

JAMES BRAMLETT

LIEUTENANT COLONEL, USAF (RET)



THE
POWER!

WHAT IT IS

HOW TO GET IT—NOW!

HOW TO RELEASE IT

With many testimonies of actual miracles and healings

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Special Notice

The information in this book is especially needed by every person in the critical times in which we live, and will be more so in the days ahead.

It is literally a matter of life and death.

Your careful attention is urgently suggested.

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The Power!

By James Bramlett

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Sometimes the *King James Version* is used because of the broad familiarity with the wording and beauty of the language, as well as accuracy in some instances.

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Author Profile

After a distinguished 20-year career, James Bramlett retired as a regular officer and Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force to respond to a call to the ministry. He joined the Christian Broadcasting Network in Virginia where he became Vice President responsible for both the International Counseling/Prayer Center network and also Human Resources, helping pioneer both functions. He served at CBN for nine years.

He later completed 12 years as Special Assistant to the late founder and president of Campus Crusade for Christ International, Dr. Bill Bright, at their World Headquarters in Orlando, Florida.

He has written five nationally selling Christian books and many articles and is the recipient of a prestigious Amy Writing Award.

Jim has a B.A. degree from the University of Miami (Florida) and an M.B.A. from the Ohio State University. He is married to the former Violeta Villanueva and has three grown sons.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to honor my father and mother, James D., Sr., and Clara Etta (Kell), long since departed. God used them to give me life and bring me into this world. My dad was born in Tryon, Georgia and my mom in Sparta, Tennessee.

As soon as they became young adults, they were faced with the Great Depression, and me, soon followed by World War II, in which my father fought in Europe with the 30th Infantry Division. My mother was a very hard-working woman who sacrificed greatly for me. It was a very trying time for that generation.

I thank God for them. They are remembered with great love and affection.



Contents

Preface

Introduction

Chapter 1. Who needs the power?

Chapter 2. What is the power?

Chapter 3. How the power first came to the earth.

Chapter 4. How you can get the power—now! (“The world’s best kept secret”).

Chapter 5. How the power is used.

Chapter 6. How to release the power.

Chapter 7. How the power can bring physical healing.

Appendices:

Appendix 1. Testimonies of the power. Actual miracles and healings.

Appendix 2. The irrefutable authority for this book. Summary of apologetics.

Appendix 3. How you can instantly receive new life.

Appendix 4. Eight incomparable benefits of receiving this new life.

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First and foremost is my dear wife, Violeta (“Yolly”), a true saint, strong of spirit, gentle of personality, whom I not only deeply love but admire as a person and example to others.

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A special mention goes to Minister Patricia J. Alston, whose diligent intercession helped make this book possible.

Preface

The distinguished, learned man with a doctorate degree in theology had been the pastor of a large church for many years. We were discussing “the power,” the subject of this book. He looked at me sheepishly and confided:

“Once I was praying for a person and I suddenly felt power in my hand, about to be transmitted to the person in need. But I quickly withdrew my hand.”

He withdrew because such a phenomenon was contrary to his theological and denominational tradition, and he did not want to be accused of “fanaticism” by his peers and congregation. While incomprehensible, he gave priority to his tradition over the reality of the power. Sadly, the person in need for whom he was praying continued in need. To my knowledge, the power never returned to the pastor.

A late uncle with whom I would often discuss the deeper things of life, once wrote to me about this power:

“Jim, I know that (the power) is there, but I am not worthy of it. I run from it like the wind. It has touched me on at least three occasions, twice dramatically. I am afraid of the power.”

My uncle’s fear was not because of his tradition, he indicated, but because recognition of the reality of the power would require commitment on his part, something he was not willing to give. He was correct about one thing: One cannot accept this power without being changed. To my knowledge, my dear uncle, whom I loved, never again experienced the power.

