils down to your consecration *not* your performance. He is after our willingness *and* obedience God sees the heart and motive behind your service.

It is the Lords will for none of us to be attached to anything that will hinder the flow of God's blessing in our lives. When we get to this place where we only think of him our hearts will be free and at peace. "Be attached to nothing" - is the Lord's cry!

And so the remnant gathers and set out on that perilous adventure to get back to the way things once were. Hearts all beating to one drum and having "***all things in common***" (***Acts 2:44***) At this moment in time the present Church Structure would struggle to contain those that know our Lord in the depths, they are built on other emphases. That is why some people simply cannot "fit".

We can look to Paul the Apostle, in reference to his wayward Hebrew brothers. Who said....

"I would to God that I myself could be cut off from Christ for the sake of Salvation coming to my brothers"

Only God could put that heart of selfless love in Paul

A Christian's progress can only be truly measured by his separation from self. NOT self denial, for that is outward and temporary, but the ROOT itself, which comes only by abandonment.

We must learn to love the cross and ALL that comes with it. Then God will have found his man.

Will it be easy? No
Will it be glorious? Yes
Get ready for God to take you there.

From Luke 10:v40-42

But Martha was distracted with all her preparations and she came up to him (Jesus) and said

“Lord do you not care that my sister Mary has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me”

But the Lord answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha you are worried and bothered by so many things, but only a few things are necessary, really ONLY ONE for Mary has chosen the good part, the part that shall not be taken away from her.”

We all want to be made disciples of **our Lord**, and ditch that which holds no resemblance to Christ.

THAT YOU MAY KNOW HIM

And this will create in us the immense desire to be a reflection of Jesus to a sick and dying world. The journey involves **choosing to surrender** to the cross and ultimately death of self. That’s how we will truly win the lost. *Death in us, life in them” (2 Cor 4:12).*

Kairos (καιρός) is an ancient Greek word meaning the right or the supreme moment. In the New Testament kairos means "the appointed time in the purpose of God", the time when God acts (e.g. Mark 1.15, the kairos is fulfilled

My prayer is that this “moment” will come to you as divine revelation, for such a time as this (Book of Esther)

*“Arise, shine;
For your light has come!
And the glory of the LORD is **risen upon you.**
For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth,
And deep darkness the people;
But the LORD **will arise over you,**
And His glory will be seen upon you.
The Gentiles shall come to your light,
And kings to the brightness of your rising.” – Isaiah
60:1-3 (NKJV)*

*There will be perfect harmony as you bask in the glory
of his awesome presence – your Spirit begins to
fellowship with him on a deeper level – **‘oh that I may
know him’ – is the cry - not the things that he
gives or imparts – but HIM!***

**Welcome to
the
restoration!**

*Just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man,
so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.*

1 Corinthians 15:49

*And the world is passing away and the lust of it , but he
who does the will of God will abide forever
1 John 2v17*

*For this is the will of God.....your sanctification **(The
journey to the cross)** – 1 Thessalonians 4v3*

GREAT QUOTES ON THE CROSS

“To avoid your **CROSS** is to avoid destiny – R Lairdon

“His laboring is to render the **CROSS** despicable to you”
– (***John Bunyan*** of ***Pilgrims progress*** speaking to Christian in answer to Worldly Wiseman).

I once had a Christian brother tell me, “You can’t build anything upon the **CROSS**”. He’s absolutely right. Nothing of the flesh can be built upon the preaching of the **CROSS**. You have to preach another kind of gospel to get that preaching done. – (***Charles Newbold, the Crucified Ones***).

When the Lord finishes such a work in us via the **CROSS**, the outer man which was once a hindrance and frustration to the Lord’s purpose, will now be broken – (***Watchman Nee, Breaking of the outer man***).

Those who do not consent to the crucifying process of the **CROSS** will remain throughout their lifetime with a defective inner man – (***Jeanne Guyon, Final steps in Christian maturity***).

It is by the utter destruction of self by the way of the **CROSS** that you can only acknowledge the supreme existence of God – (***Jeanne Guyon, Experiencing the depths of Jesus Christ***).

