

The Spiritual Journey



Ty Unruh

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By

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Generation Chosen

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Introduction

It is my chief desire to see glory and honor brought to the Lord through the writing of this book. Everything I discuss in this book would not have been possible without the Lord. He is my Teacher, and has revealed to me the things written on these pages. This book is a spiritual guide that has the potential of bringing you closer to the Lord. I have only written about my journey so that it will inspire you to draw near to God, and that you might experience Him. Nothing written in this book is meant to draw attention to myself, but simply give you an understanding of what journeying with God has been like for me; so that you can enter into that kind of journey with Him for yourself.

This is a book that will help you to stay on the right path with the Lord. I have written of my successes, and my failures. My prayer is that you skip all of my mistakes, and experience the Lord in His love, peace, and presence. Let the Holy Spirit speak to your heart as you read these pages. I pray that this book would set you on a journey to go deeper into the Lord than you ever thought possible. Lord, glorify yourself and draw many into an intimate relationship with you. The spiritual journey begins.

Chapter 1

The Journey Begins

As I looked around from the floor of a small building in Saltillo, Mexico in the fall of 2004; I saw about fifteen believers in Jesus gathered around me. Peace, love, and joy surged through my body. I was overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit. I had never experienced anything like this in my life, nor had I thought it was possible. I was laying on the floor because I could no longer stand on my feet. The Lord had touched me so powerfully, that both of my legs were numb. Fellow believers slowing helped me to the floor as my legs gave out underneath me. I laid there for about 15 minutes, unable to move. My arms and hands were numb and tingling. I was in complete peace for the first time in my life. I had truly encountered the Lord, and I would never be the same again.

Five minutes prior to me lying on the floor of an old building in Mexico, I was watching the service go on in Spanish. I was only understanding a few words when the pastor gave an alter call, and two women came forward. I watched the pastor lay hands on the first woman's head, and she fell over. Someone caught her. The same thing happened to the second woman. I had never seen or heard of anything like this. Of course I had only been born again for about six months, so everything was new to me. I remember thinking to myself that this was a little weird. Yet I was open and wanted to learn about the Lord. The Lord wanted more than me to learn about Him, He wanted me to experience Him.

The pastor then told me in English to come up to the front. I was a little taken back, and didn't really want to come forward. Reluctantly I walked to the front, not knowing what to expect. Soon many believers were gathered around with their hands on me. The pastor was praying in English and Spanish. The peace of God began to flood my soul, and I could not stand any loner.

When I got up from the floor I was a different person. Not different in the sense that I was instantly changed, or that all sin was eradicated from my life. But instantly changed in the sense that I wanted to walk with the Lord. I now desired to pursue Him and find out who He was. I needed to encounter Him again, and now I knew it was possible. He had revealed Himself to me, so I would embark on a journey with Him. A journey of knowing Him. This was His call to me. And I would later find out that it is the greatest call we can have in this life, the high calling of God in Christ. And the good news is: this is your call also.

A few months prior to being overwhelmed by the Lord's presence in Mexico, I stood talking to a leader of a baptist church in a small Kansas town. I was explaining to him that I had applied to law enforcement agency and was trying to learn Spanish. The man told me that he had a friend who was a pastor of a Bible institute in Saltillo, Mexico. The rest was history. I planned on going to Mexico to learn Spanish for my future career, however the Lord had something else in mind. The Lord wanted me in Mexico so He could reveal Himself to me. The Lord worked in a natural way through people to

orchestrate a supernatural encounter that would change my life. Look for him to act supernaturally through the natural things in your life. Often times He moves this way to be seen by you, but remain hidden from others. He desires for you to journey with Him, and to reveal Himself to you in a greater measure.

Enoch walked with God, and then all of a sudden he was no longer on the Earth for God took him. We have the opportunity in this life to be friends of God as Enoch was, and to be as close to the Lord as we desire to be. The question is, do we really want to be that close to the Lord? Our actionable response to that question will determine the reality of it in our hearts. Those who really desire to know Him and be close to Him, will use the time they have to pursue Him with all their heart. And those that do this without turning back, will find Him. He will test you on this issue.

This book is about my journey with the Lord. It will contain a revelation of who He is, and how He chooses to move in our lives. It is a book for those who are seeking to know His ways. A book that will bring you closer to Him. In this book, I describe what brought me closer to the Lord, spiritual experiences, how I began to feel the Lord's manifested presence, lessons learned during the journey, pitfalls, and maturing in God.

Chapter 2

Salvation and Baptism

In February of 2004, I gave my life to the Lord. My best friend led me to Jesus, and I was water baptized by his dad in a Baptist Church. I was 22 years old. I did not grow up in church, and I didn't know anything about the Bible or the spiritual life. Growing up, I always believed in God, but I didn't know God. There is a big difference. Satan and his fallen angels believe in God, but they are not going to spend eternity with the Lord in Heaven. Only those people who believe that Jesus died for their sins, and confess Him as their Lord and Savior, will spend eternity with Him. The requirement to be saved is to personally know the Lord. You truly know Him when He has come to live inside of your heart, by His Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes into you and makes your human spirit born-again (renewed) from Heaven (John 3:3). Many have preached this as the goal, but it is only the first step in the spiritual life. I had believed that since I was a good person, I would go to Heaven. Obviously this was nothing more than self-righteousness, but I was completely ignorant of the Gospel at the time.

Six months after my salvation experience, I found myself on the floor of a Mexican church encountered by the Holy Spirit. Why did the Lord have to take me from Kansas to Saltillo, Mexico, so that He could reveal Himself to me in that capacity? Sometimes He has to remove you from the place you are at, so that you will go on with Him spiritually. I have found this to be true time and time again in my walk with Him. Sometimes you reach a spiritual plateau in the geographical location that you live in, and the Lord has to move you so that you will progress spiritually. Oftentimes your current environment can hold you back. This isn't always true, so we must hear the will of the Lord for ourselves.

The encounter I experienced in Mexico changed me. I came back to Kansas wanting more of the Lord. I found a book, or rather a book found me, on the baptism of the Holy Spirit. At the time I did not know there was a doctrine that taught against the baptism of the Holy Spirit. I simply read the book, looked at the scriptures in the Bible and believed God. I prayed that I might experience this blessing, and started speaking out in faith as the author of the book recommended to do. As I did, the fire of God came onto my head. The Holy Spirit took over and I began praying in tongues rapidly. He was in control and He was praying through me. My head burned as if it were on fire. I began to weep. I wasn't sure exactly what the Spirit was praying through me, but I knew He was helping me repent of sin in my life. I could feel how grieved the Holy Spirit was as He prayed through my spirit to the Father. Since I was a new believer and lived in the world for so long, I still had a lot of sin in my life.

This was yet another powerful experience that left me wanting more of God. The Holy Spirit was making the scriptures come to life, and showing me that there was more. Apparently the Holy Spirit did not believe the doctrine of men, that teaches the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not for the current church. Most certainly, it is for you. I was probably seeking it for a period of four months before it actually happened. The timing of this experience can be different for everyone. Seek, ask, knock.

Chapter 3

The Call to Discipleship

In March of 2005 I accepted a position in the law enforcement field. The process took a year and eight months, and there were things I needed to pass that seemed nearly impossible at the time. However when the Lord desires for you to do something, He will make a way where there is no way. He will use the natural (the people and system around you), and move supernaturally through them in order to enact His will. He simply wants us to partner with Him, which means allowing Christ's faith to come forth from us. Christ who lives in us, has perfect faith; and it's His faith we need. So I trusted in the Lord, and He made a way for me to go into law enforcement. He will do the same thing for you, when it is His will. Doors that seem impossible to open (and may be for you), He will open. Remember that He is the great King. If He wants to do something, then He will do it. Wait for Him to open up His way for you.

In Arizona I was adapting to my new career, and learning to follow the Lord. Around one year after I had been baptized in the Holy Spirit, I had a second encounter similar to the first baptism. I was praying and I started speaking in tongues uncontrollably. Fire came upon me yet again. After this powerful experience ended I realized that I had been lied to by the Devil. I had believed that the "tongues" experience was a one time thing. However the Spirit was revealing to me that He wanted me to have this experience often.

So from that point on I set myself to pray in tongues often. I discovered that most of the time the Holy Spirit does not completely take over, like the previous encounters I described. Most often, I decide to pray, and simply start praying until I feel a release by the Spirit. Do not make the mistake that I did. Do not allow the Devil to tell you that you are not really praying in tongues, or that it's just you and God is not doing it. The Devil will try, because when you pray in tongues you bypass self-centered fleshly prayers. Satan hates it when you are praying the Father's eternal will, but he encourages self-centered praying (which is currently the prayer life of many in the current church). Self-centered praying focuses on what we need or want God to do for us.

I will note that praying in tongues (or prayer language) is not the same as the gift of tongues discussed in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. The gift of praying in tongues is for the public edification of the body of Christ, while praying in tongues is for private use, and the edification of your own spirit. The gift of tongues should be accompanied by the interpretation of tongues so the entire church knows what the Lord is saying. Oftentimes when you pray in tongues privately, there is no interpretation (at least with me).

At the same time that I was learning more in the Lord, my career in law enforcement was taking off. I had been training for a selection course that I needed to pass in order to be apart of one of the most elite special operations groups in law enforcement. In June of 2007, I passed the month long selection course along with two other guys. Our

class started out with around 30 candidates. The selection course was similar to Army Ranger school. We received about two hours of sleep per night, were tortured with CS gas everyday, and punished physically to the point of exhaustion. The psychological games that were deployed against our minds may have been the worst of all. Most either failed, quit, or got sent home. However the Lord got me through it, as I believed that He would.

Soon after I was operating on a tactical team conducting high-risk search warrants, tracking down armed suspects, and taking down large drug loads. Everything was going great in my career, but everything was not going great in my heart. It should have been the best time in my life after I had worked so hard and accomplished so much, but spiritually I was sinking. The Holy Spirit began to reveal the problem to me, as He is so faithful to do. I had put this special operations group above the Lord. This portion of my career had become an idol and taken the place of God. The Lord, in His unusual yet wonderful ways, got me through the process and gave me the position; so that He might teach me an incredibly important lesson. It was also to be a great test for me as a young believer.

Over time I felt the Holy Spirit speaking to me about laying down my position on the team, and going back to my regular position in the agency. I didn't fully understand it at the time, but the Lord was testing me. The test was: do I value my new position more than the Lord? The choice I made then would determine the rest of my life. I knew I had an important decision to make, but I did not understand the seriousness of it at the time. One day the Lord gave me the following scripture:

“He called the multitude to himself with his disciples, and said to them, “Whoever wants to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. (Mark 8:34 WEB)

The Holy Spirit was specifically saying to me through the words “deny yourself,” that I needed to “forget and lose sight of myself, and my own interests.”

Later that night I went to a meeting at a Pentecostal Church I was attending at that time. The pastor gave a scripture before the offering, and it was the exact one the Lord had given me earlier. The Lord was truly speaking to my heart, and I knew what He was asking me to do. At the time, leaving the team was one of the hardest things I had ever done. Not to mention the shame of being misunderstood by my fellow teammates. How could they understand what the Lord was asking me to do, since they were not walking with the Lord? How could I explain it to them? You simply cannot explain spiritual things to carnal people.

Up until that point I only knew Jesus as my Savior. When I obeyed the Lord through His word and left the team, I began my journey of knowing Him as my Lord. At that moment in time I understood that He wanted me to leave the team in order to come and be His disciple. I had to be willing to give up the part of my job I had come to idolize (set aside my selfish interests), so I could follow my Lord.

The original twelve disciples had to do the same thing. They left their businesses when the Lord called them. Today many Christians may know Jesus as Savior, but do they know Him as Lord? There is a line in the sand that one must cross to know Him as Master. When He calls there must be a response. Our decision to pick up our cross and follow Him as a disciple will have the weight of eternity behind it, as it will determine our eternal position before Him. Many in our age have passed up the offer. They have turned down the call to come and be His disciples. I can assure you that if those in Heaven who rejected the call could speak to us, they would counsel us not to make the same mistake. A disciple will be closer to the Lord than just a Christian who knows Jesus as Savior. The Bible clearly indicates that those who walk with Him are closer to Him.

If you have never made a commitment to Him, to come be His disciple; will you pick up the cross of sufferings and do so? If you choose to pick up your cross and follow after Him, the cross will indeed cause much suffering in your life. But suffering is only allowed so that you will grow closer to Jesus. Will you hear the call of the Spirit?

When you really become a disciple of Jesus, all of the scriptures that reference discipleship become a reality in you. I remember reading scriptures like this one: *“Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his Lord.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.” (John 15:20 WEB)*. I would meditate on it, until it became the living word in me. The life of a disciple is like their Masters’ life:

“He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me.” (Matthew 10:40 WEB)

This word burned in my heart like a live coal from before the throne of God. I really was His disciple, and the scriptures applied to me. Jesus made them real inside of me. The word became flesh. Many believers read over these scriptures like they only applied to the disciples of that time period. And if you choose not to become one of Jesus’ disciples, then those scriptures will only apply to the disciples on the pages of the Bible. It’s your choice if you want the word to live in you.

Chapter 4 A Season of Deliverance

I began to see in the scriptures that certain physical and mental problems were caused by demons such as the woman with scoliosis (Luke 13:10-13), and the boy with epilepsy (Matthew 17:15-18). Then I started reading books written by deliverance ministers who casted out demons from people. The accounts of these ministers had one common denominator; demons took certain manifestations that we would refer to as areas of sin or personality flaws. They found that demons would secretly bond to a person's soul (mind, will, and emotions) through different doorways such as generational curses, sin, curses, or traumatic life events. A few examples of demons that can attack themselves to someone's soul are: anger, bitterness, unforgiveness, critical, jealousy, controlling, rejection, fear, depression, worry, anxiety, mind racing, lying, impatience, profanity, tiredness, anorexia, pornography, drug or alcohol addiction, arthritis, and cancer. These are just a few of the manifestations that demons can take on and attach themselves to people. The full list of possibilities is just about every problem a human can have.

Now not every problem is demonic in nature, but I have learned from experience that many times the issue is demonic. I had my first experience with the demonic in early 2008. I was lying on the couch praying and the presence of the Lord came upon me for the first time. I had felt His physical presence a few times in public meetings, but never when I was alone (except during the baptism of the Spirit). After about 10 minutes of being in His presence, I felt something come up out of my stomach, through my throat, and out my mouth. Instantly by a word of knowledge I knew it was a demon. This was the beginning of the Lord's answer to my prayer. I had asked him a month before to set me free from sin and bondage.

Over the next months the Holy Spirit taught me how to command demons to come out in the name of Jesus. I would have to repent of sins or generational sins, and then ask to be forgiven before the demonic spirits would come out. As it was happening it felt surreal, but it was actually happening and could be felt. Spirits like lust, depression, and anger left me at the power of Jesus' name. Sins, mental attitudes, and negative traits that had plagued me for years were instantly gone. I felt lighter and better after each one came out.

One might contest the reality of the deliverance I experienced, but the proof was in the results. I went from a believer who was bound in sin, to one who was set free. I went from someone who couldn't focus on reading the Bible for more than five minutes, to someone who could meditate in the word for hours. I went from being partly committed to Christ, to being fully committed to seek Him and know Him. These encounters were life changing for me. I now knew the Lord as my Deliverer.

After I had these encounters and was set free, I became aware that there was a doctrine in the church that stated Christians couldn't have demons. Thankfully I had not been taught these traditions of men before I received my own deliverance. If I

would have been taught and believed this doctrine prior to my deliverance, I might still be trapped in sin with a lot of other negative issues in my life. I have discovered over the years that Satan loves it when we believe some of these foolish doctrines, because they aid him in keeping believers oppressed.

I also learned that even after demons are casted out, a believer's heart still needs to be healed from the iniquity of sin. The Lord could do this instantly, but I have found that it can take some time. There may still be temptation for a time, but the overwhelming compulsion to sin or the cycle of bondage is gone. A believer still has to resist the temptation, but now has a much greater capacity to overcome the temptation. Once the temptation is resisted over a period of time, the heart will heal and the temptation will fade.

The Lord gave me this grace to cast out demons and get free. He will give it to you as well. You must ask Him and seek Him. In His timing, the authority will be given. I will also give you a word of advice. Many people who you may consider spiritual will not understand or believe in this. When I was young in the Lord, I told a pastor about the experiences I had with deliverance. He was a charismatic pastor who believed in healing, and the supernatural aspects of God's power. He looked at me with a blank face, as if he didn't believe a word I was saying. Later he told the congregation publicly that he didn't want anyone praying for demons to come out of others in the church. You will have to choose who you are going to obey; your Lord or a pastor who isn't obeying the Lord. I've made my decision.

“As you go, preach, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!’ Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons. Freely you received, so freely give.” (Matthew 10:7-8 WEB)

Jesus gave the 12 disciples authority to cast out demons, and in Luke Chapter 10; Jesus gives the 70 disciples authority to cast out demons (Luke 10:17). Becoming a disciple of Jesus is a prerequisite for the authority to cast our demons. Jesus normally only gives this authority to those who first choose to follow Him as a disciple. There are many believers in Jesus in America, but few disciples. In order to be a disciple we must make a commitment to carry a cross of sufferings as Jesus did. This means the Lord will allow sufferings in our lives, in order to crucify the self-life. This self-life wants it's own way instead of the Lord's way. In order to be a disciple we must lose our self-life to find the life of Christ in us. If we choose our own life, will, and way; then we will not have the life of Christ and cannot be His disciples. Jesus is very clear on this issue. Not everyone is considered a disciple by Jesus, and those that are not, will not be trusted with authority to perform deliverance.

Before one can be trusted to engage in casting demons out of others, they must first be free of demons themselves. Disciples of Jesus may ask Him for the authority to cast our demons. Pray this through until Jesus grants this authority. He desires His church to be set free and wants to give this authority to us. Once this authority is given, the

Holy Spirit will be there to help. Long prayers are not necessary in most cases. The Lord responds to simple prayers.

For example, let's say you want to check if there is a curse of adultery on you, because there is a history of divorce in your family blood-line. You might pray something as simple as, "Father forgive me and my ancestors for divorce or any other sin that has brought the curse of adultery on my family blood-line. Cover me in the blood of Jesus. In the name of Jesus I break that curse off of my line now! Any spirit associated with that curse, go in Jesus name!" The last command "go" or "leave" can be repeated two or three times if necessary. Give it a little bit to see if anything happens. A lot of times, demons will move in the stomach area or throat before they come out. Many times they will come out of the mouth in coughing, or an extended breath. I have also witnessed mucus and snot coming out of someone's mouth as a demon was coming out. The person did not remember what happened. I have seen and heard demonic tongues being spoken when a demon is coming out of a person (it lasted around 10 seconds). Demons may manifest and come out differently than I have described.

I would recommend going down a list of demonic spirits when praying for deliverance. Obviously you should follow the direction of the Holy Spirit, but a list is a good way not to miss any. Let's say you want to check if you have a spirit of pride. You might pray, "Lord, forgive me of any sin that would have allowed the spirit of pride to come into my life. I repent of that sin in Jesus name. In the name of Jesus, spirit of pride, I bind you and break your power. You come out right now!" Repeat this several times until one comes out, or nothing happens and you are convinced that there is not a spirit of pride in you.

Sometimes there will be multiple spirits of the same kind in a person. For example a person could have two strongman spirits of pride, and four regular spirits of pride. Strongmen are the ruling spirits over the lesser spirits and they are like their name implies, stronger. You must call out the strongman spirit by its name (strongman spirit of pride). If one comes out, then try to command another to come out to make sure you are free. Then move on to the regular spirit of pride. Usually there will be several demons under a strongman demon. There could be a demon of pride without a strongman, or there could just be one strongman. The point I am trying to make is that one needs to be thorough and specific with the names. Jesus casted a legion of demons out all at once into a herd of swine. That is the goal, but I'm teaching this way because we have not attained to that level yet. I pray we get to that level soon.

It is possible for a Christian to have hundreds of demons. The Christian would be demonized, but not demon possessed. The level of demonization depends on how many demons there are, and the strength of those demons. The deliverance process may take some time if this is the case. Generally those who are demon possessed are unbelievers. Some of the details about deliverance from demons that I am giving comes from experience in the deliverance ministry, and is not in the Bible. It is extra-biblical, but it is not unbiblical. The Holy Spirit can teach us and show us things that are not in scripture, as long as those things do not contradict scripture. God is infinite,

and there is endless information about Him. The Bible is only a snap-shot of who He is. We will be learning about Him and getting to know Him for all eternity. Fear of deception is also a demon that keeps many believers from walking with the Lord. We must trust the Holy Spirit to led us into all truth. He will not give us a snake if we are asking for a fish (Luke 11:9-13).