On the other hand, many other people I have known did not withdraw from the power because of their tradition, nor were they afraid of it. They totally embraced it and, in fact, became instruments of it, greatly impacting the world around them. The power became a source of peace, joy, victory, and fulfillment, not fear. You can experience the same thing.

Experiences such as these have caused me to exhaustively study this subject for many years, and I have learned beyond all doubt that the reality of this power must not be denied, as with my theological friend, nor should it be feared, as with my uncle. The power is totally benevolent, and desires recognition and acceptance by each of us.

This power is the greatest need in the world today. The truth must be told. That is the purpose of this book.

Introduction

There is an awesome, pervasive and benevolent power in the universe that transcends all other powers and forces.

It is unequalled, unstoppable, immutable, and sovereign.

This power became known to me over 30 years ago. I had been only vaguely aware of it before, actually avoiding it, albeit unknowingly. But it finally caught up with me. I found myself face-to-face with this power. I did not turn away. I said “yes.” It changed my life.

Now I am compelled to tell everyone about this awesome and wonderful power that I have learned about and experienced for more than three decades.

The power described herein is not to be confused with the fictional, impersonal “Force” of *Star Wars* fame. The power I refer to is real and personal. By personal, I mean this power is cognizant, it is communicative, it has purpose, and it knows who you are! Being personal, I have made the amazing discovery that this unlimited power is available to all human beings who meet the conditions, not just a few make-believe space travelers.

Although this power is omnipotent and personal, it usually does not force or impose itself on people. People have a free will—the freedom of choice. People can accept it or reject it. If they accept it, they are in for the most adventurous and fulfilling life imaginable. If they reject it, they remain in some sort of void, a dark spiritual limbo, without true meaning.

There is nothing more important than the power described in this book.

Every person needs this power. But most people don’t know about it. Most people who do know about it have no clue that they can get it, or how.

In the following pages, you will discover this power and learn how to get it and how to use it, or rather, be used by it. You will also discover many amazing examples of this power in action.

You are about to encounter an eye-opening, life-changing experience. Your life will never be the same.

It is so amazingly simple, yet so profound.

Chapter 1

Who needs the power?

With all the many forces in the world swirling all around you, do you sometimes feel weak and impotent?

Do you sometimes feel irrelevant? Not in control? Powerless? A helpless victim of “the system,” or selfish and maybe ruthless people.

Do you harbor secret fears? Fears of the future? Fears of disease? Fears of accidents? Fears of so many things over which you have no control?

Does your life lack purpose, and are you just getting by day by day? Are you tired of all the mundane trivia that seem to demand all your time?

Do you lack energy, motivation, or drive?

Are you plagued with physical or emotional problems?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you need “the power.” Actually, you need the power even if you answered “no” to all the above.

How would you like to have more power than the President of the United States?

More power than the Secretary General of the United Nations? More power than top professional athletes? More power than the richest person in the world?

Everybody wants some kind of power. It may be financial, political, social, intellectual, athletic, romantic, personal, or many other kinds.

Some of these kinds of power are available in varying degrees temporarily, but they are usually difficult to attain. In many cases it may take a lifetime, if attainable at all. Plus, when you get them, you realize that they did not produce the happiness you thought they would. In fact, they often bring great misery.

Then after all that effort, all of a sudden – *poof!* – they are gone. As you draw your last breath, to your angst you suddenly realize that they were nothing but a grand delusion.

A good example of this is what happened to nine of the wealthiest men in the world, who once had great power. In 1923, a very important meeting was held at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. In attendance were nine of the world's most successful financiers, men who had found the secret of obtaining worldly power. Now, decades later, let us see what happened to these men:

The president of the largest independent steel company, Charles Schwab, died bankrupt and lived on borrowed money for five years before his death.

The president of the largest utility company, Samuel Insull, died a fugitive from justice and penniless in a foreign land.

The president of the largest gas company, Howard Hopson, went insane.

The greatest wheat speculator, Arthur Cotton, died abroad, insolvent.

The president of the New York Stock exchange, Richard Whitney, spent time in the famous Sing-Sing Penitentiary.