When a believer begins to really see the **CROSS** for what it is – a place of death to self – he is inclined to hesitate about choosing such fellowship. But it is the only true fellowship – (***Miles Stanford, Principles of Spiritual growth***)

When self is not dealt with by the **CROSS** a man can quote the bible, fast, pray and do all forms of religious exercises but would not be able to truly fulfill God's plans simply because self is occupying the space that God is supposed to occupy - (***Ibukun Abajingin, Understanding Self***).

The Church is spiritually dying because God has sales reps and not channels of his glory, which only comes by way of the **CROSS** – we desperately need to hear what GOD has to say (***Mario Murillo – Critical Mass***).

They will seek to serve God on a lesser level or leave him entirely once the fullness of the revelation of the **CROSS** is understood. (Paraphrased ***Jean Guyon, Final steps in Christian Maturity***).

The person who has allowed the **CROSS** to cut deeply, this one will bring about revival. (***Peter Madden, Keys to Wigglesworth's power***).

“At the end of the day, we are to go and preach the Word and demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit to the lost and dying of this world. God wants the people of this world to know He loves them. Through a laid down life (THE **CROSS**) we let the people see the real and the people will sooner or later be able to tell what the truth is”. (***Evangelist Eric Cowley***).

“How much of Jesus do you want and how much of yourself are you willing to give?- it will cost you something to be used of God. This **CROSS** is different for each of us, what is yours? What is standing in your way”? (Evangelist Lee Stoneking).

All self- none of God
Some of self- some of God
None of self – all of God

***“God is looking for that man or woman with the
magnificent passion of being fully dead to self and fully
alive to God!”***

Keith Green – Altar call

The Gospel is simply this: Jesus will forgive you all your sins if you come to him humbly lay down at his feet and say: “You’re the Lord and I’ll follow you the rest of my life on earth so that I can have the rest of eternity with you and the glory of your father in heaven”.

When a man or women has reached the place that Gods presence matters more than all the blessings pleasures and securities in this life than that person is truly blessed!! - unknown author

At concerts, I get countless questions about this, and I also get lots of letters and even some long-distance phone calls from many people who feel they are only "called" into the music "ministry." One day I began to ask myself why so few have ever asked me how to become a missionary, or even a local street preacher, or how to disciple a new believer. It seems everyone would prefer the "bright lights" of what they think a music ministry would be, rather than the mud and obscurity of the mission field, or the streets of the ghetto, or even the true spiritual sweetness of just being a nobody whom the Lord uses mightily in small 'everyday' ways.

My answer to their question is almost always the same. "Are you willing to never play music again? Are you willing to be a nothing? Are you willing to go *anywhere* and do *anything* for Christ? Are you willing to stay right where you are and let the Lord do great things through you, though no one may seem to notice at all?"

ARE You?

"This generation of Christians is responsible for this generation of souls on the earth!" - K. Green

“THAT I MAY KNOW HIM
AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION AND THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS”
PHILLIPIANS 3v10

MANY KNOW ABOUT HIM

FEW REALLY GET TO KNOW HIM

“FOR THE EARNEST EXPECTATION OF THE CREATURE (THE
WORLD) WAITS FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD”
ROMANS 8:19

IT'S TIME TO REVEAL JESUS IN US

THIS IS THE MESSAGE OF THE CROSS

MAY IT TAKE YOU THERE

“UNTIL WE ALL ATTAIN TO THE UNITY OF THE FAITH, AND OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SON OF GOD,
TO A MATURE MAN, TO THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE, WHICH BELONGS TO THE FULLNESS OF
CHRIST.”

EPHESIANS 4:13

JAMES BEDDING WAS BORN AGAIN (CAME TO A REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST) ON 8TH JUNE 1991. HE RECEIVED HIS FIRST BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT SOON AFTER. HE IS THE AUTHOR OF “HE REVEALED HIMSELF TO ME” A PERSONAL TESTIMONY (1998). HE HOLDS A DIPLOMA IN CHRISTIAN STUDIES FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE OF LONDON (1994) AND AN HONORARY DEGREE FROM THE EMMANUEL BIBLE INSTITUTE IN HYDERABAD, INDIA (2006). HE ENCOURAGES PERSONAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE AND BELIEVES HIS MANY THOUSANDS OF HOURS BEING PRIVATELY SCHOOLED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT FAR EXCEEDS ANY WRITTEN CONFIRMATION.