Chapter 5 Montana

In May of 2008 I was on the way to Montana. I had requested and received a transfer with my job. Once again the Lord had opened a door that only He could open. I didn't know it at the time, but my life was about to change forever. The decisions we make in our younger years will set the course for the rest of our lives. It is incredibly important that younger people seek the will of the Lord before making decisions on what career they are going to pursue, who they are going to marry, or where they are going to live. These decisions have the potential to wreck your life, or bless your life. We have the ability to choose, and if we choose our own will; it could bring havoc into our journey. One bad decision can ruin God's plan for our lives on the earth (2 Kings 5:20-27). Please seek His will and wisdom before choosing your path.

When I arrived in Montana, I remember it being one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen. Picturesque trees and fields throughout the valley, surrounded by majestic snow capped mountains. It was Heaven compared to the Arizona desert I had just journeyed from. This was a new beginning for me. My walk with the Lord was getting ready to accelerate.

I had been in Montana for one week when I heard about a young adults Bible study from some people at a Christian coffee shop. I decided to go. I arrived at the location, and walked into the open garage. I saw about thirty people, and rows of seats. I immediately scanned the room and noticed a beautiful brown haired girl walking in to an empty row of seats. I nonchalantly placed my Bible a few seats from her as she was getting ready to sit down, and proceeded deeper into the garage to introduce myself to the group leader. Then I came back and sat down. Fortunately the girl didn't bring her Bible, so when the meeting started I asked her if she wanted to share with me. She did, and of course that meant I needed to scoot over a seat so that I was sitting next to her. It was easier for her to read the scriptures of course.

We started talking when the meeting was over (I can't remember what the meeting was about, but I'm sure the Lord forgave me), and I found out her name was Maegan. She was 20 years old, nearly 7 years younger than me. She was absolutely beautiful. We started talking about healing, and how God still heals the sick. She told me about how the Lord healed her of an incurable disease. The ministry that this church group was apart of didn't really teach or believe in healing, and yet here we were talking about it.

Not wanting our conversation to end, I asked her if she wanted to meet for coffee after the meeting, and she agreed. We talked for another three hours at the coffee shop until midnight. When I got home that night, I sent a text to my friend and told him that I had met my future wife tonight. I have never been very prophetic, but that night my words turned out to be an accurate prophecy.

After about a month of not really communicating with each other, we went on a date for my birthday. After that date, the rest was history. We spend almost every day together

from there on. We got along well together and seemed to fit together well. We began pursuing the Lord together, and wanted to investigate the future He had for our lives. It was an exciting time. I saw that she loved the Lord and wanted to be dedicated to Him. That was the most important thing for me, and it will turn out to be crucial in any marriage. Putting the Lord first is the key to all relationships, including a successful marriage. This is the key to look for when you are searching for your future spouse. It is a good sign if they have a heart that is after the Lord.

Another extremely important factor when trying to determine who your future husband or wife will be, is the peace of God. The person you are dating may be godly and have a heart after God, but is the peace of the Lord present? With Maegan I felt His peace. In previous relationships I had before I was walking with the Lord, I never remember feeling His peace. There was always turmoil, tension, anxiety, and darkness. If you do not know if you have the peace of God in your relationship, then you do not have it. When you have it, you know. And if you don't have it, but decide to go on with marriage anyway; your decision could cause a train wreck in your life.

Wait for the one that God has chosen for you. The Devil will lie to you and tell you that you won't find anyone else in an attempt to rush you into making a bad decision. Wait for the Lord. Sometimes the partner that He has for you isn't ready for you yet. Sometimes you are not ready for your partner. And most of the time it's both. The Lord has a perfect mate for you and a perfect timing. It's far better for you to wait for Him than to make it happen yourself, and regret it for the rest of your life.

I understand that some people have arranged marriages. The Lord knew this would happen to some. He can move on marriages and work with what has been chosen for people. Nothing is impossible for Him. He is the God who gives hope and transforms us by His Spirit. He can bring life where there is death. He can certainly use arranged marriages for His glory, as He foresaw what would happen. His grace is sufficient for those in this situation.

Within six months of meeting, Maegan and I got engaged. We were married in June of 2009, and then off to Costa Rica for our honeymoon. We were in love and starting our journey together with the Lord. It was a beautiful time. We didn't yet know the prophetic word that the Lord was planning to release to us through His prophet when we returned home, and the course that it would set us on.

Chapter 6

Maegan's Testimony

The year was 2006. I stood worshipping before the Lord at a church gathering in a small Georgia town. The presence of the Lord was strong upon me. The Holy Spirit told me to lay down at the altar. As I obeyed, Fire went through my veins. The Lord whispered, "I am cleansing your blood and making you whole." After seven years of sickness and five years years of blood transfusions for Von Willebrand disease, instantly I had been made whole. For years I was the girl with the issue of blood. At 17 years old, I had just touched the hem of Jesus' garment. He became my healer that Friday night. I would never be the same again after this encounter.

In 1996, at the age of seven, I drifted off to sleep in my bed. My family lived in Guam at the time. Early in the morning a dark dream entered my mind. In the dream, my mother had taken me to the doctor. The nurse called us back to our room. The nurse then had me lay on the table. When she came over to examine me, I could see her eyes were completely yellow in color. I could feel the evil coming from her. The nurse reached down and touched the right side of my stomach. Scared, I woke up from the dream, and part of my body was levitated off of the bed. The experience is difficult to explain properly. It is sufficient to say that it was an encounter with demonic powers. Being such a young girl, I was terrified. After the demonic experience, I started having nose bleeds. This bleeding disorder could have come from this incident.

My parents were not walking with the Lord during my childhood, but I can remember the Lord's hand being upon me. I recall going to prayer meetings with my grandfather, who was a pastor. I have faded images of Jesus playing with me as a small child. Since I grew up in an abusive environment, a lot of my childhood memories are not pleasant. The painful environment I grew up in led to a lot of hurt, but the Lord was with me to administer healing throughout the years.

As little girl I had given my heart to the Lord, but when I was a teenager, I drifted from Him. I didn't have a spiritual mentor in my life to led me to the Lord, and help me stay on the right path. The Lord used this time to create a passion in me to see teenagers and young adults cared for by spiritual parents. The decisions made during those years can set us on a path of destruction, or on a path of destiny in the Lord.

In 2005 my parents separated, and my mother decided to go back to church. I went with her. In one meeting, a visiting minister prophesied to me in front of the congregation and said, "If you continue down the same path that you are currently on, it will lead to death." This prophetic word got my attention. I know that many in the church say that the gift of prophecy is only for encouragement and blessing, but the Lord can say whatever He wants to; and I needed to hear this word.

Shortly after, that I committed my life to the Lord again. I applied to a discipleship training school with YWAM, however I had one problem. They weren't going to accept me, because of my current medical condition, as they did not have the medical

facilities I needed at the time. I knew the Lord wanted me to serve Him, and He gave me faith to apply to the school. Not long after I stepped out in faith, the Lord healed my body and made a way where there was no way. It was an impossible situation, and the Lord parted the Red Sea for me. He revealed Himself to me as the Waymaker.

I'm sure there are a lot of people going through difficult circumstances. Many of God's people need healing from an infirmity. Some of you have lost hope because you have been sick in your body for so long. The Devil creeps in and condemns your faith. He tells you that God has healed others, but is not going to heal you. You start to believe Satan's lies, because the years have gone by and you are still struggling with sickness. The woman with the issue of blood struggled with her infirmity for twelve years (Luke 8:43-44). God could have sent a prophet to release healing to her after she had suffered for one year. Why didn't He?

Sometimes we don't have all the answers, but we do know the One who is the answer. Jesus came at just His right time for the woman with the issue of blood. He came at His right time to heal me. He will come to you in His time and in His way. Keep following Him and keep trusting him. Ask for His grace, and don't give up. The enemy will try to kill your spiritual life with deferred hope, but you need to turn your gaze to Jesus. Hope in Him, not healing. Then He will be hope in you and through you. Our spiritual lives cannot be destroyed if our hope is in the Lord.

Chapter 7

Impartation, Fire, and His Presence

Something significant took place in January of 2009. I had just finished reading the Bible all the way through for the first time. All of a sudden my mind was open to the scriptures (Luke 24:45). The Lord began to give me revelation and understanding. The Lord's truth was hitting my spirit in a fresh new way, and I could now sit before Him hours everyday meditating on the scriptures. As I would read the Bible, the Holy Spirit would 'highlight' a verse to me. I would then ponder this portion of scripture until the Living Word would reveal to me secrets and mysteries. The Lord was burning the fire of His word into my heart. It was cleansing and purifying. It was truth. As I continued this practice, it became a burning fire shut up in my bones. The kind of fire you grow weary of holding in. Then it simply comes forth from you, because you cannot contain it any longer. It seemed like few around me understood this fire. People felt the burn of the fire coming from me. Many did not like what they felt, because it made them uncomfortable. The fire would only intensify as I continued to follow the Lord. I was not expecting what came next.

The first time I received an impartation through the laying on of hands was in February of 2009. I was at a small ministry in Montana, and Leif Hetland was ministering. During prayer, Leif laid hands on me and it felt like a fire burning through my body. All I could do was cry out as many others did. A holy fire from the Lord was being released, and it hurt (but in a good way). After that time the Lord moved on me in holiness. Worldly things did not have the same appeal that they once did. The fire from the Lord purified me of the desire for worldliness. It was in fact a baptism of fire. The One who is a 'refiners fire' touched me, in order to purify me as a priest to make offerings of righteousness unto the Lord (Malachi 3:2-3).

During those same meetings, Todd Bevan (one of Leif Hetland's spiritual sons) prayed for me as well. I remember laying on the floor at the altar for around twenty minutes. All I could do was groan as Todd was laying his hands on me. The Holy Spirit was moving on me in such power. Todd told me that the Lord was releasing to me the apostolic anointing that would progress over time, and that the Lord was giving me the key to the Father's heart. Those first impartations changed and shaped my journey with the Lord, and set me on a course to seek Him with all of my heart. Every impartation is an invitation to seek the Lord in a greater way. If we do not use the impartation to propel us deeper into seeking the Lord, then the main purpose of the impartation has been wasted.

Sonship

During those meetings I got set free from an orphan way of thinking. I had been extremely driven to achieve, and be someone "important." However, by the power of God, I was set free. I now saw clearly, by revelation, that the Father loved me for who I was. I was His son, and all I needed to do was simply "be" with Him. His chief desire was to be with me. This foundational understanding set me on the right path of walking

with the Lord. It also opened me up to a new relationship with Him. Now I knew Him as the Savior, the Healer, the Deliverer, the Master/Teacher, and now the Father. There is so much more to Him than God the Savior. Thankfully He is a Savior, but His desire is for us to know all of who He is through experiential relationship.

Return to the Burn

The first series of impartations left me hungry for more. Now I had hunger mixed with faith, which is a deadly combination (so to speak). I knew that when someone laid their hands on me I would receive what I was asking for. It is good to desire spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14:1), but we must remember that it is the Holy Spirit who distributes the gifts as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). Many times He puts a desire in your heart for certain gifts, and will release that gift to you in His timing as you seek Him. Sometimes it is simply our self-will and desire for a gift, and it is not His will for us to have it. Ultimately He is in charge and we must conform to His will. Not everyone is going to have all the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:28-30).

In April of 2009 I received another impartation at a ministry in Montana. Ian Andrews was ministering and teaching on healing. After the meeting I went up to Ian and asked him if he would impart the gift of healing to me. I told him that I knew I would receive it if he would pray. I was incredibly immature in the Lord, but my spiritual hunger and faith were extremely high. Ian took both of my hands and prayed. Fire went through my body. I started to crumple to the floor, but I had ahold of Ian's hands so tight that I started to take him with me. He said, "My hands, my hands," and I let go and curled into a ball on the floor as the fire of God burned in me. I got the impartation.

In July of 2009 (three weeks after my wife and I were married), the Lord used James Goll to issue us a call to the ministry during a meeting at a Bible Camp in Hungry Horse, Montana. James Goll laid hands on my wife and I and prophesied. Fire burned into my head, and I could barely stand. The video we have of the impartation shows my entire head becoming dark red. The experience was impacting and drove me further into seeking the Lord.

In August of 2009 I received an impartation for the gift of discerning of spirits. I was at a Matt Sorger meeting in Aberdeen, South Dakota. I asked him to pray for me after a meeting, in which he had preached on the gift of discerning of spirits. He put his hand on my stomach and prayed. Fire burned into my stomach as the Lord released the impartation. The fire was so great that it bent me over, with my hands on my knees.

The Presence of God

Those meetings I had attended in Aberdeen changed me forever. During those meetings, the manifest presence of the Lord filled the room (by manifest presence, I mean you actually feel the Lord's presence in your physical body). The presence of the Lord feels like Heaven is inside of you; because it is. Jesus said that "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). Jesus sits on His throne within all who are born again.

This encounter with the presence of God put a hunger in me that has only intensified over the years.

I remember telling an older woman in that meeting that I had tried waiting on the Lord, and never felt anything; but that I was going to start waiting upon Him, and not stop until I carried His presence for myself. She thanked me for saying that as it encouraged her. After that meeting, I set my heart to wait on the Lord until I became a carrier of the Lord's presence.

I began by waiting on the Lord for 2-3 hours a day. In those early days I would listen to worship music, today I do not. Note that this practice of waiting on God was added to my preexisting practice of fasting, prayer, study, and meditating on the scriptures. After about three weeks of waiting on the Lord, His presence started to come. It was not strong, but it was there. Up until this point in my life, I had mainly only felt His presence in a corporate setting (public worship).

His presence was with me in a lower level for the next year or so. But I continued to wait upon Him. He is a rewarder of those who earnestly and diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6), and He rewarded me with more of His presence (a closer position before Him). By 2012 His presence had greatly increased in my life. By 2015 He was with me almost everyday, and almost all day.

His presence is so beautiful. In His presence I perceived His deep love for me. I didn't need anyone to tell me that God loved me, or I didn't need to read it in the scripture. I was spending time with Him, and therefore I felt His love. This is similar to, but much deeper than the embrace of a spouse. During the embrace you feel their love for you, and no words are needed. I had now entered in to a bridal relationship with the Lord. The intimacy I felt was very special, as that of a bridegroom and his bride. This journey was taking me deeper into the Lord than I ever imagined it would when I first started out.

While waiting on the Lord, I had an experience where I was completely lost in Christ. I felt nothing but His thick presence. All I could do is weep, because I knew that this encounter would not last, and I wanted it to last forever. I wanted the Lord to just keep me in Heaven. My spirit was in Heaven since Christ and His Kingdom are within. The very thought of going back and dealing with daily life made me sick. I wept because I could not stand to leave that place of intimacy.

Another time, while waiting on the Lord, I felt like I was before His throne. Then His fire burned through me. All I could do was yell. I cannot put the intensity into words. He burned me with His holiness, and the fear of the Lord was infused into my spirit. I have had countless encounters and experiences throughout the years with the Lord like or similar to these. He wants everyone to seek Him with all of their hearts', so that He can be found by them (Jeremiah 29:13).

The presence of the Lord is available to every believer. Being in His presence is simply being in close proximity to Him. So close that you sense or feel Him. If the Lord has given His presence to me, He will give it to you. I am nothing special and the Lord is no respecter of persons. The condition to walking in the manifest presence of God is spending time with Him.

To him who has time (with the Lord), more will be given. To him who does not have time (with the Lord), even what he does have will be taken from him. Spend the time that you do have meditating on the scriptures and waiting on God, and He will give you more. There is no formula for entering into the presence of the Lord in the secret place. It's based on relationship and your pursuit of Him.

There are some Christians who might say, "It's not about feeling. It's about faith, and it is enough to know that He is always with you." This statement and statements similar to it, are formed out of ignorance. If people only knew the level of intimacy that comes with feeling the presence of the Lord, they would never say such things. Could you imagine getting married to someone, and then telling them you never need to feel their physical presence. "You don't need to hug me, or kiss me, or ever make love to me. Just knowing that you are in the room with me is enough." What kind of marriage would that be? A lifeless marriage without intimacy. But how many Christians have a dull and dry relationship with the Lord? And why? Because they have never physically touched Him or felt His presence. Many Christians in America lack intimacy with the Lord. This is an invitation to seek Him and know His presence for Yourself. Let your soul wait in silence and quietly submit to the Lord (Psalm 62:5).

The secret place and waiting on the Lord has become my life, and my deeper longing. I want to be with Him more than anything else. He is my reason for being. In Him is found the fullness of life. He is our purpose. When you are with the Lord in that inward secret place, all fear and worry is gone. It's just Him. You will feel His life filling your being. He becomes your everything. Words cannot properly explain the connection that one feels with the Lord in this place. It is Spirit to spirit, and deep to deep.

The greatest thing that anyone can ever accomplish in this life is to be before the King, and to be known by Him. After, you have been with the Lord before His throne, you understand that He is greater than an earthly president, athlete, or person of fame. I would rather be alone with Lord in a dark quiet room, then being among the chief men of earth. He is a great King, and it is an honor to be chosen (because of seeking Him) to dwell in His courts (Psalm 65:4).

Final Lessons of Impartation

In July of 2010 my wife and I were at a series of meetings in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada. A man named Charlie Robinson was ministering. The presence of God was thick and he was walking around ministering prophetically. All of a sudden he called out, "Who wants a revival anointing?" I was instantly charged with hunger and faith. I didn't say anything, but my eyes showed my desperate hunger for the anointing of

God. Charlie's eyes met with mine. Suddenly he got excited and started pointing at me and yelled, "You, come here!" I quickly moved to the end of the row and reached out for his hand. As I grabbed his hand, the anointing burned in me powerfully. I collapsed to the floor yelling. All I could do was yell from the intense power. It probably lasted about 10 seconds. I could hardly function for the next 30 minutes.

The final impartation I will mention occurred in September of 2010 at a Randy Clark meeting in Northwestern Montana. Randy gave an alter call for those who were called to ministry. He asked people to come forward and receive an impartation to help empower them for the call. I went full of faith. When Randy laid hands on me it felt like a bolt of lightning mixed with a mighty rushing wind entered through my mouth from above. My whole body shook violently as I fell backwards and was caught by someone. I went down to the floor and continued to shake with violence for about 15 seconds. It was a powerful experience. The only way to truly explain impartation is to experience it for yourself.

Mistakes

One mistake I made in my early years as a believer was that I focused too much on ministers of God and their ministries. A certain amount of this is tolerated by the Lord when we are immature, but He expects us to grow up. The Lord does not want us to move into idolatry, which is exactly where we will go if we focus on leaders and ministries. Our focus should be on the Lord. I can remember waiting in line to receive impartation and focusing on the minister. This was wrong, and my focus should have been directed towards the Lord in receiving the impartation from the Holy Spirit. Ministers should do everything possible to keep the attention of people on the Lord.

The greatest mistake I made in regards to impartation, was thinking the Lord would do things with me as He did with others. As a young believer I heard stories of how impartation could empower you for ministry. The story taught in the Charismatic church went something like this: "Randy Clark received a powerful impartation from Rodney Howard Browne, and then the Lord used him to spark the Toronto Blessing. John and Carol Arnott, Roland and Hedi Baker, Bill and Beni Johnson, Leif Hetland and Ché Ahn all received powerful impartations at the Toronto Blessing. Then the Lord empowered their ministries and miracles began occurring frequently. Revival broke out."

While there may be truth to the above account, there is much more to these stories. These men and women of God already had a long history of walking with God. They had been on a journey with Him for some time, and had experienced ministries that lacked the fruit and power of God. They had been experiencing brokenness that comes from the cross of Christ. The Lord had been spending years preparing their character to receive and handle the anointing. Then in the Lord's timing and in His way, He suddenly empowered them with the anointing for fruitful ministries.

It seemed hardly any ministers were teaching about the cross, the wilderness, and the process that the Lord uses to prepare a person for the anointing. So I erroneously thought that if I could get a powerful impartation, then the Lord would just start using me in great power. In my immaturity, I didn't know any better. However this way of thinking set me up for deep disappointment and discouragement that I was hardly able to recover from. That is the reason I am writing this, and why the Lord is restoring the true apostolic in the church. The focus must return to the Lamb of God, and doctrines such as impartation must be explained fully and presented in a proper context. If these doctrines are not presented well, they can damage believers.