The member of the President's Cabinet, Albert Fall, was pardoned from prison so that he could die at home.

The greatest "bear" on Wall Street, Jesse Livermore, died a suicide.

The head of the greatest monopoly, Ivan Krueger, died a suicide.

The president of the Bank of International Settlements, Leon Fraser, died a suicide.

Their power vanished, like vapor. As far as I know not one learned about the power described in this book. There is nothing wrong with wealth per se, but it is not synonymous with real power or happiness.

The Roman Empire spanned most of the known world and was one of the most powerful empires in history. But Roman power eventually crumbled and was reduced to dust.

Adolph Hitler's Third Reich was a great, conquering power that swept through Europe in the mid-twentieth century. But in just a few years it was reduced to rubble and Hitler was dead, a suicide.

The Soviet Union was a gigantic world power but is no more. Its brutal dictators are all dead.

During the height of the Cold War with the former Soviet Union and a period in my U.S. Air Force career, I had great power at my fingertips. I was a Missile Combat Crew Commander (MCCC) in one of the first Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) units. In just seconds, with an order from the President, one simultaneous turn of our keys from our steel-reinforced Launch Control Center (LCC), 50 feet beneath the South Dakota prairie, and a 30-second countdown, my deputy and I would have launched ten nuclear-tipped missiles to rain total destruction upon our targets, vaporizing them (probably including some cities, but we were never told what our targets were). Ten

missiles from many other LCCs would accompany them. Each missile was many times more powerful than what was dropped on Japan during World War II and each was capable of destroying a city. Thank God we never had to launch, but the deterrence provided by our capability and readiness helped prevent World War III. That was many years ago. Those old missiles and their warheads are obsolete now and are on the junk heaps of history. But all that nuclear power, combined with all the modern weapons of today, is nothing compared with the real power described in this book.

All human power eventually fails, because it is not real power. By the way, it was on missile duty that I began to think seriously about life, death, and the power described herein, and I began to study it.

Real power. There is only one kind of real and lasting power that at the same time brings joy and peace.

This real power does not eventually vanish like a vapor. It is a power that is permanent, and its effects are permanent. It is with you morning, noon, and night, forever.

This power is not natural, but supernatural. It is not physical, but spiritual. It cannot be measured in kilotons. But it is no less real, mighty, and greater than megatons.

There is a strange paradox about this special power: It is both totally free and also extremely costly. You cannot earn it, but there is a price to pay. I will explain.

Another strange thing is that this power is “promised” and guaranteed by the highest authority.

How can all this be? That is the exciting part!

It can change your life

The power can change your life.

Bob experienced a major disappointment in his life. He was shattered, and over a period of a few weeks, he began sinking further into despair. He had a deep-down feeling of hopelessness. But suddenly, through an unlikely set of circumstances (no doubt, directed from above), Bob learned about this power and how to get it. That very day, it was like Clark Kent coming out of a telephone booth after donning his Superman cape. There was a radical transformation in him. There was no more despair. Now there was power, victory, and joy. In fact, his total life changed, and he has since been a positive influence on many others. Believe it or not, the process took only minutes!

What do you do? What do you do when your world seems to be caving in around you? You need the power.

What do you do when a feeling of hopelessness tries to take over your mind? You need the power.

What do you do if you sense evil attacking you and you seem strongly drawn to do something you know in your heart is a sin against God and others? You need the power.

What do you do if suddenly you find your life in danger and threatened? You need the power.

What do you do if you are suddenly told that you have a terminal disease? You need the power.

What do you do if you are suddenly told that a loved one has a terminal disease? You need the power.

What do you do if you struggle to even get out of bed in the morning, without energy or motivation? You need the power.

What do you do if you find a person or group struggling to know the meaning of life and you know the answer, but you are at a loss for words and are too timid to speak up? You need the power.

God, your Creator, wants you to have His power, and He has made provision for you to have it. He wants it to flow in your life. Every person needs the power but most do not have it. This is tragic, because God offers it.

I will tell you how to get it, and believe it or not, get it *fast*—actually while you are reading this book!

Conquer, not just cope

I am not talking about the power to *cope*, but the power to *conquer*. There may be things with which we sometimes must cope, but God has called us not to be just copers who grit our teeth and bear it, but to be conquerors and, in fact, more than conquerors. God says, “We are more than conquerors through him who loved us” (Romans 8:37). Sometimes we just cope until we finally realize that we are supposed to conquer.

Stop coping and conquer! Don’t be a whiner, be a winner! Don’t give up, get up!

When a crisis hits us, we are not to just passively accept negative consequences. We aggressively come against it with the power.

When a sickness hits us or a loved one, we are not to just passively accept it. We attack it with the power. I had a mole on my chest for many years. One morning while shaving I noticed that it began to look suspicious. It had become darker and funny looking, a warning sign the magazines tell you about, one that would normally cause one to run to

the dermatologist to have it removed and a lab test done, with dreaded results. My natural mind thought, “cancer,” and fear tried to come upon me as I pictured myself wasting away in pain and agony. But my supernatural mind suddenly kicked in that morning, and I released the power into it. The very next morning, while shaving again, the mole suddenly dropped off into the basin and washed down the drain. There was not even any scar tissue left to tell where it was. It was like a baby’s skin. Later I will tell you how I did it (see Appendix 1). You can do it too. It may happen differently for you, but the outcome can be the same.

When a danger physically threatens us and when we face it with the power, the danger retreats and disappears. With fear, the demonic source slinks back into its dark hole. It cannot stand the light of the power.

For example, a few years ago I was on a commercial jet airliner when a serious mechanical problem developed just after takeoff from the Orlando International Airport. The pilot announced over the speakers that we should prepare for a crash landing. An older lady seated next to me was almost hysterical with fear. I gently put my hand on her hand and said, “Ma’am, everything is going to be all right. Jesus has assured me.” I had released the power into the situation (I will tell you how in Appendix 1). Astonishingly, just a minute later the captain came on the speaker and said that everything was now back to normal! He gave no explanation. The lady was stunned but so relieved at this sudden, miraculous manifestation of the power. I was not surprised at the outcome, but the quickness of it surprised even me. There is no doubt in my mind that God put me on that airplane so that His power could be released through me, without which people could have been killed.

Pastor John Hagee of Texas tells about the time a deranged or demon-possessed man rushed down the aisle of his church toward him with a gun in his hand shouting that he was going to kill Hagee. But Hagee had the power. The man fired several shots at him at point blank range, and all of them missed. Later trajectory analysis by the police revealed the bullets should have gone right through Pastor Hagee. I know of an evangelist who had a similar experience with an abductor in Mexico.

When a strong temptation or problem hits us, we are not to just give in to it, rationalizing it because, “Oh, well, these things happen,” and “After all, we are human.” With God’s power, we can be superhuman. We can overcome.

On the following pages, you will learn how to be a container and instrument of the power.

Chapter 2

What is the power?

Does the universe sometimes appear random, cold, impersonal, and threatening to you?

Years ago I used to think about what appeared to be random forces in the world, forces to which we are all subject, making us seem to be the victims of a capricious and sometimes cruel universe. If you don't know any better, the whole idea is scary, leading to deep feelings of insecurity.

But the world only *appears* that way. I later learned that there is a sovereign, unlimited, purposeful, and *benevolent* power behind the universe. If one is not tapped into this power, the forces and the things that happen to us do appear random and capricious, often cruel. But that is only the appearance and not reality. In fact, such people are the unwitting victims of a spiritual war going on, and they have chosen the wrong side, the diabolical side, even if unknowingly.

The truly diabolical aspect of the dark side of spiritual reality is that its victims do not even realize it is diabolical. Their sad plight seems logical, rational, right, and in concert with the prevailing cultural values at the time, no matter how evil. A 3,000-year-old proverb says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" (Proverbs 14:2).