Just because the Lord gave Randy Clark a powerful impartation from Rodney Howard Browne which sparked a revival, does not mean He will do it that way with you or me. The Lord can and oftentimes does do things differently with different people. Moses never received an impartation for ministry from a man. The Lord simply visited him as He did with Elijah and Paul. The Lord Himself empowered these men when they were ready. Jesus does as He pleases and in His timing. And just because you carry a great anointing and have a big ministry, does not mean you will be ranked among the first in Heaven by attaining to the high calling. I would learn this lesson later.

Another of the greatest mistakes I've made is trying to get the Lord to commission me in my timing and my way. When things did not happen in my way and in my timing, it nearly shipwrecked my faith. False expectations that masquerade as faith can lead to a spiritual shipwreck. I did not understand that the Lord has to prepare the character of a person first. A person must experience the cross-life and go through the wilderness before they can handle the anointing. This often takes many years or even decades. Also, a person has to have a specific call from the Lord before He will entrust them with a high level of the anointing. Failure to understand these truths can send believers spiraling into a black hole from which they will have great difficulty recovering from.

The Lord often releases impartations for spiritual gifts, but does not activate them immediately. Many times the gifts imparted to us are time delayed by the Lord. Once we are spiritually mature (having continued following Him as disciples), He activates those gifts imparted to us. Some gifts may take years or decades before they are activated. Oftentimes believers receive an impartation, and because the gift does not operate immediately; they become discouraged. Their faith and relationship with the Lord is damaged. As mentioned before, I only know this from personal experience. Are we going to follow the Lord because of who He is, or because of what He gives us? Do we have the discipline to wait for His perfect timing for the gifts that were imparted to us to be released? He knows what we can handle and when we are ready. Focus on intimacy with Him and His cross (the life of a disciple). The Lord will do it in His timing and in His way.

As we journey with the Lord, we learn to progress from outward forms of receiving, to inward ways of receiving. Instead of receiving an impartation through the laying on of hands, we can receive directly from the Lord Himself. As we grow in Him, we will learn how to access grace from Him within our own hearts. In 2011 I was waiting in line at a

conference in Albany, Oregon. I was there to receive an impartation. A woman who was about twice my age approached me, and I could feel the presence of God that she carried coming off of her. She said prophetically, "You have everything you need inside of you. The Lord gives us things as we can handle them. The Lord doesn't do things how you think or how you want Him to. He does things how He wants to do them."

Apparently the Lord felt it was necessary to give me this understanding. Unfortunately because I was very strong in myself, it took years for this to sink in. Every bit of grace, gifting, or power that we will ever need to accomplish the Lord's will, is within us. This is because Jesus is within us, and in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead (Colossians 2:9). When Jesus is ready for us to be used in a particular way, we can access the grace of God from Him who lives inside of us. The mature learn to go inward, where Christ dwells, and receive from the eternal King.

The greatest impartation of all is a release of hunger and passion for Jesus. It is a burning fire to seek and know Him. This has been the greatest gift the Lord has ever given me. I focused too much on power gifts, and not enough on the greatest gift I could ever have (a heart after God). One of my greatest desires is to be able to release this impartation as the Lord wills. My hearts' desire is to see people burning with passion for the Lord, and walking in an intimate relationship with Him. Impartation is a very powerful spiritual truth. It must be properly taught, and the focus must remain on the Lord Jesus.

The Anointing

The year was 2012 and my wife and I were at a camp meeting in Hungry Horse, Montana. A thirteen year old girl from the Blackfeet Indian Reservation was invited to speak. I believe her name was Mishayle, and she had been healed or resurrected from terminal cancer. She had been taken up to Heaven, and she had seen the Lord Jesus on her death bed. The Lord sent her back to tell His people about Him.

Mishayle was unpolished in speech, yet the fire of the Holy Spirit filled the atmosphere. The authority of the Lord was upon her, and you could tell she had been with Jesus. Oh that we could have some more unpolished preachers that carry the fire and authority of the living God, instead of well spoken and energetic preachers that look and act like the world!

Mishayle didn't move in the gifts of the Spirit or lay hands on anyone. She shifted the focus of the meeting to Jesus. There was a raw cry coming forth from her. The kind of cry that emanates from someone who only wants the Lord. Even thinking back on her desire for Jesus convicts me, and brings attention to my lack of pure focus on Him. I desperately want my focus to be only upon Him. Mishayle carried the anointing, and the anointing upon her pointed to the anointed One, Jesus Christ. True messengers will use the anointing to unleash a burning desire for Jesus.

I still remember what Mishayle said at the end of her message. Everyone, including myself, was expecting her to pray for people. She said, “You don’t need anyone to lay hands on you and pray for you! Jesus is here right now! He can touch you! I need Him to touch me too! Worship Him!” With that she ended and went back to her seat. I could feel the Holy Spirit burning in the atmosphere. Mishayle had done at age 13, what many older ministers could not do; she shifted the attention from the anointed vessel to the anointed King, Jesus.

Even now I feel like the Lord is saying that this is the hallmark of true anointed ministry. The anointing must be used to completely turn people’s attention to Jesus. Anyone can speak and tell people that it’s all about Jesus. But when it’s really all about Jesus in a person’s life, then a spiritual shift takes place in the hearts of the listeners. Jesus is exalted and glorified, and people leave the meeting wanting Jesus. When the anointing is used to exalt the preacher, the people leave talking about how great a speaker and minister they are. I would rather use the anointing to help draw people near to Jesus in the secret place, than to help build a following on social media or for my ministry.

We can learn a lot from a pure 13 year old girl who only wanted Jesus. The cry coming from Mishayle’s heart was ‘Jesus only.’ She didn’t want the focus on her, and she was simply giving testimony to who He is and what He had done. Because her heart wanted the Lord, an anointing to turn people’s hearts to the Father manifested corporately. It was beautiful.

The simple ministry of a ‘nobody’ 13 year old girl from a poor Indian reservation in Browning, Montana; moved my heart closer to the Lord because her desire for Jesus was true. It matters who we are, and the level of inward purity. Proper heart motives for Jesus to receive all the glory, honor, and praise; mean everything when it comes to pure ministry. Taking attention from the Lord causes chaos in ministries, and causes them to fall short of their purpose. Jesus loves using pure vessels like Mishayle who will allow Jesus to have all the glory, as He so rightly deserves. Oftentimes the Lord will use the weak things to confound the wise so that He can arise:

““Now I will arise,” says Yahweh; “Now I will lift myself up. Now I will be exalted.” (Isaiah 33:10 WEB)

The burning ones coming forth in the days ahead will be entrusted with the anointing, because Jesus is the first love of their hearts.

God Calls the Weak

In, 2006 I was a baby in the spirit. I was struggling with sin, didn’t know how to pray, and my greatest fear was speaking publicly. The last thing that I ever thought I would be doing is preaching Jesus publicly. I would have been one of the worst candidates and the least qualified. But Jesus is greater than my weakness. He is the God who calls those things that are not as though they were. The “I Am” saw something in a

“nobody” country boy from Kansas, and He moved upon me in power. I had never had any desire to do public ministry until the age of 27 in 2008. But at 27, the fire began to burn in me to such a degree that I could not deny it. That is how you know the Lord is calling you. It’s the fire that won’t stop. The whole world could tell you that you are not called, but the burning fire shut up in your bones is telling you that you are. Listen to the fire. There will always be those around you who don’t understand, or do not have much spiritual discernment. People will say that you don’t have what it takes to minister, but they only say this because they can’t see the end from the beginning. The Lord sees the final product, and what you will be after He has completed His great work in you. Most people only see who you are now, and not how Christ will come forth in you. Trust the Holy Spirit. He will guide you. He will finish what He has started.

The Lord chose me, not because I was smart, or a good speaker, or wealthy, or famous, nor because I knew a lot about the church or ministry. He chooses the foolish things to confound the wise (1 Corinthians 1:26-29). Many times He passes on those with seminary degrees, and picks the fisherman who have seeking hearts for God. The Lord does this so that He will get all the glory. Clearly I could not have reached the point I am at on my own. I cannot boast in my education. Jesus transformed me, taught me, and gave me everything I have. It’s by grace. All honor and glory go to Him.

Chapter 8

The Calling and Prophetic Words

The power encounter I received from the Holy Spirit when Todd Bevan laid hands on me in February of 2009, changed me forever. I had already known in my heart that the Lord was calling me to ministry, as He had been revealing it to me for the previous six months. Now I had to search out the meaning of the gift that had been released to me by the Holy Spirit. The only understanding I had at the time was the gift of a pastor. I knew nothing about the other ministry gifts found in Ephesians chapter four. The Holy Spirit gave me direction through this prophetic word.

As I sought the Lord in regards to the ministry He had called me to, the Holy Spirit revealed it to me inwardly in a greater degree. The call burned in me as I prayed and searched the scriptures. I knew that the word I had been given was true and good, by the inward fire and agreement I felt during the months following that encounter. The Holy Spirit must confirm prophetic words this way. You can get words from people that are from the human soul, and not from God. You must have the Spirit bear witness to any prophecy, in order to stay free of deception. I was so sure of what I was called to, and no one could shake me or tell me otherwise. When the Lord speaks, you will be confident in His voice.

Confirmations continued to come. Three weeks after Maegan and I were married in July of 2009, we attended a camp meeting in Hungry Horse, Montana. James Goll was ministering. He called Maegan and I out in the meeting and prophesied over us an anointing and a call to the ministry. The presence and fire of God came upon us as He prophesied. This presence of God has always come upon me when I have received a word from the Lord. The Lord confirms His word with His presence so that you will know the word is from Him, and not simply a bad prophecy. He doesn't have to do this, but I have found He does this with me. We received a similar public call, when Paul Keith Davis pointed Maegan and I out in a meeting in Red Deer, Alberta (summer of 2010). The Lord will sometimes do this to bring confirmation to you. This way you will know that you are not in deception. Also, Satan will not be able to shake your faith through doubting believers.

In February of 2011, Maegan and I were at her aunt and uncle's house in a small Montana town. A friend of the family named Ted, was visiting from out of town. As we were sitting on the couch talking, Ted suddenly started prophesying over me an identical word to that which Todd had given me. As Ted spoke that word, the presence of God came on me in such a way that I instantly began to weep. I could not control it. It was such a precious moment as the Lord broke in and transformed the atmosphere.

In September of 2013, Maegan and I took a trip to visit some friends in Houston, Texas. When we first arrived, we met a young couple that gave us a powerful confirming word. Jake Freels prophesied over us the same ministry calling/gift as both Todd and Ted. We had just met, and he knew nothing about us. I am giving these example to show how the Lord works. He confirms His call through multiple people, in different locations,

over a number of years. I could go on with more examples, but these should be sufficient to get the point across. The Lord is consistent, and He confirms His word. In the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established (2 Corinthians 13:1).

The biggest mistake I made during this season, was not grasping that often times there is a large gap between being called and being commissioned. In my immaturity, I thought the Lord would commission me into ministry in two or three years from the first word I received in February of 2009. I was wrong. Very wrong. At the time, I thought I was ready for ministry. I was deceived. Very deceived. It took 13 years for the Holy Spirit to do the work necessary in David and Joseph, so that they could be commissioned into their respective callings. Moses was in the wilderness for 40 years before He was sent by God. Very few people understand this. Some people around us expected us to simply ‘take off’ into ministry after these words were given. However, the Lord does not do things this way. He is not in a hurry, and He takes His time with us. He is much more concerned about us being conformed to the image of His Son, than us operating in a secondary earthly calling of ministry.

It’s now been over a decade from when we received most of our prophetic words and callings. Hardly anything has changed in the natural. We are still not walking in what was prophesied to us. People who witnessed the words spoken over us may think that the words were not true. But where was Joseph ten years after his vision? In the prison. Where was Moses? Still in the wilderness with 30 years left to go. Even though Moses was called as a prophet, he was not a prophet yet. He would not be a prophet until he was sent by God. Things do not and will not happen over night. It takes a while for the Holy Spirit to get us to a place in which we are ready to carrying out the calling of the Lord.

There are a lot of believers who go to seminary to become a pastor. They get a degree, and then get a job as a pastor of a church. This is man’s way of commissioning into ministry. When the Lord commissions He shows up in a burning fire. He burns the commissioning deep inside a vessel, and they go forth as a messenger of fire carrying the burden of the Lord. The person who commissioned himself after completing seminary, and securing a job with their resume; may go forth with eloquent sermons, but they will lack the fire of God that burns deep into the hearts of their listeners. They might preach good, but they will not carry the Lord’s fiery burden. These seminary preachers are a dime a dozen, but the messengers of God are rare. Will you be one who allows the Lord to pull you aside and place you in the wilderness of the Spirit? Or will you be a self-appointed pastor with a degree from seminary? God can send people to seminary, but just make sure it is indeed Him sending you.

Hearing God According to the Desire of Your Heart

The call to ministry burned in my heart, and the prophetic words were starting to add up. Towards the end of 2010, I started to think I was ready for ministry. My heart was beginning to focus on ministry and it was unhealthy. I wasn’t even close to being ready, but I started to believe the Lord was going to send and commission me. My will and

desire was very strong, because it had not yet been crucified by means of the cross. This is a dangerous time in the life of a disciple. I was seeking the Lord, and following Him as a disciple; however I still had too much self-life operating through me. I was still living, and very little of Christ was living through me.

In Numbers Chapter 22, the Lord told Balaam that he could not go with the men who came to offer him wealth and fame. Then when the men returned a second time to offer Balaam even greater rewards, Balaam asked the Lord if he could go with them this time. However the Lord had already said he couldn't go. Balaam's self-life was rising up. Balaam's heart wanted the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life. So he asked God again, even though God had already spoken. The second time Balaam asked the Lord if he could go, Balaam heard God say he could go. Balaam's heart was now twisting the will of God, and he was starting to hear the Lord according to the desire of his own heart. Balaam went and the Lord sent an angel to kill Balaam for his disobedience. Balaam was shown mercy then, but was killed shortly after that at a different time. Hearing God according to our heart can get us killed. At minimum, it will kill our spiritual life with Christ, and cause great confusion in our spiritual journey.

During a period of a few years, I tried to get the Lord to commission me in my way and in my timing. I almost quite my job to go off in to full-time ministry. All of these things were terrible mistakes. The Lord will never move in our timing, and jump at our commands. He is the commander, and we obey His plans. I learned this the hard way. It took years of breaking in the wilderness for the Lord to get this point across. Children in the Lord, sometimes have difficulty hearing the Lord. I was shown grace, because I was still a child, spiritually speaking. The Lord kept me back from quitting my job and entering ministry. He was watching over and protecting His child like a good Father. The best advise I have ever heard is, "Make the Lord commission and send you into ministry." The Lord is surely able to do this, and make it clear just as He did with Moses. This advice will keep us free from deception, and from acting on our own good ideas.

Chapter 9

The Wilderness of Isolation

I spent long hours alone in the wilderness of Montana due to my work. Many days I would not have any human contact for over eight hours. The isolation got to me the first year, but then the Lord gave me grace to adjust. I was working in a physical wilderness, but I was also beginning my journey into the spiritual wilderness. The Lord made it clear to me that I was in the 'wilderness of John the Baptist.' In the fall of 2008, I started to look at Bible colleges after I perceived the call of God. However, I felt that the Lord was saying that Bible college was not the path for me. The Lord can use seminary, and He does direct some to take that route. But not me.

The Holy Spirit needed to teach me Himself without any interference from the religious system. This is how He prepared Elijah and John the Baptist. Everyday I would come before the Lord and have communion with Him. He became my Teacher. His presence was my drink, and His word was my bread. I ate and drank of Christ nearly everyday for over ten years in the wilderness. Since I was in isolation, Christ was the one I conversed with. We spend so much time together that we became friends. Friendship with Jesus is one of the most precious things we can have in this life. It's worth more than any earthly treasure. We become his friend by being with Him, and by obeying His commandments (John 15:14). Believers who do not take time to be with Jesus are not His friends; they are simply His acquaintances. Believers who follow their own will, instead of the Lord's commands; will not experience friendship with Jesus.

The wilderness was a place in which I was pursuing the Lord with all my heart. Therefore, according to His word, He was found by me. The Godhead is no respecter of persons. In other words, He favors people fairly. Those who want Him, pursue Him; and those who pursue Him, get Him. Jesus invited Peter, James, and John to the top of the mountain with Him while the rest had to stay behind (Mark 9:2-7). Why? Because their hearts wanted Jesus more than the rest. What does your heart want? Natural things in this world or Christ? Peter, James, and John got to behold His glory and rest in the cloud of His presence. That is the reward that believers have access to, when their hearts are after the Lord. And it is the greatest gift of all.

As I spent time alone with the Lord in the wilderness, He revealed more of what He had called me to. He clearly showed me that I was called as a messenger, to prepare His people for Him as Elijah and John the Baptist did. Also, He gave me the calling of a watchman. A watchman is to warn the people when they see the sword (judgment) coming upon the land (Ezekiel 33:1-9). These two callings combined with the apostolic anointing, would cause me much suffering in the days ahead. It was all very exciting in 2009 when the Lord was beginning to reveal them to me, but I didn't know how much the call of God would cost me in the future.

In the wilderness, the nights were long, lonely, dark, cold, and sometimes painful. The days turned into years. Even though I was in the presence of the Lord, the solitude afflicted my soul. I felt like I was dying a little each day. I had dreams of large crowds,

traveling ministry, and moving in great signs and wonders. However none of that came. Only more isolation. Day by day the Lord used the wilderness to strip away my desire to be someone important, and to have a place of recognition among leadership in the American Church. Solitude has a way of stripping the human soul of its prideful and lustful desires that I cannot properly express with words. The Holy Spirit used the wilderness to go deep. In my self-will and pride, I thought I had something to offer people, and that I could be a deliverer. Like Moses, I was deceived. Christ removed that foolish thinking from me, and my desire to be known by man.

There were no shortcuts through the wilderness. I looked for them, but found none. My only option was to embrace the dealings of the Holy Spirit, and allow Him to do the work.

The Cross

In April of 2014, I listened to a message on YouTube from a man named Terry Bennett. The message was on the 'Cross-Life.' The Holy Spirit moved upon me as I watched and listened. The power of God came upon me and I began to weep. Terry was preaching about the deception of destiny and calling. He spoke about how many believers have placed their destiny and call above the high Heavenly call of being conformed to the image of Christ. The Holy Spirit broke me. I had been guilty. As I cried out to God in repentance, waves of fire swept over me. The power of the Spirit hit me so hard that I lost consciousness. I hit my head on the floor of our condo, but thankfully I was already on my knees and the floor was carpeted. I woke up to my two year old girl hitting my chest saying, "Da da, you okay?" I will never forget that moment. The Lord showed me my error and the idolatry of my heart, and set me on the right path. Unfortunately for me, the devastation of the ministry idol in my heart would take a number of years.

The Lord used Terry to confirm to me much of what He had taught me in the secret place. As I listened to other messages from Terry, I heard many of the exact things the Holy Spirit had already showed me. This was comforting to me. I had been on a lonely road, and this was the first ministry I had come across that was similar to what I had been called to. I knew that I was not alone, but had just felt alone up until this point. It was evident that Terry Bennett was being used as a forerunner to help prepare the messengers. The Holy Spirit would come in His fiery presence with each message I listened to. I was thankful to have the Holy Spirit guide me through Terry, and give me a greater understanding about the messenger and watchman callings. The Lord was using Terry to mentor me, and I am incredibly thankful for Terry's obedience to the Lord.

Over time, I saw that I had gotten lost in the Charismatic Church's gospel (which is a different gospel). According to the Holy Spirit through Paul, a curse comes upon those who preach a different gospel (Galatians 1:8). Many are still under a curse from worshipping the golden calf of the Charismatic Movement. The gospel that the Charismatic Movement has preached is the gospel of your calling, your ministry, your

anointing, gifts, miracles, power, and prophecy. They have preached the things of God, and failed to preach the high call of being transformed into the image of Christ. They have failed in preaching the cross-life, that brings forth Christ in a person unto the mature man. Jesus killing the self-life of our natural man, taking possession, and then living through us in full measure is the high call. The Holy Spirit taught me this in the wilderness. Because many in the Charismatic Movement have rejected the cross and the wilderness, they are trapped on a Charismatic merry-go-round, sipping the Kool-Aid of a different Gospel than Jesus preached. Jesus clearly lays out the right path to all who accept His call to become a disciple. We must choose to listen to His words in the Gospels, over the words of the Charismatic Movement. Whose disciples will we be? Jesus is preaching and telling us to lose our lives, so He can fulfill His destiny and call through us. The Charismatic Church is preaching and telling us that we have a destiny and a call to accomplish. There is an enormous difference between these two messages.

Up until this point in my journey I was under the deception that the great high calling was to be used by the Lord in anointed ministry (because that's what I heard being preached). I was a product of the error being taught in the church. The Holy Spirit used Terry to break that lie and set me on the path of life. Some of the most anointed ministers with large ministries will find themselves being last in the Kingdom of Heaven because they lived for ministry or themselves. Many people who are first in this earthly life (famous, influential, well-known), will be last in the Kingdom of Heaven (least important). Many believers and ministers who are unknown and last in this earthly life, will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven; because they walked intimately with Christ and pursued the high calling of being transformed into the image of Jesus (Matthew 19:30).

Chapter 10 Trouble in the Church

When I was a kid, some of my family used to call me “T for trouble.” I suppose it was a fitting nick-name that would follow me. Ahab referred to Elijah as trouble also (1 Kings 18:17). Anyone who threatens the political and religious systems will be referred to as a “troubler.”

As I began growing up in the Lord, the Holy Spirit started showing me inconsistencies in His church. Maegan and I were attending a small non-denominational ministry in Montana (we will call the ministry “Little Bethel,” although that wasn’t its real name). We had recently gotten married, and the prophetic words were flowing. We were on the top of the mountain. The pastor of this ministry recognized the calling of God on us, and was welcoming of it. Life couldn’t have been better.

But there was a fire rising up in me. I was spending so much time with the living flame that God is, that I was burning as well. The fire in me would not allow me to overlook some of things that were going on in this ministry. I could have just looked the other way, and there wouldn’t have been any conflict. But is that what Jesus did? Look the other way? I think not. He confronted the religious system, and hit them head on. The entire book of John shows Jesus operating in the apostolic anointing, and warring against the religious system.

If you want to be a carrier of the anointing and fire of God, many people will not like you. The inward fire of God makes many uncomfortable, and they won’t understand you. They misunderstood and judge what they don’t know. Generally, it’s the religious people who only talk about grace, that will misunderstand you (as they misunderstood Jesus). Being a carrier of the fire can be difficult. You may be burning while everyone around you is not, and it’s difficult for you to understand why they are not burning; or why they don’t want to. Carrying the fire is a lonely road. Without question, you will be judged and mislabeled as a “religious spirit,” because the fire causes you to be fully committed to the Lord. Ironically, it’s the religious spirit who will condemn and accuse you of being one. The religious will persecute the burning ones.

The Pastor’s daughter (of the ministry we were attending) was a deacon, and had been posting photos on social media of herself partying and drinking. The Bible indicates that people can drink, however it becomes sin when people get drunk, or when alcohol causes weak believers to stumble. Also, partying with alcohol is a worldly lifestyle (worldliness is sin). I spoke with the pastor about his daughter. All seemed to go well. He said that he would address the issue, and get back to me. He never did either one.

Probably about three months later I wrote a letter to the elders of the church. I don’t remember all that I said, but I told them that unless they repented; they would not enter in to the promises of God, and the ministry would not continue. My letter did not go over well, and to be fair I did not have the authority to say what I did. Things did not go

well for Maegan and I in that ministry after that. We fell from their grace. Maegan and I were treated very differently, to the point that we needed to leave. There was never true repentance by the leaders. The pastor's daughter eventually got divorced from her husband, and opened a bar. The ministry was closed down and dissolved three years after Maegan and I left. If they would have repented, I believe it would have been a different story.

The ministry had started to embrace an evangelist who was giving them false prophecies. The evangelist told them that they would build a large ministry center on a new property, and that it would be better than the International House of Prayer in Kansas City. Even though I was a young believer, I could see that this prophecy was puffed up in pride. But the leadership swallowed the prophetic word and took it into their hearts. I can still remember the pastor's wife saying that IHOP was going to be "passé" (no longer fashionable, out of date). This prophecy was certainly of the flesh.

This prophetic evangelist (whose brother is extremely well known in the Charismatic Church) preached about how he drank a huge glass of beer while preaching from the pulpit in Ireland. He was preaching on religious spirits. I knew that the leadership had told him about my issue with the pastor's daughter. He was preaching directly at me to set me straight, and basically saying I was influenced by a religious spirit. But I knew the truth. The Holy Spirit was moving upon me in holiness, since He is Holy. This is the battle you will face, if you want to follow the Lord as His disciple. The days following that meeting, I was attacked by the religious spirit trying to condemn me. The Lord showed me that the message of false grace and mercy that allows sin to continue has a religious spirit attached to it, similar to the spirit that controlled the Pharisees. Being holy as the Lord is holy is not the religious spirit, it's a command. The Holy One is to live through us.

The ironic thing was that this pastor had actually prophesied that I would operate in a "watchman anointing" a year prior to this incident. He didn't understand what a watchman is actually called to do. The qualifications for a deacon are very clear in the scriptures (1 Timothy 3:8-13). The pastor's daughter did not meet those qualifications. This is not "religious," it's simply about obeying the Lord. He knows what is best for His church. When we disregard His word, we rise up in pride and stand in opposition to Him. The leaders, by refusing to deal with pastor's daughter, were saying they knew better than God and His word. Their actions were showing who they really were. We can either humble ourselves before the Lord when sin is revealed, or dig in and resist. The pastor's daughter was only in that position because of her relationship to the pastor, which is a hallmark sign of the political spirit.

Even though I missed the mark by giving that warning to them before I was actually commissioned to be a watchman, the word I gave came to pass. The ministry didn't make it. This does not make me happy. I am sad that they didn't want to serve the Lord fully and go all the way with him. I hurt because this group didn't allow the Lord to fulfill His calling through them. You will have the same choice they did, which is the same choice the first generation of Israel had when they were coming out of Egypt. They

chose poorly, forfeited God's destiny, and dropped dead in the wilderness; never coming into the promise. We better understand that this was for our instruction, and that the same can happen with us. The false grace message will tell you that God will never do this to you, but the church is full of believers who refused to go all the way with Jesus; and are simply wandering in the wilderness until they die.

I will also address my mistakes at this ministry. I never should have written the letter to the leadership team. I did not carry the authority, or have the command of the Lord to do that. I did apologize to the pastor in person, and I wrote a letter to the elders apologizing. What I should have done is simply met with the pastor again, and informed him that we had to leave the ministry because no repentance had taken place. Being immature, I made a bad decision. This is a part of growing up spiritually, and the Lord is merciful to those who are growing and learning. He did however discipline me by removing His presence from me for a season. A loving Father spans His sons to teach them a lesson when they have misbehaved (Hebrews 12:5-11). True sons receive discipline, because it leads to righteousness. Orphans reject discipline or judgment as a false doctrine, because it doesn't fit their definition of God's love. These people will remain in a state of questioning God's love for them, and never come to the knowledge of the truth. These are the people who are always preaching about and talking about the love of God, and never getting the revelation of His love in their hearts.

So Maegan and I journeyed from Little Bethel in the fall of 2010 to a ministry we will title "Seeker Friendly Charisma." In the first meeting we attended, I looked over and saw a teenager in a wheelchair. I felt like the Lord said, "If you believe that I am going to use you in healing, then you will go over there and pray for that boy." I hesitated a few seconds and then got up and went over to his family. I asked the father if it would be okay if I prayed for his son. The father told me that it was fine. I prayed a simple and short prayer. I asked the Lord to come, commanded the boy to be healed, and released blessing. Nothing seemed to happen, but the father of the boy thanked me.

The next week, an elder of the church came up to me. He asked me not to pray for anyone in the church, and told me that they have a prayer team for that. I remember feeling oppressed after the meeting. I was in the shower and I heard the Lord quote the scripture to me, "Do not forbid him, because he doesn't follow us." In Mark 9:38-39, Jesus' disciples were forbidding someone from casting out demons, because he was not part of their 'prayer team.' Jesus told His disciples not to do that. The Lord was showing me that He was with me, and that He did not support what the elder had told me. Again, I had ran into another religious spirit. The same spirit that opposed Jesus, and told him that healing prayer was not to be administered on the Sabbath (Luke 13:14). We could not remain under that demon, just as Jesus couldn't.

The Next Stops

In late 2010, we traveled from "Seeker Friendly Charisma" to "False Grace Church." In the very first meeting, the pastor talked about how he had a shot of whiskey the night

before. I was thinking, “This whole meeting place is made up of young missionaries. Without a doubt, a number of believers in here are struggling with worldliness and drinking alcohol. Maybe some have repented of partying and drinking, but this leader is going to cause these little ones to stumble into sin, by speaking about drinking hard alcohol (Romans 14:21). These young believers could easily rationalize that since the pastor does it, then it’s okay for them to do it. Then they would even fall into sin, or back into sin. Jesus said it’s better to drown in the sea, then to cause a young believer to fall into sin” (Matthew 18:6-7).

Then the pastor proceeded to give a “prophetic word” that there was someone in the meeting who has a religious spirit, and issues in regards to alcohol. Do you see how the real religious spirit operates? It follows you, and condemns you for standing for the word of God and for the Lord. It tries to twist the truth so you believe a lie, and then be condemned by it; thus falling under its power. The religious spirit is found in formal religion, but it is only found in false grace. Both are ditches. The true life is found in the center of the path. It’s a life of burning devotion, fellowship, holiness, love for God, and the fear of the Lord. You must know the Lord, His truth, and stand against the onslaught of the enemy.

I knew this demon of religion was following me around from ministry to ministry. It was trying to stop me before I went all the way with the Lord. If I had not known the scriptures well, I could have easily fallen off course. We must anchor ourselves in the word of God, or we can easily be destroyed by the attack of the enemy. Demons can speak through any believer or pastor who has not embraced the cross and had their self-life crucified, just as Satan spoke through Peter (Matthew 16:22-23). The scary thing is, this pastor thought he was hearing prophetically from the Lord, even though his “word” and message contradicted scripture. The pastor was being influenced by a spirit of religion who was misusing the grace of God. Therefore the pastor was a messenger for this evil spirit. We must choose if we are going to be a messenger of the Lamb, or a messenger of Satan.

In 2011, we were at our next stop on the church train. We will call this ministry, “Ministry Builder.” This ministry was more evangelical in nature. They believed in the gifts of the Spirit, but the gifts were swept under the rug and never allowed to operate. The pastor was young and driven. He was a gifted teacher, and was building a large ministry. The main focus of this leader was salvation, and then getting people to serve the ministry. The leader was preaching Christ, but the leader himself was becoming larger than Christ. He was becoming a celebrity among the church. It was clear that ambition and success were driving him. This was the exact opposite of what the Lord was doing in me. The Lord was destroying ambition and the need for success in me.

I wondered why the Lord would allow the man to have a successful ministry in his early 20’s, while here I am; almost 30 (at the time) with no ministry whatsoever? The answer, there are two paths. We can choose our own life, or we can choose to pick up our cross and follow Jesus as His disciple. There are many gifted leaders in America who have never been crucified with Christ to the point in which they are no longer living. I

know from experience that it takes many years to die to self. At the time of this writing, I have been allowing the Lord to put my self-life (natural life of Adam) to death for over 13 years. I know for a fact that if I was a gifted teacher and chose to go into ministry in my early twenties, I would be building a ministry to myself right now. Our choices have great consequences. We can choose our own life, ministry, and success; or we can choose to allow the cross to work in us so that Christ has His life, His ministry, and His success through us.

The leader of “Ministry Builder” was intent on having a big and successful ministry with him speaking, writing, and traveling; while slaves served his will. Jesus is intent on building His Kingdom inside of people. Then taking those living stones and building them together into the temple of God where the Holy Spirit dwells (Ephesians 2:21-22).

Every ministry that my wife and I went to was training. We were enrolled in the school of the Spirit, which is better than any ministry school of man. Maegan and I learned just as much from the bad, as we did from the good. The Holy Spirit was teaching us what to do, and what not to do.

Spiritual Abuse

In 2012, it was time to journey onward as the Lord had more to teach us at a different location. Only by moving from ministry to ministry was the Lord able show me these things. Had I stayed in one location for my entire 11 years in Montana, I would not have the understanding that I do. So we arrived at a ministry that we will call, “Shallow Creek.” We were never truly welcomed there, even though we tried to fit in. The pastor and his wife kept Maegan and I at a distance. I understand, by the Spirit, that we were kept at a distance because of jealousy (the same reason Saul pushed David away).

It didn’t take long before I started seeing a spirit of control operating. The leaders called their ministry an “apostolic center,” but the true apostolic was not in operation. The ministry school taught on the supernatural power of God, but a ministry school or a resource center does not make someone apostolic. The real apostolic preaches Christ, His cross, and labors to see Christ formed in believers. Shallow Creek was focused on promoting itself. The main leader wanted recognition among the well-known leaders in the Charismatic Movement.

They preached a damaging spiritual fathers/sons message. Believers in that ministry were treating the leaders like spiritual parents, while the leaders treated the people like orphans. The lead pastors had both divorced their spouses in seminary, and married each other. The pastor thought he heard the Lord tell him that another man’s wife was to be his wife. He also loved her singing voice. So he told the woman this. They then proceeded to divorce their respective spouses and marry each other (all while studying to serve God in Bible College). According to the scripture in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, this should have disqualified them from overseeing a ministry. However, sadly there are a lot of believers and leaders who disregard scriptures that they don’t like. This ministry

couple began their ministry in sin, and therefore sin was the foundation. Bitterness, control, jealousy, and mistrust were in their hearts.

Shallow Creek was supposed to be an equipping center, but no one was being raised up to leadership. No one was being released into ministry or sent out. The only one who ever did ministry was the pastor's son. I saw shameful control operating there. Leaders told the people that God was going to move in revival, so they "better not leave the ministry or they would miss the move of God" (the pastor's son was shown this by prophetic revelation of course). People were told they couldn't be trusted with knowing where the new building was located (that had recently been purchased), because "someone might screw the deal up." During one offering, the pastor told the people that if they didn't give money, they were orphans. He stated that "sons knew how to give."

During this season the Lord allowed me to feel like He felt: "*He was despised, and rejected by men; a man of suffering, and acquainted with disease. He was despised as one from whom men hide their face; and we didn't respect him.*" (Isaiah 53:3 WEB). I understood how Jesus felt when He walked among His people on the Earth. He was certainly not celebrated and well received. At the beginning of His ministry, they tried to kill Him by throwing Him off a cliff (Luke 4:28-30). This is what is referred to as, partaking of the sufferings of Christ. This was a season of pain for me, but I took great comfort as I was following my Master. I was walking the same path that He walked, and feeling what He felt. A disciple is not greater than his teacher. If I was going to be a true disciple, then I had to experience what my Master experienced. This season brought the Lord and I closer together as we shared these sufferings as friends. There is a powerful connection to the Lord when you walk the same path as Him. It can only be understood when you make the choice to follow Him in this way. He will then take care of setting up the experiences for you.

I believe the foundation of these two leaders was badly damaged from the sins of adultery. They were never fully healed, and then they went into ministry together. They didn't seem happy together or in love. The ministry was all they had. I had met with the lead pastor numerous times, wanting to be mentored. But our relationship never worked out. The pastor's secretary finally got back to me about six months after I had asked to be mentored (sons get calls from their spiritual father, and those treated like orphans get calls from the pastor's secretary). The pastor was setting up a meeting with about 12 men who he had chosen to disciple. I agreed to be apart of it. The first meeting was set, but they told me they would let me know the time. They forgot.

The meeting had already started, and the pastor called me and asked where I was at. After several more incidents just like that, it was clear that sitting under this ministry was doing more damage than good. Confusion was at work and operating. I felt the Lord tell me, "I have taught you everything you need to know here. If you don't leave now, then unnecessary damage will be done." We also received a prophetic word from our trusted friend in the Spirit, Susan. She indicated that we were released from our past season, and supposed to move into a new season. The Lord has used Susan over

the years to give us timely confirming words of direction, and we have always appreciated her.

A Breath of Fresh Air

In December of 2013, I was preaching at a small ministry. A pastor named Steve invited me to minister. I have always been thankful for Steve and the opportunities he gave me. Even though the Lord didn't have me forming a partnership with him, I have always wanted the best for him. Anyway, after I had given the message, a woman came up to me and introduced herself. Her name was Linda Munson.

A few days later, I was having breakfast with her husband Val. As we talked, the Holy Spirit fell upon us and we both began to weep. It was the Lord's way of showing us that this relationship was His will. Val had been a pastor for over 55 years, and was the same age as my natural dad. Val and Linda became mentors to us, and even ordained me into ministry in the spring of 2015. I have always been extremely grateful for my relationship with Linda and Val. The Lord put them in our path at just the right time. Maegan and I were walking through some darkness, and the Lord used Val and Linda to bring us into the light. They understood us and took care of us, as parents would do. They taught me a great deal about spiritual relationships. The Lord is faithful to bring seasons of refreshing during our journeys.

The Disaster

In 2014, Maegan and I were attending Friday night meetings at Val and Linda's ministry. Val was having me preach from time to time. Maegan and I also started going to another ministry on Sunday that we will name, "Valley of Bad Notes." Everything went fairly well at this ministry for the first year. The ministry did teach that God doesn't judge anymore, which according to the entire Bible, is a false doctrine and damages the church. Part of the apostolic calling is to combat false doctrine, because it eats away at God's people like cancer or gangrene (2 Timothy 2:17). It's one of the driving forces behind the false grace message that keeps believers bound in sin. A careful read of the New Testament will show that God is still a judge. He has always been merciful, and He has always been a judge. He cannot change as Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

In the summer of 2015, I started reaching out to ministries throughout the valley where we lived. I felt like I was supposed to gather together the younger generation of the body of Christ in that region to go after the Lord for revival. I would soon come to discover that I was wrong. In June I had preached at a meeting where an older prophetic intercessor gave a word. She said that it was time for this generation to pick up the revival that had started with the youth in the past. Wanting that word to be true, and wanting that word to be for me; I took ahold of it.

I reached out to a few people related to the pastor at Valley of Bad Notes, to see if they wanted to be apart of the meeting. The guy said that he needed to get permission from

his “spiritual covering” first, before he could give me an answer. There was something really wrong with this. If he would have said, “Let me seek the Lord and ask Him first, or let me get some counsel;” then that would have been completely understandable. I started to see that the doctrine from the Shepherding Movement had infiltrated this ministry. I have written extensively on this subject titled “Spiritual Covering and Authority,” and can be found on the Generation Chosen website.

I then asked the worship leader at the Valley of Bad Notes if he would help out with the new meetings, and he gave me his word that he would. The guy I asked to be apart of the ministry got back to me, and wanted me to meet with his “covering,” the pastor. So Maegan and I did. The pastor started off the meeting by telling me that none of the people in his church would be participating in the meeting that I would be conducting. He said that the reason for this was because I taught on God’s judgment. This caught me a bit off guard, as it seemed very controlling. The Lord had made it clear to me over the years that the people of God are His people, not mine or not a pastor’s people.

I should have responded to the pastor, “Okay, no problem. Thank you for your time.” But my self-life had still not been crucified so I let my flesh get the better of me. I responded with a bad attitude, that I am not proud of. A day later the worship leader called me and told me that he wasn’t going to help with the meetings. I was devastated. It was like a bomb just went off. Everything was going fine, and then everything imploded. My heart was to gather people and unite the young leaders for revival. I wanted to see the prophetic word of revival come to pass. The Lord had showed me through the scriptures that there is only one church in any given area or region. I was tired of seeing the divisions created by the different denominations and ministries. I thought I could make a difference. I was wrong. I was in the school of hard knocks, and on my way to secure the same college degree that Elijah had.

The Messenger

Much of the resistance I have encountered in the church is because of the message I must give as a messenger. I have had leaders tell me that I simply need to stick with the “intimacy” message. While I am first and foremost called to preach intimacy with Christ, that is not all I’m called to. I have discovered the hard way that many pastors have a difficult time understanding messengers or watchman. The pastoral call and the messenger call are completely different. I am not called as a pastor, and I probably would not be a good one. The Lord has burned certain messages into me that He wants released to His church. Some of those messages are not popular. For example, Jesus prophesied judgment on Israel (while walking in the office of a New Testament prophet), and it was fulfilled in 70 AD with the deaths of one million Jews; when Rome crushed Jerusalem, and destroyed the temple (Luke 19:42-44). Many leaders in the church have been sowing false doctrine in the church, and preaching that God no longer judges. Obviously from the above scripture, that would prove false. Because the Lord wants His church to be filled with light and truth (instead of doctrines of demons), He burns a message into the messenger. By burn the message, I mean that the messenger becomes the message.

I am using the issue of the judgment of God as an example, because most of the resistance I encountered in Montana was with this one issue. Leaders and believers were rejecting who Jesus is as the Judge and the King. It hurts Him when we reject who He is, because we do not like certain aspects of Him. Jeremiah gave the message that the Lord told him to give. He was rejected and persecuted for it. The messengers of the Lord have always had a difficult and lonely road. The false messengers tell God's people what they want to hear, and get their ear tickling prophetic words posted on the top prophetic websites. The real messengers are forced to go live in the wilderness at the Brook Cherith, because of the backlash.

This generation is going to have to make a decision. Are you going to live to be a mouthpiece and messenger of the Lord, or are you going to live for the acceptance of the current church leaders; so that you will fit in among their leadership circles, and be recognized among them? I would rather be recognized by the Lord as one who is completely given over to His will, His word, and His mission. I am choosing to live for what Heaven thinks about me, and not what leaders on this earth think. If you measure Jeremiah's success by numbers, he would be considered a failure by the American Church (since few repented or responded). However the Lord measures our success by obedience to what God has said. Therefore Jeremiah was a complete success. Are you going to be a messenger of the Lord, or a puppet of the current religious system?

"Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall exclude and mock you, and throw out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven, for their fathers did the same thing to the prophets. Woe, when men speak well of you, for their fathers did the same thing to the false prophets." (Luke 6:22-23, 26 WEB)

Chapter 11 The Valley of the Shadow of Death

On December 12, 2015, I launched the first meeting with Generation Chosen. There was probably around 80 people in attendance, and the Lord's presence was strong during worship. But something happened that I will never forget. As worship was getting ready to end, I felt a powerful fear sweep over me. Not a fear of the Lord, but a fear from the enemy. This was abnormal for me, as I typically do not struggle with fear. The enemy had shown up to oppose me, and it was not a small demon.

Gripped by fear I stepped forward and opened the meeting. The fear began to subside, but I could feel the opposition in the spirit. It was as if the Lord was not with me anymore. I preached a message, but it was not the message I wanted to preach. Instead of preaching Christ, I preached more about the beginning of the ministry the Lord had called me to (which was a great failure). What I believe to have been a principality, stood against me in the spirit. I preached harder against the thing in an attempt to break its power, but I was unsuccessful. Instead of breaking the demonic power, my preaching came off as too hard and didn't seem to hit the mark. When the meeting was over, I knew that it hadn't gone the way it should have. By the time I got to my truck I was physically shaking. The principality that stood against me had "eaten my lunch" so to speak. I literally shook for hours. Confusion immediately hit me, and clouded over me for days after the meeting. Where had the Lord been? I had faith that He would be there to back me up, but He didn't seem to do that.

It would take me a long time in the valley of the shadow of death to understand that my "faith" that night was merely presumption. Because my heart was still too focused on ministry, I had once again heard the Lord according to the desire of my own heart. I had been deceived by my own self-will and desires. I believed it was His will for me to start public meetings, but the truth was; it was only my will. The Lord was not with me during the meeting, because it was not His timing. If it's not His timing, then it's not His will.

I had things backwards. I wanted to step out in faith and have the Lord back me up. He normally will not do this, and for good reason. He doesn't take sides with us, as Joshua found out when he encountered the Commander of the Host in the promised land. We need to take sides with Him. This means that we do not move out of presumption and call it faith, expecting Him to back us up. This was the temptation that Satan hurled at Jesus when he attempted to get Christ to jump from the temple. However, Jesus only did the things that He saw the Father doing, and the Father was not jumping from the temple to prove Himself. The temptation was, "Act independent of the Father, and get Him to back you up."

Only Doing What the Father is Doing

"Jesus therefore answered them, "Most certainly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father doing. For whatever things he does, these the Son

also does likewise. I can of myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is righteous; because I don't seek my own will, but the will of my Father who sent me."
(John 5:19, 30 WEB)

Jesus had such an effective ministry, because He only acted, spoke, and judged according to the will of the Father. This is an example of how we are to be. In John Chapter 5, there are probably hundreds of people gathered around the pool of Bethesda in hopes of being healed. Yet the Father was only healing one person. Jesus did what the Father was doing, and then quickly slipped away, because there was a crowd gathered there. Jesus didn't announce to the crowd that the power of God was present to heal, and that everyone should line up. He didn't use the healing as a promotion for His ministry, as many preachers do today. He simply walked away, because the Father wasn't healing anyone else. It should be noted that this was a location where God's people were gathered who believed in healing, miracles, angels, and the supernatural power of God (otherwise they wouldn't have been there waiting for the angel). In others words, it would have been equivalent to a modern day "Charismatic" healing meeting in the church. Are we okay if the Lord chooses to only heal one person in a meeting where hundreds need healing? Many in the church have a doctrine that states it's God's will to heal all people, all the time. However this doctrine is a direct contradiction to the scriptures in John Chapter 5.

In Acts Chapter 13, the Holy Spirit used Paul to prophesy judgment on a false prophet called Bar-Jesus. The scripture states that he becomes blind for a time or season. Therefore it was the will of the Father for Bar-Jesus to be blind for a certain amount of time. It could have been six months or it could have been three years. Let's say a believer came across Bar-Jesus, and decided it would be good to pray for his healing before the time of judgment was complete. That believer would actually be praying against the will of God, even though they are assuming it is God's will for Bar-Jesus to receive healing immediately. When we do what we think is right, or operate based on our doctrines; we can actually oppose the will of God. This is why we must get to a place in which we are only doing what we see the Father doing. If the Father cannot trust us to only do what He is doing, then He will not show us what He is doing. We will be tested in this by the Father.

We also need to understand that if the Father shows us what He is doing, it means that there are many other things that we are not going to be doing. For example, you get an invitation to conduct a massive meeting with thousands in attendance, but while in prayer the Lord shows you He wants you to drive to a different town that day and pray for one poor person. You might try and justify that praying for thousands of people would be of more good than ministering to just one person. And that the money your ministry will receive from the large meeting will enable your ministry to impact many people for the glory of the Kingdom of God. The temptation will be to succumb to human reasoning, and to go ahead with the large meeting. If we are still struggling with the lusts of this world; we will listen to the justifications of our own hearts, over what the Father is saying to do. If the Lord wants us ministering in a small church in Texas, we cannot be doing the big meeting with the other well-known ministers. If we are

going to do the will of the Father then we will sacrifice fame, money, and what makes sense to the human mind. If we are going to be doing the exact thing the Father is doing, then we will have to pass on a hundred of our own good ideas; and a hundred good ideas from others. We will pay a high price (including unjust judgment from others) if we only do those things we see the Father doing.

Sometimes I have prayed for people to be healed, and they were not healed. Then other times when I prayed for certain people, and they were healed. The reason that most of these people were not healed, is because I was doing what I thought seemed good (my will). I was acting from a general command in scripture to heal the sick, and not a specific command from the Father. It's scary to think that we can be engaged in spiritual activities such as prayer, and actually be fighting against the will of God. To be out of His timing, even when praying for healing, is to be out of His will.

If the Lord is going to trust us enough to show us what He is doing, then we must first pass some tests. The primary test will be to do nothing, if He hasn't shown you anything. Peter, like me, thought it would be a good idea to do something and build something for God.

“Peter answered, and said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you want, let’s make three tents here: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. Behold, a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him.””
(Matthew 17:4-5 WEB)

If the Lord's primary will is for us to be in an intimate relationship with Him. He wants us to simply be with Him, watch Him, and listen to Him. Secondly, we are to take care of our families. If I cannot be a good father to my own children, how can I be a spiritual father to God's children. If I cannot be a good husband to my wife, how can I be a good leader to Christ's wife. We will be tested in our family relationships, and the testing will take years; because it's something we must be proven in.

Doing only what the Father is doing does not just apply to miracles and ministry. It applies to the entirety of our lives. We should be in the job or career that the Lord has chosen for us. We should be living in or moving to the geographical location where the Lord wants us. We need to be gathering with the group of believers that the Lord has shown us, if we are to successfully navigate through the trials and tribulations of this life. Sometimes it takes years for the Lord to position us with the right group of believers, and we need His patience. But it is imperative that we only do what the Father is doing.

The Dark Night of the Soul

The Lord had not been with me during the opening meeting of Generation Chosen, because it wasn't what the Father was doing. I had missed His timing, and therefore opened myself up to a major attack from the principality that showed up at the

meeting. I shut down the meetings shortly after I saw my error. Over the next months, the confusion made way to disappointment, and the disappointment made way to discouragement and frustration. I still had unhealed wounds from church leaders and believers. This perfect onslaught by the enemy sent me into the “dark night of the soul.” I wanted to be away from the hurtful church circles that I had been apart of. I went back to the wilderness alone (spiritually speaking) just as Moses had done. Moses thought he was ready to be the answer, leader, and deliverer that the people of God needed. Until the moment came where the veil of deception was pulled back, and he saw clearly that he had missed God’s timing and acted independently. It was the beginning of the revelation that he was not sufficient in leading and helping God’s people. Only the Lord Himself can fulfill that roll.

In the beginning of 2016, I told the Lord that I did not care anymore about the church, and that I didn’t want to be apart of the things going on in the area anymore. I realize that it was wrong, but that is where I was at the time. It was a dark time, and I had been hurt by things that had happened in the church. I know that some of it was my fault, but I know that it was not all my fault. This is how things go sometimes when you are growing up spiritually, and you are doing your best to follow the Holy Spirit. You are going to make mistakes and miss the mark. That is what His grace and mercy is for.

Also, Maegan and I had been under heavy spiritual attack for years. The principality over the area had been opposing us everywhere we went. That is the danger of receiving a public call to ministry in front of the leaders in a region. We had been marked by that ruling spirit, as soon as the prophetic word was released.

We had not been accepted or welcomed by the majority of the ministries that we attended in the region (just as Jesus was not accepted by most of His people). Jesus told His disciples that if they were not received, then they should wipe the dust off of their feet as a testimony against them (Matthew 10:14-15). The crowds loved Jesus while He was performing signs and wonders, but when He started preaching difficult things; even many of His own disciples walked away from Him (John 6:60-66). The spirit of darkness over that region would not allow us to be accepted or fit in, and unfortunately it had great influence in the body of Christ. The principality was set on causing division, and it was doing quite well. I was ready to obey the words of my Master and get out of town, but it was not yet time. The Lord had more breaking for me to go through first.

The deepest pain I felt was hurting the Lord for missing His timing with the meeting. Secondly for disappointing my friends in the Spirit-filled Amish community that came to the meeting. They put a lot of trust in me, and I felt I let them down (even though they never said that). That is what happens when you miss the Lord. The Lord allowed some of that pain to remain in me for a while, so that I would remember and not make the same mistake again. I told the Lord that missing His will and timing for holding public meetings was one of my greatest failures, and the Lord responded, “It is one of My greatest successes in you, because I used that mistake to bring the end of your

ministry.” I knew that when and if the Lord resurrected the ministry He called me to, that it would be Him living through me and conducting His ministry.

The Darkness

After the misstep, I sunk into a deep pit of discouragement and disappointment, because God had failed to do what I expected Him to do. The pit was so dark that I didn't see a way out. I had fallen in this pit, because ministry was becoming an idol. You cannot fall in a pit like this if Jesus is the focus. Christ, the rock, was in my path; and would not allow me to continue in my self-life. I had fallen on the Rock and been broken to pieces (Matthew 21:44). The Rock broke me into more pieces that I could explain. I didn't want to talk about ministry. I couldn't even pray for people. I had no faith to pray for people, and didn't believe anything would happen even if I did. I know that sounds bad, but Christ broke me. If you haven't been there, then you would not understand. Don't judge what you do not understand. Even though the pit I had sunk into was not Christ, He certainly put Himself in my way so that I would fall upon Him and be broken. The alternative was Him falling on me, and grinding me into powder (that blows away in the wind). This, in His mercy, He did not want to do. He can put pieces back together, and His goal is restoration.

The dark night I experienced turned into three years and six months. As the months went by, the darker it got. Within six months I had lost hope. I lost hope because I had placed too much of my hope in ministry, instead of the Lord. As my calling and destiny in ministry were stripped away, so was my hope. Because I didn't learn the easy way, the Lord had to do things with me the hard way. He stripped my desire for my calling and ministry. He also stripped away my drive, my fire, and my passion. These can all be very good things if they are stewarded properly and used to focus on Jesus. But if they are used to focus on ministry or anything else, they become deadly to our relationship with the Lord. The Lord needed to crush them so that He could deliver me from my unhealthy desire for ministry.

After eight years of burning for the Lord, and spending around eight hours a day with Him; all of a sudden I was struggling spiritually. I was still going to the secret place, but much of His grace had lifted off of my life. This revealed yet another issue in my heart. Spiritual pride had been creeping in, because I had forgotten that the drive, and fire that I possessed to seek the Lord was a grace given by Him. I did not have the same passion to be with the Lord, so the time I spent in the secret place decreased some. I didn't understand what was happening at the time. It felt like I was slipping into the darkness of Hell, and I hated it. But now as I look back, I can see the Lord was saving me from spiritual pride. He had to lift His grace off of me for a time, so I would remember that the burning fire to seek him for hours everyday was only by His grace. With the grace lifted, I was able to see how spiritually undisciplined I was. Without Him, I could do nothing.

It was as if I was staring into the brightness of The Son of God, and became blind as Paul did. The bright light of the Son caused me to lose my vision. Even though I only

saw darkness, I knew the light of the Son was shining in me. The light exposed things in my heart that I thought were already dealt with. Anger, pride, frustration, and impatience poured out of me on various days. I saw where I was truly at, and that the Lord had much work left to do. I understood what Paul was referring to when he called himself “the least of all the saints.” I knew a lot of spiritual things, and had spent much time with the Lord; but was walking in so little. What His light was exposing in my heart was agonizing. I felt like the worst possible disciple, and not even worthy to be called a disciple.

I had thought that I had something to offer in bringing transformation and unity to the church. I believed that I had keys and understanding on how to bring about apostolic change and revival. I was very wrong. I learned in those years of the “dark night” that I didn’t have a clue. I discovered that I could do absolutely nothing, as the Lord showed me who I was apart from His grace. Only the Lord can bring transformation, and release the fire to revive His church. Only He has the blueprint of how it needs to be done. It can only be done in His timing, and in His way. He will put His grace on those whom He chooses to carry this out. And apart from that grace, nothing of Heavenly significance will be accomplished.

Chapter 12

The Crucifixion

It was the summer of 2019. My vision was slowly starting to return. The Lord made a way through the wilderness and formed streams in the desert. We were moving to South Alabama. Maegan had been suffering from chronic pain in her body for the last three years or so, and it was continually getting worse. The cold weather in Montana seemed to make it worse. Also, our daughter Alivia had several things going on medically that required better medical care. I knew the Lord was also telling me that this move was for the spiritual life and benefit of my wife and children. Our season in Montana was over. Sweet home Alabama it was.

I feel I should share about how the Lord spoke to me about Alabama, and why I knew it was his will. We knew it was time to leave Montana due to some medical issues, and Maegan had family in Alabama. I didn't ever want to live in the South, so at first I was resistant. We had a number of places on a list that we could potentially move to. I would go down the list city by city, and ask the Lord if it was His will for each place. When I got to Mobile, Alabama I felt the Lord's burning presence come on me. I felt nothing for any of the other places. I did this numerous times over six months for confirmation, and to make sure I was not hearing according to my own will. Every time I felt the Lord's presence on Mobile, Alabama. He was leading me and guiding me with His presence. Before I could hear from the Lord in this way, I first needed to be in His presence. Also, I always started by saying, "I only want to hear your will Father, not my own." When you know the Lord's will, it gives you the strength to press through any opposition from the enemy. Stand on His will and don't back down. I certainly had the enemy opposing me through a couple of people, but the Lord did what He said He was going to do; and opened an impossible door for a transfer through my job.

Alabama was a relief in ways. My wife and daughter started doing better because of the sunny and warm climate. The Lord began administering inner healing to my wife and I from the last season. You could feel a big difference within a few months. Sometimes you cannot be fully healed until you are removed out of your current environment. Things in your environment will remind you of hurt and pain. For example, every time you see a person or building, it can cause hurtful memories to resurface. When you are no longer reminded of hurtful things on a daily basis, you can be healed more rapidly and completely.

I had thought that things were getting brighter for me as well, but it turns out that I was only seeing a break in the dark clouds. My job in Alabama took away almost every bit of alone time that I had. Meaning I hardly had any time with the Lord throughout the day to solely focus on Him. How could this be God? The Lord wouldn't move me to a place where I don't have very much time with Him, would He? The secret place had become my life, and now I was around constant noise and activities. I used to be surrounded by trees and mountains, and now I was surrounded by interstates and

traffic. The Lord had changed me so greatly in Montana, that I was a completely different person. Confusion started to set in. Did I miss the Lord's direction?

When we are going through transition, we are in a vulnerable state. The enemy will try to sow confusion during spiritual and physical transitions. Confusion is like a cloud that blocks your spiritual vision. If the enemy can get you disoriented during this time, then he can get you off course and moving in the wrong direction. It's during these crucial times, where we need to get before the Lord and see what He is saying inwardly. He will guide us by His peace, and we will "know" what is right inwardly. The mature allow Christ to lead and direct through them.

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The Lord's presence began to fade as the amount of time with Him in the secret place faded. It was the greatest pain I could ever experience. To be with Him is life, and not to be with Him is death. I suddenly understood how horrible Hell is. To be in His presence and to know Him, then be cast away from Him is Hell. All unbelievers will kneel before Him and feel His glorious presence. They will feel His perfect peace and love. Then they will receive their eternal judgment. Forever, they will be alive in Hell being tormented, while remembering what the Lord's beautiful presence felt like. The Hell of remembering His presence and not having it, will be worse than the physical torment of Hell itself.

Regret started to creep in. It was trying to take me out, and I battled it for months. The spirit of regret was making me regret leaving the secret place in Montana. I had never struggled with regret, as I am a person who is always focused on the future. I can now see how regret can and will cripple people. The spirit of regret woke me up in the middle of the night and tormented me. It was in a bitter battle. I was able to defeat it by standing in the fact that Christ had me right where He wanted me. He was allowing this season to do work in me, and I needed to submit to the season my Master had put me in. I am the Lord's disciple, and He can allow whatever He sees fit. Total submission to the Master's will and plans broke the power of the demonic spirit from afflicting me. Satan will use regret to trap believers in the past. Regret is most effective and powerful. It will keep a believer from advancing with the Lord if we allow it to subdue us.

I cannot put the pain I felt into words. My spirit was grieving because of the lost communion with the Father. If I had never had the secret place of His presence, there wouldn't have been a problem. But to know that glorious place of communion before His throne, only to have it stripped away was awful. I would wake up at night, not able to go back to sleep; because my spirit was troubled and grieving. One morning in December of 2019, I awoke and the Lord's presence came on me in a thick cloud. He said, "My God, My God, why have thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). He continued, "You are learning to sacrifice for others as I did. I came and laid down my life for others. This is your share of my sufferings and it is the crucifixion."

I instantly understood by revelation that as the Lord was hanging on the cross and taking upon Himself the sin of the world; He felt the separation from the Father's presence. I was partaking in this separation from the Father's presence, just as He did.

He was allowing me to feel a small portion of what He felt, and how it affected Him. Jesus taking on our sin must have been a horrible experience that we could never fully understand. Jesus was in such pain physically, and then the darkness of our sin upon Him, caused Him to cry out to God. Death was upon Him and he died for us, taking our place. We should have been forsaken by God but Jesus took our punishment.

He showed me that this painful season of not having a lot of time with Him is necessary for my spiritual growth. It has shown me the pain of being away from Him. It has refocused me. Nothing else matters more than being with Him. Being away from Him is worse than anything else that could happen in this world. It has created an intense cry from the depths of my heart for the living God. He has shown me that I now desire Him more than ministry. I wake up at night and in the morning wanting Him. Not ministry. I miss Him. I'm not alright if I don't have Him. He has used this to refocus me, test me, and purify my heart for Him. I will never forget the pain of not having time with Him and not being in His presence. It is death on a cross. In Montana I was carrying my cross and drinking from His cup of sufferings. In Alabama I was being crucified with Him, and being baptized into His death (Mark 10:38-39).

The enemy also attempted to suck me back into a pit, by trying to get me to believe that this season would last for a decade. The thought of not having a lot of time with the Lord started to darken my outlook, and my hope started to fade. But Jesus reminded me that it is about the journey with Him, and being under His hand. Complete surrender to my Master meant that I had to give Him permission to take even my time with Him in the secret place. The only way through this season was submitting to His will, and He needed to do things in me that could only be done in the perfect environment that He orchestrated. I was faced with another test of trust. Did I trust the Lord to do the work needed to be done on the cross, and then move me into a new season with Him in resurrection life? Or would the Lord abandon me on the cross to suffer endlessly? Would I attempt to come down off of the cross, before the Lord took me off? I knew that the Lord missed our intimacy more than I did, and that He would restore it as soon as He could. I knew this because I know Him. All of those years we spent together had built a friendship and trust. I had to listen to His inner voice over the loud voice of the enemy.

The Lord told me that Alabama was a step. You sometimes cannot get directly where the Lord wants you to be at, from where you are. You must take a step first. After you take a step, you see where you are supposed to go; or where you are supposed to go will be more accessible. We can't get to where the Lord wants us to be, unless we take His steps.

Alabama was my crucifixion. The Lord will use circumstances in your life to simulate carrying your cross. Then comes the circumstances that He will use to crucify your self-life. Only then can we say like Paul, *“I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20 WEB)*. Christ living through us is the goal, and the high call of God. There is no other way, except by crucifixion. If we

were greater than our teacher, then we would not have to go to the cross. However we are not greater than our teacher.

The Point of the Cross

The Lord is looking for willing vessels so He can have His way through them. Not everyone will allow Him to put them on a cross. He can give a jackass spiritual gifts (Numbers 22:28-30), but He will only live and move through empty vessels. Many leaders who have the gifts of the Spirit operating in them, think they have attained to maturity. The church in Corinth was a very carnal and immature church, yet the gifts were in operation among them.

The Lord has shown me that only He can do what needs to be done, in order to bring His bride to fullness. I know with certainty that I am not able to fulfill my call. Only Jesus is able to lead, prepare the bride, release revelation, minister in the anointing, transform His people inwardly in to living stones, and then build those living stones together corporately. His grace will flow forth like a mighty rushing river and complete the work of ministry from a vessel who has been crucified with Christ, and is dead to self. Those leaders who refuse to go to the cross, will continue ministering in their gifts; but Christ will not minister through them. Therefore their ministries will fall way short of accomplishing the Lord's eternal will in His people.

If we allow the Lord to crucify our self-life (ambitions, plans, dreams, ministry, destiny, will, ways, timing, purposes), then Christ will shine through us. He will live through us in His resurrection life and power). Then the hearts of people will be set on fire for the Gospel, and experience a true inward revival. People who the Spirit is drawing will then be awakened to Christ in you, the hope of glory. When Christ is living in and through us, He will be doing works of power through us. The greater works will be accomplished by Jesus doing them through us as He prophesied (John 14:10-12). At this level, we will only be doing what we see Jesus doing by His own authority, as Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing by the Father's own authority. This is the great hope for those willing to go all the way to the crucifixion.

Hell

I mistakenly thought that resurrection was coming after my crucifixion. That should be the next step right? As I soon found out, I had made an incorrect assumption. The Holy Spirit would soon remind me that resurrection did not immediately occur after Jesus was crucified. He spent three days in the grave, and then He was raised from the dead. Paul says that Jesus descended into the lower parts of the earth (Ephesians 4:9). Peter said that during that time, Jesus preached to the spirits that had been disobedient and imprisoned in the days of Noah (1 Peter 3:19-20). Jesus spent time in Sheol (hades or the world of the dead) after His death on the cross.

My soul had been feeling worse and worse. I finally realized that it was no longer on the cross, but in Hell (not literally, but spiritually I was experiencing a small measure of

what Jesus did). Again, as a disciple, I was following my Master and partaking of His sufferings. I had thought the crucifixion had felt like Hell, and now I saw how wrong I was. My desire was to wait quietly before the Lord in His deep presence as in the days of old, but I could not. Work consumed my time and hindered my focus, yet Jesus did not allow me to leave my job. I wanted to sneak away to the secret place of solitude before the Lord, but chains were around my soul preventing me from doing so. The daily involvements of the natural life tormented my soul. I desperately wanted to escape this prison of torment, but had no power to do so. Words cannot describe Sheol, it must be experienced by the soul.

While attending church gatherings, I would stand in worship and weep. I knew that this was where I was called to be. An environment of praying, preaching, worshiping, and gathering people to seek the face of the Lord. However, this life was escaping me. What I was supposed to be doing was far from me, as I was with my Master in Sheol.

The pain of my soul increased beyond what I could bear. I told the Lord that I needed Him to help me, and that I couldn't take anymore. I told Him that I couldn't go on. I felt awful, but I still did not have the revelation of where my soul actually was. Then one day I heard the Holy Spirit very clearly. He said, "You will not leave my soul in Hell." I knew the Lord was quoting Psalm 16:10 to me. The word became living in my heart, and knew where I was spiritually. As I searched the scriptures, I saw what Peter had preached in regards to Jesus:

"he foreseeing this spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was his soul left in Hades, nor did his flesh see decay." (Acts 2:31 WEB)

Peter states that Jesus was not left in Hades. The Holy Spirit was revealing to me that He would not leave me in this state. In a set time, He would deliver me. He was showing me that my Master had to suffer through it, and I had to follow my Master through it if I wanted to experience resurrection life. Many desire the resurrection life of Christ to flow through them, but are unwilling to pay the price for this to occur. We have a choice of two paths. Which one will you choose? Your way, or the way of the Spirit? The way of the Spirit may be painful at times, but the end result is the life of Christ flowing through us and manifesting the Kingdom of God.

We each have a different journey with the Lord. We must be able to hear what the Spirit is saying to us, and discern where we are at spiritually on that journey. The only way to navigate the spiritual journey is with a spiritual compass. If we cannot discern what the Lord is currently doing in our life, it will open the door to confusion and disarray. We can go through some of the most difficult times and seasons if we understand what the Lord is doing and saying. If we are wondering around without spiritual direction and sight, we are at great risk of being taken out by the enemy. Satan will strike at the most opportune time.

Only when we find ourselves unable to "do it" anymore, do we see Christ take over and live through us. If we are still strong enough to do things on our own, Christ will be

weak in us. If we discern our actual weakness, Christ becomes strong and lives through us in the power of His resurrection. If you are in a place in which you feel to weak to go on, then you are right where the Lord wants you. Ask Him to “go on” through you.

I have heard it said that before the resurrection, there was a grave. Before the power of Christ’s resurrection comes forth from us, the crucifixion and death of Christ must work in us.

“Most certainly I tell 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 WEB)

“always carrying in the body the putting to death of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.” (2 Corinthians 4:10 WEB)

Chapter 13

The Test of Love for God

The greatest opportunity we have in this life is to pass the test of love. How much do we love the Lord? The worst thing that we can do is waste our trials, and not see them for what they really are. An opportunity to prove our love for God. Love that is not proven, is not a deep pure love; and may not be love at all. We can say we love God, but when circumstances in life occur, our declaration will be tested. Many believers allow the circumstances of life to drive them further from the Lord by becoming bitter. Circumstances in life can be so brutal that they cause us to close off our hearts to the Lord, and stop journeying with Him. We can still be saved and have a basic Christian relationship with Him, but we can lose the burning fire of intimacy.

Jesus, speaking to His disciples about believers says, "*Because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold.*" (Matthew 24:12 WEB). Jesus is saying that the love believers have for God will grow cold. If we have love for God then we will love the brethren. If we do not have a love for God, then we cannot love the brethren. He should be our first love, the One who gives love, and the One who loves the brethren through us. In this time before Jesus returns, love will grow cold toward God in the hearts of many believers. The question is, will this be the case with us?

If we have allowed offense or bitterness toward God, then we are at high risk of our love growing cold for Him. The church that was in Ephesus actually left their first love (Revelation 2:4). They were never able to repent, their love grew cold, and the Lord removed the lamp stand (the entire regional church). The church in America is living this right now. The cares and anxieties of this world, the distractions of this age, false glamour, deceitful riches, and the passionate desire for other things; are causing the love of the American church to grow cold. These things are causing her to leave her first love. One of the greatest challenges we face, is keeping our eyes on Jesus in the midst of all our comforts, pleasure, and stuff.

This is a daily battle that we face, and it is something that can only be overcome by the grace of God. Yet the words of Jesus the Prophet will not fall to the ground. The love of many will grow cold. This chapter is for those who do not want to be one of the many, but long to be one of the few; the burning ones.

Suffering

People suffer in this world whether they know Christ or not. Christians will suffer in this life whether they have chosen to go all the way with Christ as His disciple or not. Tribulation is simply apart of living in a fallen world (John 16:33). Suffering can be wasted and it can be pointless. The choice is ours. If we choose to go all the way with Christ and carry our crosses as His disciples, He will use the suffering in our lives to transform us into His image. Suffering has a unique ability to crucify our self-life, if we are journeying with Christ. Suffering is the ultimate test that God can use to determine

our true love for Him. Not that the Lord doesn't already know our level of love for Him, but He needs us to know how much we really love Him.

The test of suffering is this: do we still love the Lord, trust Him, believe in Him, and hold Him in high regard if bad circumstances occur in our lives? Many believers never go on to fullness with the Lord because they allow trials and sufferings to drive them away from the Lord instead of to Him. The thought process is, "How could the Lord allow these evil and horrible things to happen to me if He really loved me?" And truly the afflictions of this life are brutal, and have the potential of taking any one of us out, if we are not walking closely to the Lord. But we must see things from the proper Heavenly perspective. If we prove to the Lord that we really love Him above all else, we will be rewarded for eternity. We will be close to Jesus, be among the greatest in Heaven, (Matthew 5:19), and be an overcomer who rules and reigns on the earth with Jesus (Revelation 2:26-27).

In order for us to be granted this great reward of having Christ, we must be found worthy. In order to be found worthy, our love for Him must be tested. We can be saved by grace and faith in Jesus, but still only love ourselves. Our eternal position before the Lord will be determined in this life, and it will be determined by how much we love the Lord. This life is very short and it is a test. Failure to understand that truth has led to the spiritual shipwreck of many. The more carnal we are, the more we live for this life; because we can see it. But the just shall live by faith. Those who live for this life are placing all of their focus on a temporary residence, but those who live by faith are looking for a city which has foundations; whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11:9-10). In order to pass the test of love, we must be properly aligned with the Kingdom of God, and see from an eternal perspective.

“and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if indeed we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which will be revealed toward us.” (Romans 8:17-18 WEB)

This scripture shows us that if we suffer with Christ, glory will be revealed in us as we are glorified together with Christ. We will have our great reward, Christ. There is no greater reward. But we must suffer with Him in order to reign with Him (2 Timothy 2:12). Our love for Him can only be purified and tested through afflictions and trials. Jesus proved His love for the Father by going all the way to the cross for His will to be accomplished. This life is our opportunity to prove our love for the Father. Will we be found worthy as Jesus was?

Job faced one of the most difficult tests any follower of the Lord has ever faced. The Lord allowed Satan to strip away Job's prosperity, his children, and his health. Just one of those things is enough to break many Christians. I could not even imagine the severe pain of losing my children. What the Lord allowed to happen to Job does seem cruel if we don't know Him. But we know that the Lord is love, and the reason why the Lord allowed this was so Job could be found approved by God. The Lord's desire was for Job

to pass the test in his temporal earthly life, so he could be in close proximity to the Lord for eternity (the greatest in the Kingdom). The Lord loved Job so much, that He wanted Him to be found worthy for this position. Job did not pass the test perfectly as he did get a bad attitude (which he was rebuked for by the Lord). But who wouldn't get a bad attitude under those circumstances? So maybe Job didn't score 100 percent on his exam, but he did score pretty high. He remained faithful to the Lord, and he proved that he loved God by His works; for faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). Love confessed that has not been proven, may only be a confession. Confessed love that is proven (like faith), is more precious than gold (1 Peter 1:6-8).

Job will be ranked among the overcomers in Heaven because he passed the test of love for God. Job's voice echos through the ages to our generation, "Though He kill me, yet will I trust Him." (Job 13:15). Job proved that He trusted God unto the death. Job did not deny the Lord, or become bitter against Him. Everything had been taken away from him, but his confession cries out, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21).

The Greatest Test of the Greatest Love

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13 WEB)

Peter was tested in this area several times. Through the outcome of Peter's trials, we can see his progression in love for God. Jesus tells His disciples what the greatest demonstration of love is. Peter tells Jesus that he is willing to die for him (indicating to Jesus that he loves Him more than the other disciples).

"But Peter answered him, "Even if all will be made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble." Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you." All of the disciples also said likewise." (Matthew 26:33, 35 WEB)

Then Peter's first test came, and he denied the Lord three times. Peter was very strong in himself (self-will). Peter thought that he was strong enough (in his own strength) to stand with Jesus, even in the face of death. He found out that his own strength could only take him so far. The Lord needed Peter's strong will to be broken, so that he would no longer trust in himself. The Lord needed Peter to see his own weakness, so Christ could then live through Peter and be strong in him. After the Lord's resurrection, He exposes Peter's self-life to him, so he can repent and be changed:

"So when they had eaten their breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I have affection for you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I have affection for you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you have affection for me?" Peter was grieved because he asked him the third time, "Do you have affection for me?" He said to him, "Lord, you

know everything. You know that I have affection for you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep. Most certainly I tell you, when you were young, you dressed yourself, and walked where you wanted to. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you, and carry you where you don’t want to go.” Now he said this, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. When he had said this, he said to him, “Follow me.”” (John 21:15-19 WEB)

The first two times that Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him, he is using the same Greek word (Agapao) for love that He used in describing the greatest love that we can have (John 15:13). Peter answers both times with a different Greek word (Phileo) for love, meaning “to be a friend or friendship love.” When Jesus asked Peter the third time, He uses the Greek word for friendship love (Phileo).

Peter is grieved as he admits to Jesus that he only loves Him as a friend, and not with the deepest love of which one lays down his life for another. What Jesus does seems hard, but He needs Peter to see, understand, and have his self-life crushed. Jesus then prophesies to Peter, that he will mature to the greatest kind of love. History showed that Peter grew in his love for God, and was crucified for Jesus. Peter requested to be crucified upside-down, because he was not worthy to be crucified the same way as the Lord. His request was granted.

Peter is an example to us of how we can progress in the love of God, and a love for God. We must yield to the Holy Spirit, and allow Him to love through us. The end result for Peter was that he did not love his life unto the death. His self-life was gone, and he laid down his life for his Friend.

Trials and Afflictions

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various temptations, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. Let endurance have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1:2-4 WEB)

If we are going to pass the test of love, and be found worthy to rule and reign with Christ on the earth for 1,000 years (Revelation 20:4); we must let Him transform us into His image (the mature man). Christ is able to increase to the full measure in us, when our self-life decreases. One way our self-life decreases is by means of trials and tribulations. We must have a revelation of God’s love for us, so we can stand in the day of trial. A revelation of His love, comes from knowing Him inwardly. Knowing Him inwardly, comes from waiting on Him in silent prayer, and communing with Him in our hearts. Knowing the Father’s love for us, by an inward revealing, is the only way we will be able to stand if life comes crashing down upon us as it did with Job. Christ must become our life.

Life can break anyone. The hardships are endless, but a few are: divorce, sickness, disease, betrayal, financial hardship, and death of a loved one or child. How we respond to the Lord during and after these events, will measure the love we have for Him. Those

that really love Him are those that really want Him. Those that really want Him, will have a close proximity to Him forever. Thankfully, like Peter, we have an opportunity to see where we are at in our relationship with God; and grow in our love for God as Peter did. When these trials occur, will we be resentful, angry, or bitter toward God? Or will we take the attitude of, "I have Christ as my life and I am under His hand. Whatever He has allowed, He has done so for a reason. I know He loves me and is allowing this trial or suffering for my own good. If I don't walk through this, then I will not become more like Him. If He wanted to change or prevent this circumstance, He could have. Even though I don't see His exact plan and purpose in this, I trust Him. I am His possession. The Master may do with me whatever He wills. Complete surrender."

Satan can also attack us without permission and we must be able to discern the difference. If Satan is attacking then we obviously stand against him, pray, and fight our way through the attack. We must have our senses trained to discern both good and evil (Hebrews 5:14). Journeying with the Lord requires insight to what is happening around us in the spiritual realm.

Trials in Our Health

There are believers who don't believe that the Lord allows sickness to come upon His children. However the scriptures prove this doctrine to be false. Obviously none of us want or like sickness and disease, but we should desire to know the truth. It is equally obvious that Satan does attack us with sickness and disease, and Jesus went around healing those afflicted during His earthly ministry. We must discern if we are being attacked by a demonic sickness, or if the Lord has allowed sickness for a reason. We engage in a spiritual war against Satan if he is attacking with unauthorized sickness and disease. Sometimes, if the Lord allows infirmity, we have to endure until our healing comes as Job did. Some healings will not happen overnight, and some may.

Clearly the Lord allowed sickness and disease to come upon Job. The Lord did not enjoy allowing Satan to afflict Job, but He allowed it to purify Job. Had Job never gone through this most serve test, his love for the Lord would not have been proven. Anyone can say they love the Lord, but their actions toward the Lord will determine their love for Him when negative circumstances occur. Will we still love and trust the Lord even if He allows our good health to be touched? For those who still don't believe God will use sickness and disease, here are a few New Testament scriptures: Acts 5:1-10, Acts 12:21-23, Acts 13:6-12, Matthew 18:33-35, 1 Corinthians 11:30, Revelation 2:21-23, Hebrews 12:5-11, and 1 Corinthians 5:5.

When my wife was around 11 years old she was diagnosed with Von Willebrand's Disease. This bleeding disorder caused her to be weak and sick. She had to have a port-a-cath so that she could take transfusions, in order for her blood to clot. At age 17, when she had started serving the Lord, He healed her from that disease. My wife was worshiping the Lord in a church meeting, and she saw a vision of a hand touching her from her head to her toe. Then she heard the Lord say, "I am cleansing your blood." Next she felt a fire go through her body. She knew that she was healed. She stopped

taking the transfusions, and did not have any more symptoms from the disease. She was tested for the disease, and the results showed that she no longer had it. She suffered with it for around 6 years, and then the Lord healed her.

Now the Lord is the King. Jesus could have healed her right when she was diagnosed, or He could have chosen to heal her after three years; but He didn't. Why didn't Jesus heal the man at the gate called Beautiful when he was conducting His public ministry? Instead he left the man crippled and unable to walk. Then God used Peter to heal the man later on (Acts 3). The Lord has a timing for everything. His timing hovers around our eternal benefit. Jesus is not focused on this earthly life that is only temporary. He is focused on us being conformed to His image so that we will overcome this life, and attain to the high calling. Jesus is focused on our eternal position with Him, and not our position in this fleeting earthly life. Everything He does or allows is motivated by love and is meant for our eternal benefit.

In December 2014, I was diagnosed with a detached retina and rushed into eye surgery days later in order to save my vision. This was a tremendous blow to my faith, as I thought the Lord was protecting me. Yet like Job, this was an opportunity to prove my love for the Lord. Would I distrust Him and turn my back on Him because I didn't understand? Or would I still serve Him because I knew He was a loving God, and He Himself was my Life?

I had some very dark days after the surgery just as Job. I didn't understand why He allowed my retina to become detached. He easily could have upheld my health in His limitless power. Did this happen because I was engaged in warfare prayer that was beyond my sphere of authority, and didn't have enough protection; or was I fasting too much, and for the wrong reasons? I still don't have the exact answer. How could I trust the Lord again after He had failed to protect me? I was giving Him everything I could. I was pursuing Him with my whole heart, staying free of the bondage of sin, and doing all the right things in my private spiritual life. But remember Satan's words:

"Satan answered Yahweh, and said, "Skin for skin. Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce you to your face." (Job 2:4-5 WEB)

And so the great test begins. Will we turn on God if He doesn't give us good health, money, and blessings? Will we serve God because of what He gives us and does for us, or will we serve Him for who He is? Do we really love Him, even when our souls are afflicted with pain and grief? If we never had to experience suffering during our lives in these earthly bodies, we could not be rewarded for our proven love for the Lord. The rewards will be given to the overcomers. How can we be rewarded if we haven't overcome anything?

Shortly after my eye surgery, my wife started developing pain in her body. The pain has increased through the years, and at the time of this writing, is still present. At the end of every day her muscles are in great pain, and she is exhausted. We are contending and

waiting for the Lord's healing power to touch my wife yet again. The Father will restore my wife's health just as He did with Job, for He is a good Father. The trials have kept coming, and we are not sure how long this one will last. But we have yet another opportunity to prove our love for God. I'm not saying we are overjoyed with the suffering, but we are bearing the suffering. Through many tribulations and hardships we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22).

How could my wife and I have a deep burden to see people healed from sickness and disease, if we didn't understand the severe suffering that physical infirmities afflict on people? If we are called to be leaders, how could we lead believers if we don't have a clue of the suffering they have gone through? How could I have the compassion of the Lord for His people, if I didn't understand the pain of His people?

The Lord wastes nothing. He will make all things work together for good if we love Him (Romans 8:28). In other words, if we don't really love Him, He may not make everything work together for good. Some believers only love the Lord because He does things for them (which is a childish love). That scripture is conditional, and is taken out of context by many in the church. We prove we love Him by obeying His commands (John 14:15), and how we respond to Him in the trials of life.

I will admit that I have not passed every test perfectly. I have had bad attitudes, and I've sunk into periods of darkness. I've been upset, because I didn't understand what the Lord was doing. However I submitted to the Lord, and allowed the Holy Spirit to live through me. By doing this, my love for the Lord has grown over the years. It's all by His grace that we continue in the spiritual journey with the Lord.

Hurt by Leaders or the Church

Most people who have been Christians for any length of time, will experience being hurt by others in the church. Many will experience being hurt by leaders. To spiritually young believers this can be detrimental. Being hurt by your brethren and leaders is a very real thing. It has happened to my wife and I, and in fact has side-lined us on the path of life for a time. I know the Lord has allowed us to experience this in order to help others.

Many believers who are hurt by the church or church leadership, will drift away from the Lord because of it. They will allow their hurt to drive them away from an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. I know of people who once believed in the gifts of the Spirit, miracles, apostles, and prophets; who then turned away from all of it because they were hurt by the church and leadership. Now they stand in opposition of the very things they use to believe in, and speak against those very things that are in the word of God.

We must understand that there are going to be abuses of those spiritual things mentioned above in the church, because people are not perfect. Just because there are abuses by men, does not mean that we can set aside the scriptures. Being hurt and offended does not give us the right to disregard the word of God. There are people that

used to walk with God, but because of hurt and offense from the church; turned against God Himself. Paul speaks of these people:

“Brothers, be imitators together of me, and note those who walk this way, even as you have us for an example. For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, as the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who think about earthly things.” (Philippians 3:17-19 WEB)

Offense can be a black hole of which some believers never come out of. Satan will target immature believers with hurt and offense. The main reason that believers are hurt and offended is because they put more trust in the church, leaders, or the things of God; than they do the Lord Himself. Jesus must be first and our first love. If He is second or if anything else rivals Him; our hearts will be at great risk to be devastated. The church is not Jesus, and if our hearts are to stay protected; He must be the focus of our hearts. Jesus will allow us to be hurt and disappointed with anything we put our trust in above Him. If our focus is more on leaders or ministries than the Lord, we are setting ourselves up for a fall. Spiritually immature believers need to be taught this, so their faith is not shipwrecked when they experience hurt in the church.

This test will come to every believer. Will we allow hurt and offense to extinguish our love for God? Will we allow it to dampen our love for God? Maybe some believers don't turn away from God, but they allow the hurt to affect them; so they lose their passion for the Lord. They are no longer journeying and progressing with the Lord, just going through the Christian motions.

We must forgive whoever has hurt us. This may seem impossible, because unforgiveness can be as a prison cell. We cannot overcome this giant on our own. We must ask Jesus to live through us and forgive through us. We have to stop trying to “do” things, and start allowing the only One who can do them to live in us. Jesus can empower us to truly forgive, if we ask for His grace.

We have all sinned against people and hurt people, yet Jesus has forgiven us for our sins. If we don't allow the grace of God to empower us, we will find ourselves trapped in a prison cell of tormenting evil spirits. The Father will turn all of His children over to demons, as judgment, who do not forgive others from their heart (Matthew 18:32-35). These tormentors, evil spirits, will be given access to our souls, and we will be walking prison cells. There are many believers in this current state, because they have not forgiven others. Many never recover from this state of torment, and they fail to fulfill the Lord's purpose.

The Lord is testing our hearts. Will we allow others to drive us out of His love, or will we choose to abide in His love. If we choose to continue on the path of life with the Lord, His love will increase in us. He will heal our pain and hurt. He will remove our self-life, which is the source of our offense. As the Lord's love increases in us, He will live and love through us. Then, with Christ living through us, we will not take into account the

wrongs suffered (1 Corinthians 13:5). The greater the measure of Jesus living through us, the less we will be offended by leaders or others in the church. When I was a young believer I was easily offended. I know that I am currently far from perfect, but I have seen a huge change in this area over the years.

After we have allowed Christ to increase in us, His love through us will enable us to love Him and our brethren. *“No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God remains in us, and his love has been perfected in us.”* (1 John 4:12 WEB).

And when His love is perfected in us, we will not be afraid to face the judgment seat of Christ. His perfected love in us will give us confidence that we are not going to face a negative judgment before His throne. However if we have not allowed Christ to love through us, and been perfected in love; we will have fear before the judgment seat of Christ. We will face a punishment before the judgment seat of Christ for not yielding to the love of Christ:

“In this love has been made perfect among us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, even so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear has punishment. He who fears is not made perfect in love.” (1 John 4:17-18 WEB)

So for those of you who have been hurt in the church, don't let that hurt drive you away from Christ. Allow it to drive you to Him, for He is the only safe place. He is healing and will minister inner healing to you. Pursue Him and choose to abide in His love. He will put His love in you, and transform you. Jesus is worth it, and He will give you the grace to pass the test of love for Him. You cannot pass it with your own love, you need His love. His love will keep you journeying with Him in the midst of the great evil that is manifesting on the earth, and in the church.

Disappointment and Failed Expectations

Some of the darkest holes that I have fallen into, happened when I had unrealistic expectations of the Lord. In other words, my self-nature expected the Lord to do something in a certain way, and in a certain time. Wanting the Lord to commission me in my timing is one. A second would be, missing God's timing for the startup of public meetings for Generation Chosen.

The breaking of that season was so severe that I had many opportunities to turn from the Lord and give up. The darkness was so intense that I wasn't sure I would make it. I came to the end of myself. I could no longer go on, and I told the Lord. Then He showed me that I had been serving Him in my own strength all that time. Just like Peter, I thought I could go all the way with the Lord; but it was in the strength of my own self-life. The Lord showed me that my self-life was being crucified, so He could live. I learned the hard way that I can only follow the Lord in His power and strength, and the ministry that He has called me to do, will be performed by His Spirit.

Slowly the Lord began to pull me out of the dark season. I could see the Morning Star shining as the day was dawning. The Lord brought back my focus on Jesus. The longing and desire to be with Him was much more pure. Even more slowly He started to bring back a desire for ministry. Only now I understand that I am completely under His hand, and that I do not move until He sends me. I can do nothing unless He makes it happen. The Lord had to take Abraham and Sarah to a place of barrenness, before He would produce the promise through them. Man or the self-life of man can never produce the will of God. The Lord takes us to a place in which we realize that we can't do it, so that He can work through us to accomplish His will.

During this dark night of the soul, I could have turned from the Lord, because He didn't do things in my way and in my timing. But empowered by His grace, I chose to follow Him through the darkness and the stripping. I knew that He was the answer to eternal life, and I trusted Him. I didn't understand everything that was going on, but I continued in His love. We must abide in His love and grace. The Spirit of God will impart life to pass the test of love for God.

Chapter 14 Places of Refuge / A Canopy of God's Glory Fire

The Lord designated cities of refuge under the Old Covenant for His people to escape death and to be protected (Numbers 35, Joshua 21). The Hebrew word for refuge is derived from the Hebrew letter that means "hiding behind a covering." We will examine what this means in relation to the covering of God's glory. If we are going to journey with the Lord, we must see what He wants to do with His church. We must also discern where He desires us to live; for protection and involvement in His plan and purpose.

As it was in the days of Noah and Lot, so will it be at the end of this age (Luke 17:26-30). This scripture indicates that the last days of the current age will be like the days when fire and brimstone rained down from Heaven and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. The words and prophecy of Jesus will come to pass, whether we believe them or not. Lot, who was a believer, was spared from this destruction. So will the Lord spare and deliver His followers in the coming days.

Jesus makes a specific point to state that our days will be like Lot's time period. Judgment is coming upon the wicked, and God's people are still on the earth living amongst a wicked system. The Lord is revealing for those who have ears to hear, that He will be a deliverer to His chosen people in this time period, as He was for Lot in his day. Believers who are not really following the Lord, and are asleep with the things of this world; will most likely be caught off guard with the things that will take place at the end of the age. Jesus will come suddenly for these unfaithful servants, and they will be swept away with the wicked (Luke 12, 1 Thessalonians 5).

This does not mean that these believers will go to Hell, just that they will perish before their time; and not fulfill the Lord's earthly call for themselves. They will be judged before the throne of God for not knowing the Lord, not being awake, not using their time well, and not stewarding properly what the Lord had given them. These are the unfaithful servants.

We are called to discern the times and seasons. We are in the time of the end. God's people will not be caught up or raptured until the last day of the age, after the great tribulation (John 6:40, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, Matthew 24:29-31). This means that we will have to endure through the fire and destruction that is coming (Revelation 8:6-7, 9:17-18).

A.A. Allen had a vision in 1954 about the United States being attacked with missiles. William Branham had a vision in 1933 and saw America in smoldering ruins. The Lord has used prophets to give us warning and insight so we can prepare. Will we take heed, and prepare for the things that are not yet seen? Noah found favor with God and received a good testimony, because he moved by faith and prepared an ark for the saving of his household; when he was warned by God of disaster coming (Hebrews 11:7). Have we not been warned by the book of Revelation about what is coming? Will we move by faith as Noah did to prepare for what is going to happen?

Preparing Inwardly

Our primary way of preparing should be inwardly. Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven is within. We must develop the secret place of prayer and wait on the Lord in silence. This will open the door for communion with Jesus, and we will enter into His manifest presence. This is how we get “in the Spirit.” Inwardly, we can go before the throne of God, since the Lord sits enthroned in our hearts. Once this place of communion is established, we will behold the glory of the Lord as in a mirror; and be transfigured into His very image (2 Corinthians 3:18). We will go from one degree of transfigured glory to another degree of glory as we behold Him over time. It is a process.

Development of the inward life is the most important thing we can do in this life. Being with the Lord in His presence creates a level of intimacy that cannot be put into words. Simply being with the Lord is how we come to know Him, just as we only truly know other people from actually spending quality time with them (in their near presence). It’s the Lord’s desire for all of His children to learn to wait on Him, and develop a lifestyle of being with Him and physically feeling His presence. We were created for communion with Him, and much of the church is currently missing out on its primary Heavenly call of knowing the Lord in a deep inward way.

Places of Refuge

Once inward preparation has become our main focus, the Lord will begin speaking to us about outward preparation. The Lord moved Lot to a place of refuge when He rained down judgment fire on Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord will do the same thing for us who believe His word, and are seeking His face with all of our hearts’. Lot was apart of God’s remnant on the earth during that time period. The Lord has always preserved His remnant, and He will do so with us. The angels sent by the Lord to destroy the twin cities, and rescue Lot; revealed to Lot a place of refuge:

“It came to pass, when they had taken them out, that he said, “Escape for your life! Don’t look behind you, and don’t stay anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountains, lest you be consumed!”” (Genesis 19:17 WEB)

Lot, in his own will, wanted to go to a small town named Zoar; thus he debated with the will of God. The Lord allowed Lot to have his request, but soon afterwards Lot moved to the place of refuge that the Lord had initially spoken to him about (Genesis 19:18-30). The Lord knows what is best for us. We must each hear what the Spirit is saying to us individually. Lot thought he knew what was best for him, but he was wrong. Where we live or want to relocate, might not be where the Lord wants us.

My wife and I lived in a place of refuge for over 11 years in Northwestern Montana. The prophetic people in the area had prophesied that the entire region was a place of refuge in America. Believers from different parts of the country were moving and gathering

there, which brought further confirmation to the prophetic words. Even traveling prophets stated that the area was a place of refuge. I knew and discerned in my spirit that the entire region was a place of refuge. The Lord will give you multiple witnesses about an area of safety.

In 2019 my wife and I moved from a place of refuge to South Alabama. Why would the Lord do this? Because the Lord has us on a journey of trusting Him. He has things to teach us in each geographic location. Sometimes the Lord has to change our environment so that we will continue to grow and mature. He told me recently that He moved us out of a place of refuge, so He could move us to a place of refuge that is right for us. You may be in a place of refuge, but is it the right one for you?

My wife and I were not properly received in Northwestern Montana. Our ministry was not welcomed. The Lord told me He needed to move us to Alabama, so we would be positioned properly for our next step in the journey. From Alabama, we would be positioned to see and hear the location that the Lord wanted to take us to. We would also be in position for the door to be opened for us in that new place of refuge. We could not know that new location from Montana, so the Lord needed to bring us into a season of transition first. Therefore, like Abraham, we have been on a journey of obeying God, not knowing where we are going.

The Lord did speak to me about the entire region around Chattanooga, Tennessee, in regards to being a place of refuge. I asked the Lord in prayer if this region was a place of refuge, and He responded in a fiery presence that dropped me to my knees. The Lord will speak to me this way at times in order to bring confirmation. He will speak to you in His own ways about a location that you are to go to. I have heard of believers moving to regions in Arkansas, Idaho, and Eastern Washington. I'm sure the Lord has designated locations in other states as well.

Spiritually, Northwestern Montana was a place where my wife and I were trained in the wilderness like John the Baptist. It was a season of preparation. But it was not where we were called to conduct the ministry that the Lord has entrusted us with. That area may have been a place of refuge, but we did not fit in there. You must not go to the place of refuge you want to like Lot did, because you may not fit in spiritually. Sure, you might be safe physically, but you would never go on to fullness spiritually. The spiritual is of more importance than the physical. Some areas of refuge might not go on to fullness with the Lord spiritually, because the church is not seeking Him and His presence with everything in them. Maybe false doctrine is preventing the church in an area from experiencing God's perfect will. All the more reason to be perfectly positioned by the hand of God where He wants you.

The Lord's focus is for us to go all the way with Him spiritually. He will protect us physically so that we have time to come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4). Christ coming to fullness in us, as our self-life is crucified; is God's eternal purpose that must be accomplished in our time on the earth in this age. Therefore we must be in the right place spiritually for this to occur, and in a place of

refuge so we can live long enough for this process to take place. The crucifixion of our own will and desires simply takes time. It is wisdom to prolong our days in a place of refuge, so the Lord will have more time to transform us into His image. Our eternal position in Heaven depends on Jesus conforming us into His image. Those that allow Jesus to do this will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven, and those who do not allow this process will be least in the Kingdom.

The Building of Christ's Church

Jesus will build His church in places of refuge that will stand in the midst of great storms. He is gathering His true followers to locations across the country who desire to follow Him fully. True disciples will be granted knowledge and understanding about places of refuge where the Lord has chosen to build His overcoming church. These will be locations that the bride is made ready. These places of refuge will be for the preservation of the Lord's remnant.

Every believer is a living stone (1 Peter 2:4-5). Christ must increase in each stone so that each stone will be fixed and stable. Once each stone is solid and healthy, Christ will take that stone and connect it to other stones. As He builds the healthy and solid stones together, a spiritual house is built. These chosen people, then becomes a royal priesthood who offers up spiritual sacrifices that are pleasing to the Lord.

Christ will build these believers together in such a way that they become true spiritual family. Healthy and whole relationships will be established in the Lord. These groups will focus on the Lord first and foremost. Secondarily they will have spiritual fellowship with each other, which will be fulfilling. There will not be loneliness in these spiritual families. There will be godly spiritual parents, and healthy spiritual children. True spiritual friendships will be established by the Spirit of God. Believers will do life together while pursuing the Lord. This will bring much hope to people who have been struggling to find a spiritual home or be accepted in the church.

Many believers have felt like they simply don't belong, or have felt something preventing them from fitting in. This is because man has been attempting to build the church, and where this is occurring; true spiritual family cannot be established. When the Lord builds His church, we will see and feel the difference. He is the wise Master Builder, and will empower His true church by His grace. A healthy spiritual family can only be established by the grace of God. This is much needed, and it is coming!

The Lord will build different spiritual houses in different places throughout America. He will build them in places of refuge, so that they will be "kept from the hour of trial that is coming upon the face of the earth," just as Lot, Joesph, and Noah were kept safe. Because different houses are being built, we must obey the Lord and go to the proper place of refuge. Only the same kind of living stones can be built together. For example, it is extremely difficult for Christians with differing belief systems and theologies to be built together. Obviously we shouldn't have different belief systems, but in reality we do.

In order for a spiritual house to come to fullness, there must not be divisions. A house divided against itself will not stand.

Jesus needs similar living stones in a certain location, so that He can build a spiritual house that is in harmony. Stones that are of the same building material will fit together perfectly. Stones that differ in material, shape, and size; will not fit together properly in the building of the Lord's spiritual house. Our own destiny is the Lord and the destiny's of others, depends on us being in the proper location for the Lord to build us together with other believers.

The Glory of the Lord

“being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” (Ephesians 2:20-22 WEB)

If we allow Christ to do the work in us as individuals through communion and walking with Him inwardly; we will be transformed into solid living stones (good building materials). Then we are to hear the Lord speak about the place of refuge He has chosen for us to live in according to His plan and purpose. When we obey the Lord and join His overcoming church in the region He has called us to; He will oversee the church and build it according to His eternal design. Then He will have a dwelling place of His presence. The Holy Spirit will descend on that group of believers, and Heaven will manifest on earth.

When this described above takes place, the corporate presence and anointing will be incredibly strong. Light will break forth, healing will arise, righteousness will prevail, and the glory of the Lord will surround the church (Isaiah 58:8). The former desolations of many generations will be repaired, and the city of God on earth will be restored. The church in this area will be a habitation of the Lord. The presence of God will be so heavy and thick in public meetings that the ministers and people will barely be able to stand (2 Chronicles 5:14).

It is the Lord's great desire to fill His house (His people) with His glorious presence so that they are overwhelmed by His love, goodness, and affection. In this place of supreme intimacy, God is known and understood by His people. He is seeking a people who are willing to come together in order for God Himself to rest upon. He is looking for a people who desire Him more than earthly things, or even spiritual gifts or callings. He is desiring to bring a people together who yearn for and seek His face, and to be in His presence continually (1 Chronicles 16:11).

The Lord can do anything He wants to among His church in these last days. Under the Old Covenant, the Lord appeared in a pillar of cloud and pillar of fire among His people (Exodus 13:21-22). If they could experience the fiery glorious presence of God under an inferior covenant, how much more would it be possible for us to experience the Father's

glory under a superior covenant? Jesus exemplified this when He took Peter, James, and John up to the mountain. Jesus became transfigured in the glory of God as a thick cloud of the Father's glory manifested (Mark 9:2-8). Jesus was our example of how we should walk before God as a man. Jesus was demonstrating the Godhead's will for us to experience and encounter the Father. Enoch walked with God to such an extent, that God simply took Him up to Heaven. We have God inside of us, so we have the incredible opportunity to step into a deep relationship with the Lord now.

Hebrews 6:5 makes it clear that we are able to taste of powers of the age to come. In the age to come, Christ's glory and presence will be flowing from Him and filling the entire earth. Therefore we can step into His glorious presence now, both individually and corporately. Ephesians 2:20-22 makes it evident that it's the Lord's will to come and release His thick presence over His church. He will cover His church and hide her in His presence, thus protecting her from negative judgments being released throughout the last days (Psalm 91).

While Hebrews 12:22-24, indicates that we have come inwardly to Heaven and to the city of God; the Lord can still choose to manifest His thick glory and fire upon His people outwardly (since He does as He pleases). I believe that if we truly want the Lord bad enough, He will come among us in great fire and glory. I believe He can and will release a greater measure of His presence in and among His people, that has not yet been released. It comes down to how much we want Him. If we can live without having His glory, then we will live without it. If we cannot live without His fiery presence, then we will have what our hearts have longed for.

The fire that the Lord is desiring to release among His people, is a burning so great that it controls you. It is an inward fire of the Holy Spirit that Jeremiah and Elijah experienced. This fire made Elijah extremely zealous for the Lord (1 Kings 19:10). This is the same zeal that Jesus operated in when He drove the money changers out of the temple with a whip, and furiously rebuked the merchandisers. The burning fire shut up in Jesus' bones was consuming Him for His Father's house (John 2:17). The fire that the Lord will release in these last days will give His church the drive and hunger to seek the Lord and His presence above all else. We desperately need this purifying fire, as it will cleanse His people so that they are walking in holiness (Malachi 3:2-3). This baptism of fire will come to the remnant church. It will purify the bride.

The prophet Joel prophesies that the Lord will pour out His Spirit on all flesh. He also prophesies that there will be signs on the earth of fire and columns of smoke (Joel 2:30). While I understand that this is primarily describing physical signs on the earth; the same Hebrew word used for "smoke" was used when the Lord revealed His glory to Israel:

"All of Mount Sinai smoked, because Yahweh descended on it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly."
(Exodus 19:18 WEB)

I believe that Joel 2:30 could have a double meaning, as some scriptures do. Some have a natural meaning, and then a deeper spiritual meaning for those who have eyes to see. The Lord is going to do things amongst His people in these end times, that we never thought was possible. But the scriptures give us insight in to who God is, and how He might choose to move again. The fire and smoke of Joel 2:30 could be a direct spiritual reference to Exodus 19:18. I believe the Lord wants to come upon His people in a thick smoke and burning fire. He is looking for a people who desire to encounter Him like this. He is looking for a people who will only be satisfied by Him. Will we be the people who chooses inward transformation, and to be gathered with other believers in the place of His choosing? Will we allow the Lord to build us together with other living stones, so that the Holy Spirit can come and rest upon us in His glory and presence?

Let us go on with the Lord and grab ahold of what Israel experienced, and taste of what is coming in the next age. That which Jesus experienced on the mount of transfiguration can be ours:

“Yahweh will create over the whole habitation of Mount Zion, and over her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy. There will be a pavilion for a shade in the daytime from the heat, and for a refuge and for a shelter from storm and from rain.” (Isaiah 4:5-6 WEB)

Chapter 15 Pioneers and the City of God

The Lord's pioneers are those who are called to establish the city of God upon the earth. The city of God on the earth is one with the city of God in Heaven. We are that city. We are Mount Zion, the Heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-24). Jesus said to us, "You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can't be hidden." (Matthew 5:14 WEB). Pioneers leave their own earthly country, in order to settle and establish the city of the living God in strategic locations through the earth.

"By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he went.

For he looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:8, 10 WEB)

"For we don't have here an enduring city, but we seek that which is to come." (Hebrews 13:14 WEB)

Abraham was a type of pioneer. He was searching for the city God as part of his inheritance. Abraham is a prophetic foreshadowing of how our lives should be. We have no lasting earthly city in the natural. But Christ has come in us, and as we are built together as living stones; the Lord's dwelling place in the Spirit (temple) will be established. Once the Lord's house or dwelling place is established, then other homes are built and connected to it in the Spirit. This continues to grow until spiritual cities are formed in the Spirit. These spiritual cities become one with the city of God in Heaven.

This is how the Kingdom of God can be established in the earth in this age. It is an internal work, an internal city, and an internal Kingdom. It can only be spiritually discerned in this age. We should be seeking this city which will come in fulness in the next age, but can be tasted of in this age.

The city of God must be established by those whom the Lord calls to be pioneers. These forerunners carry a grace or anointing to initiate the city of God. Many leaders in the past and current church have been focused on their calling, and their ministry. Much of their time has been spent on building a ministry, instead of seeing God have a city for Himself (which is the bride made ready). This is about to change with the release of the pioneers and the wise master builders.

God's pioneers have a hunger and passion to see Him get what He wants. They understand that true satisfaction is in the will of the Lord being accomplished through them. They are willing to sacrifice having a large ministry or "big name" for themselves, in order to see the Kingdom of God come forth upon the earth.

Even now the Lord is beginning to release these pioneers that carry the blueprints of Heaven. He has been secretly preparing them for such a time as this. The beginnings

may be small, but are not to be despised. The Lord will send these pioneers to places of refuge that He will protect in these end-times. The Lord will call believers to these locations. Since the Lord has been preparing us inwardly in private to become the city of God, when He brings us together; the work will happen more rapidly than we might expect.

“It shall happen in the latter days, that the mountain of Yahweh’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it.” (Isaiah 2:2 WEB)

Obviously this scripture is speaking about the millennium, and it could be translated “on the last day” (of the age); instead of “in the latter days.” However the veil is very thin between Heaven and earth. The Lord will have His houses prepared for a dwelling place in the Spirit before He returns. These houses will begin with the pioneer. They must begin with proper understanding of what is actually being built. The house is being established to begin the city of God in that region. It is an invisible city.

The reason that we have not seen this come forth yet, is because houses of God have not been established with this in mind. Some ministers start a ministry because they are called to pastor. This will not be good enough in our day. Ministers with a pioneering anointing will understand it’s about the larger picture of the Lord starting with a house, and continuing to build until He has a city in a region.

The city of God is not a bunch of ministries or churches in a region that don’t spend time together, don’t know each other, and are divided in doctrine and beliefs. That is what we currently have dominating in America, and it is not working. The Lord is building His city that will be of one heart and one mind. His city will be seeking Him above all else. His presence will be upon them corporately in an unusual way. His light will fill them, and shine through them.

Pioneers will found powerhouses. Theses powerhouses will be sources of power for the city. Power lines will come out of the powerhouse that will create a network. An ecosystem of power will draw people to build their homes around the powerhouse. These powerhouses may be the only thing shinning within dark expanses of land.

As this happens the land will begin to get brighter and brighter. The spiritual darkness will begin to flee. It will become a city on a mountain. The mountain of the house of the Lord. The shinning light will draw more people. Community, spiritual family, and healthy relationships will be established. The light of Christ will shine through His city. Many will come to survive spiritually, and physically to this city in the last days.

Pioneers will carry an anointing for rebuilding, for it is the city of God that the Lord is seeking to restore: *“Those who shall be of you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called Repairer of the Breach, Restorer of Paths with Dwellings.” (Isaiah 58:12 WEB)*

As pioneers establish houses of God, the Lord's glory will come. When His glory comes, many families will come and houses built. Broken down and worn out houses will be rebuilt and renewed. Thus the city of God on earth in various regions will shine forth, in the darkness expanse at the end the age. The church will then step corporately into the powers of the age to come:

“Arise, shine; for your light has come, and Yahweh's glory has risen on you. For, behold, darkness will cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but Yahweh will arise on you, and his glory shall be seen on you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.” (Isaiah 60:1-3 WEB)

Abraham had no continuing earthly city. He was searching for a city that had foundations. He was looking for the city of God. He left a familiar place of comfort, to pioneer into the unknown. Something burned in his heart that could only be fulfilled in the will and purpose of God. This pioneer in the Spirit, went forth not knowing where he was going. By faith, it is now our turn to hear the Lord for ourselves, and seek out the locations where He is building His spiritual city. We have an opportunity to be apart of the light shinning forth from the city on a hill.

Chapter 16

Sudden Fulfillment

Many believers have been given promises by the Lord. Some of these promises involve what the Lord desires to do through them while on the earth. Although these promises are a secondary calling, they are still important because it's the Lord's will. For some, the promises have tarried so long that they now seem like a fairytale. The vision or dream of the Lord for you has tarried, and because it's tarried it has faded in your heart.

Joseph went through 13 years of suffering before his word came to pass. One year as a slave, and 12 years in a prison. The word that he received from God, tested and tried him (Psalm 105:19). Joseph was falsely accused and beaten with fetters. Then he was chained up like a murderer (Psalm 105:18). Joseph experienced a type of Hell that relatively few have. Favored and chosen by God, yet imprisoned by God; for "God sent a man (Joseph) before them" (Psalm 105:17).

Think of the darkness that entered Joseph's soul. Hell surrounded him. Day after day he would confess the prophetic word of the Lord, and his destiny in God. The months turned into years, and still Joseph did not lose heart. But the years multiplied, and the darkness continued. Everyday was like the former. God was not moving, nor delivering, nor anointing him. His brothers were not bowing down to him, as in the prophetic revelation had shown. Nothing was happening outwardly, but something was taking place inwardly. Joseph was becoming more humble. His heart was becoming contrite (Psalm 51:17).

Ten years had gone by in prison, and Joseph had been broken in spirit. He knew that the Lord would deliver him from prison yet the Lord did not. Hope deferred gave way to disappointment, and disappointment gave way to discouragement. The prison within Joseph was greater than the physical prison that held his body bound. His soul felt as if it were in Hell, even though his body was still on the earth. The affliction was almost more than Joseph could bare. A sliver of hope would come from his heart only to be crushed the next day when God did absolutely nothing to deliver him.

Joseph's own strong will was dead and gone, but yet he continued through the suffering. But how could he go on? When Joseph's self-life died, he began living by the life of another. The Lord became Joseph's strength, and was showing Himself strong in Joseph. Two more years passed.

It was a day just like every other day. There were no signs that things would change. Suddenly the Lord moved. The king sent for Joseph and he was loosed from his chains (Psalm 105:20). Joseph was released by the Heavenly King, and then it manifested on the earth by the pardon from an earthly king. In one day, Joseph went from the lowest place in the kingdom, to the second highest in the nation. The Lord has and does move suddenly. He is going to come suddenly for many of His faithful ones.

The process and the preparation has drug on for many years or decades for the sons of fresh oil. Many have wondered if the Lord is ever going to entrust them with the ministry or calling that He placed in their hearts. When the fullness of time had come, and Joesph finished his course of suffering and preparation; suddenly God did what He said He would.

Suffering comes when carrying our crosses. Suffering makes way to the crucifixion, and the crucifixion makes way to death (feeling like we are in Hell). But suddenly, resurrection comes. We die to ourselves, and the Lamb of God is now living in us with the power of the resurrection from the dead. Stay the course with the Lord Jesus Christ, and one day soon....suddenly.

“For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it hurries toward the end, and won’t prove false. Though it takes time, wait for it; because it will surely come. It won’t delay.”
(Habakkuk 2:3 WEB)

Chapter 17

All the Way

My prayer is that Christ would go all the way in me, so I can go all the way with Him. He wants to do this if we will let Him. It is the will of God for all of us to be overcomers and rule with Him on the Earth for a thousand years, but not all believers will. Only those who allow the Overcomer (Christ) to live through them will attain to this level. All believers have a high calling of being conformed to the image of Christ, transformed into His image, and coming to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Ephesians 4:13). However, not all believers will choose to go all the way with the Lord. Currently there is only a remnant that is allowing the Lord to go all the way in them. Will you be one that the Lord fulfills these scriptures in?

There is a popular teaching of men in the church that suggests all believers will be the Lord's bride. The teachings in the scriptures suggest otherwise. Out of the ten born again believers (virgins), only half make it in to the wedding of the Lamb when the bridegroom comes (Matthew 25:1-12). This scripture is referencing the bridegroom coming for His bride who knows Him intimately, because she spent time with Him. The virgins who were left behind didn't get to be apart of the wedding. It doesn't say that they do not get into Heaven. These foolish virgins knew Jesus as Savior and will go to Heaven. This scripture is speaking of the marriage, not Heaven. We can't make the scripture say something that it does not, for that is how false doctrines begin.

Revelation 19:7-9 states, "...His wife has made herself ready," and "Blessed are those which are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." Remember that the audience of the book of Revelation is believers, not unbelievers. The only believers who will be invited to the marriage, are those who make themselves ready. The wife is the one who has yielded herself to the Holy Spirit, and allowed Him to make her ready for the bridegroom. She is the one who has the oil of intimacy, because Christ has become her reason for living. She can't go a day without being in His presence, or craving to be with Him. She desires Him more than food. Christ is her bread. This woman will be married to Jesus for eternity.

Believers who live their whole lives for themselves, will not become the Lord's bride. Believers who stay bound in sin during their time on the earth, will not be the Lord's bride. Believers who spend their "courting" period on earth committing spiritual adultery (idolatry) against the Lord, will not be allowed to marry Him. What man would marry a woman who committed sexual immorality against him throughout their entire engagement? This time on Earth is our engagement period with the Lord. It is in this time that He will decide who He is going to invite to His wedding. Believers who have other lovers (idols) such as people, money, power, sex, career, ministry, entertainment, sports, sin, or the things of God; will weep when the door to the wedding is shut to them. The Lord Jesus will marry a spotless bride, not a dirty whore (Ephesians 5:27, Ezekiel 16). The Lord actually gave His own people a certificate of divorce who

prostituted themselves with idols and left their first love (Jeremiah 3:8). Blessed are those who are invited.

More understanding on these crucial subjects can be found under “The Bride of Christ” and “The High Calling” teachings on our Generation Chosen website.

The Lord’s Desire and Rest

“For Yahweh has chosen Zion. He has desired it for his habitation. “This is my resting place forever. Here I will live, for I have desired it.” (Psalms 132:13-14 WEB)

“Arise, Yahweh, into your resting place; you, and the ark of your strength.” (Psalms 132:8 WEB)

The mature sons will turn their focus from their own desires, to the desires of the Lord. The Lord makes His eternal will and desire known to us in the scriptures above. He wants to arise in His people (Zion), and make her His dwelling place. The Lord’s will is to dwell in and among His people, and for them to be His resting place. Meditate on that. The Lord wants us as a resting place.

The Lord will dwell among believers who allow the Holy Spirit to bring them together, and build them together as living stones are built into a spiritual house. As these believers enter into the rest that has been prepared for them, the Lord will actually rest as well. He will rest in them, and they in Him. Shouldn’t we be concerned about giving the Lord what He wants? He is deserving to have what He wants.

Imagine how it would please the Lord to give Him the place of rest that He desires. We can start right now individually. Since the Lord is a righteous judge, there are a lot of decisions that He has to make world-wide, that are difficult; or simply things He would rather not do. Now He is perfect and can rest in Himself, however He has chosen to make us a place of His rest. So what an honor it is that we can “be” a resting place of the Lord. A place in which His desire is fulfilled. A place in which He enjoys to be and finds comfort. In this place of rest, we touch the heart of God. We minister to Him. It’s beautiful.

I spent many years looking into the future believing and contending for God to move, or for how I wanted Him to move. When all along God was looking to move inwardly in me. I could never rest because I was always looking for the “next thing” that the Lord was going to do. My mind was concerned about the ministry that the Lord had called me to, and when it might be time to step into that role. I couldn’t be a rest with simply enjoying my family, and the process of journeying with the Lord. I was restless. I had the secret place of the Lord’s presence, but I could not go on to fullness with the Lord in that place of intimacy; because of my restlessness.

Jacob’s name means “supplanter” in Hebrew. He was always trying to get things in his “shifty” ways. So to deal with Jacob’s flesh, the Lord gave Jacob a taste of his own

medicine through Laban. Laban supplanted and tried to trick Jacob numerous times. Why did the Lord allow this? So Jacob would see his own nature and ask the Lord to change him.

My last name is German and means “restless.” The Lord had to take me out of a place where I had a lot of time with Him, and put me in a place where I did not have a lot of time with Him. He gave me the exact opposite of rest; busyness. In my busyness, I desired rest and realized that I had never fully stayed in the Lord’s rest. I would of course be in His presence and rest for hours, but then my heart would move to: “What’s the Lord going to do with us next in ministry?” Once I was in an outward environment of restlessness, to truly appreciate “the rest” of the Lord, and saw that I must stop leaving His rest.

I know I have been restless in seasons that were not very pleasurable to me. The Lord had to use these seasons to do His work in my heart, so that I would become more like Him. But in my restlessness, I tried to leave the season before the proper time. Just because your current season is not “good” by your standards, or fruitful according to ministry standards; doesn’t mean the Lord is not moving powerfully in you. Resist the urge to be restless, and in His grace; be still and know that He is God. He will only allow the undesirable season until you cease from your restlessness, and allow Him to make changes in your heart. Then His change in you will break forth like the light of the morning.

Now His rest has become a focal point for me. I want to abide in His rest and be a vessel of rest. My purpose has now become to give the Lord the rest that He desires. He spoke to me very clearly and said, “Your calling is to be my rest.” So this is what I have set my heart to be. The Lord has been changing my name from “restless” to “restful.” He wrestled with Jacob in order to change his name, and has been wrestling with me for a while. I think it’s time we stop wrestling with the Lord, and allow Him to bring forth the change that He desires and we need.

In order to enter into the rest of the Lord, we must cease from our own striving and works. This could mean, our own religious rituals we perform attempting to persuade God to move how we want, and when we want. We must cease from our striving and praying for spiritual gifts or ministries that is not the will of the Lord for us to have or function in. Many believers are caught up in this toiling, and will not find rest in God until they cease from seeking their own will. Rest is found in seeking the will of the Father, as Jesus did. A man can receive nothing unless it has been granted unto him from Heaven, not whatever he wants or confesses (John 3:27). It’s time to cease from our own striving, or trying to get God to move. When the Lord is ready to move outwardly, He will do so. A slave obeys his Master, not the other way around.

Jesus sat in a boat and slept while the storm raged around Him (Mark 4:36-41). The restless disciples said, “Don’t you care that we are dying?” It wasn’t that Jesus didn’t care, but that the internal rest from the Holy Spirit had flooded Him and He was in perfect peace. This is where the Lord wants us to live. If it was impossible for us to get

there in the Spirit, then Jesus wouldn't have rebuked His disciples. Going forward, let's pursue the Lord's rest, and be the dwelling place that He desires for His rest. I know it is the will of the Lord for Him to have "resting places" established for Himself, so that He might abide in His people. Let us turn our hearts toward His desire.

Spiritual Fullness

In these last days, we have an opportunity to experience the fullness of Christ inwardly. Jesus sits on His throne within us, and we can go within our hearts and be with Him as often as possible. The Lord is calling this generation out of the darkness and into His marvelous light. Will we choose to be apart of His royal priesthood? Will we be apart of the generation that will seek His face (Psalm 24:3-6)?

We do not have much time left, as our days in these earthy bodies are fleeting. Those that go all the way with the Lord, will be those who use their time well. I want to fix my eyes on the Lord. I want to be apart of the generation that is chosen to dwell in the courts of the Lord (individually and corporately). I believe the Lord can have a people on this earth, before he returns, that will become transformed into His image. A bride without spot or wrinkle. A place where the cloud of His presence will rest by day, and the burning of the refiners fire at night. Will you seek this with me? Will you allow the Holy Spirit to make you apart of the city of God on earth (Hebrews 12:22)?

Many in the Church know Jesus as Savior, and Blessor. Some know Him as Deliverer, and Healer. Few know the Lamb as Master, Teacher, Lord, Friend, Judge, Father, and Bridegroom. The Lord Jesus is extending His hand to you. He is inviting you to come into a deeper understanding of who He is. Now is the time, and this is the opportunity to know Him, and become one with Him (John 17:20-21). Will you walk through this open door of grace, set foot on the narrow path, and begin the spiritual journey with the Lord?

"The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" He who hears, let him say, "Come!" He who is thirsty, let him come. He who desires, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17 WEB)

Epilogue

This spiritual journey has been written so that you might know the will of the Lord more fully. I pray that the eyes of your understanding will be flooded with light, so you will know the hope of His calling. I pray for His will and purpose to be revealed to your inward man. We must know the Lord inwardly, and follow the inward burning. The Lord sits enthroned in all who are saved. By the Holy Spirit, we must go before His throne and hear from our King. He is the meaning of life. We can choose to draw near and know the Lord. We can choose to embark on or continue on the spiritual journey.

The spiritual journey will take you into an intimate relationship with Jesus. A place of inward burning in which your heart is set ablaze for Him. A private place before the throne of God where His presence saturates all that you are, and you connect with Him in oneness of Spirit. Few choose to go there in this busy world of constant distractions. Will you? Countless experiences and encounters with the Holy Spirit await. The Holy Spirit is searching hearts to find those who love His fire and His presence. He will pour Himself out on those who must have Him. He is looking for those who desire to be carriers of His presence.

In my journey, I mistakenly at times pursued power, anointing, and revival; before the inward transformation of Jesus. The Lord taught me that what we call revival (miracles, healings, and salvations), cannot be sustained without inward transformation. Intimacy and the cross-life must lead us down a spiritual path in which we are conformed to Christ's image. True spirituality is found in Christ possessing us and living through us. This inward fiery relationship is true revival. True revival is when you are burning for Christ on the inside, even if nothing is happening on the outside. Get burning and stay burning for Christ on the inside, and the outward manifestations of revival will follow in the Lord's timing and in His way.

My journey with the Lord will continue. Many pages will be added to the journey in the future. I am currently starting the next chapter in my spiritual journey with the Lord. The presence of God has been returning to me, and His fire is burning yet again. Now it is time for you to determine your relationship and journey with the Lord. Many believers wander through life aimlessly, never progressing with the Lord. If you are reading this book, then you are most likely not one of these people. The Lord has placed a desire in you to know Him and to journey with Him. Every day can be an adventure of being with the Lord, and hearing from Him. Let the spiritual journey with the Lord become your chief desire, as the Lord's chief desire is to journey with you.