There is, indeed, a dark side, and a side of light. The side of light is the source of the power described in this book. The dark side has a degree of power also, such as the power of witchcraft, the occult and demons, all part of satanic power, and all of which can be formidable. However, that power is very limited and is easily vanquished by the power from the light described herein, which is omnipotent.

If one is tapped into the power this book describes, you learn that nothing is by accident, either in appearance or in reality. There is no such thing as luck, good fortune, or even coincidence. "According to the rabbis, coincidence is not a kosher word," says author Chuck Missler. In fact, if you are plugged into this power system, everything that happens to you is ultimately for your good (Romans 8:28). The universe is no longer random. It is totally ordered for your benefit and the new spiritual kingdom in which you find yourself. The realization of this truth produces a transcendent peace beyond all understanding. That alone is worth the effort.

This power brings life. The alternative brings death. I urge you to tap into this life power today. When you do, you will experience a great peace, and an inner sense that you have finally come home to where you were created to be.

What is it? What is this great, benevolent power?

The “power” referred to in this book is nothing less than the unlimited, all-pervasive, all-encompassing power of the Creator of the universe, who has uniquely revealed Himself in the pages of the holy Scriptures, or Bible.

His power is total. It is absolute. It is without limit. It is beyond earthly comprehension. Nothing can resist it—no person, no devil, no physical law, no circumstance, or no disease.

It is the same power that created the universe and the same power that holds it together.

For by him (Christ) all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together (Colossians 1:16-17).

While really incomprehensible, try to grasp something of this absolute power of Christ:

- In one second, our sun emits more energy than man has done since he was created.
- Our sun is only an average-size star. One star, the Pistol Star, produces 1 million times the energy of the sun and has 100 times its mass.
- Our sun and entire solar system are just a pinpoint, or small speck, in our Milky Way galaxy.
- There are perhaps 200 billion stars just in our galaxy.
- If our galaxy was the size of the North American continent, our solar system would only be the size of a tea cup.
- Quasars, at the extreme edge of the known universe, some 1,000 times brighter than our Milky Way galaxy, emit as much energy every second as our sun does in 10 million years.
- While estimates continue to rise, our galaxy is just one of more than 100 billion galaxies in the universe, many of which are comprised of 200 billion or more stars.
- Astronomers say that the total number of stars in space could equal or surpass the total number of grains of sand on all the seashores of the world, and in most cases they are separated by trillions of miles.

(Some of the above information has only recently become known because of the orbiting Hubble telescope.)

Through the ancient prophet Isaiah, God said, “My own hands stretched out the heavens” (Isaiah 45:12).

The psalmist pondered the wonders of creation and asked God, “What is man that you are mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:4).

God is not only mindful of us, but He has revealed Himself to us in a special way and amazingly, He wants to manifest His power through us, on the earth.

With His kind of unlimited power, God has absolutely no problem wielding it upon the earth and manifesting it through willing human vessels for His purposes.

There are two Greek words translated as power in the New Testament. One is *dunamis*, where we get the word for “dynamite.” According to the *Strong’s Enhanced Lexicon*, the Greek word *dunamis* means “strength, power, ability, and the power to do miracles.”

The other is *exousia*, often translated as “authority.” The lexicon describes *exousia* as “the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises; the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege).”

Power and authority go hand in hand. Without authority, there can be no power. Without power, authority has no enforcement. Authority is supreme because it controls and exercises the power.

For example, a policeman’s authority is represented by his badge. Sometimes respect for the badge (authority) is all that is needed to get compliance and action. But the policeman sometimes may need to use his power, which is his gun. His gun backs up his badge. His power backs up his authority.

Whether one realizes or admits it or not, the Bible says that every person has seen God’s power:

For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse (Romans 1:21).

This power referred to is manifested in the world by no less than the Holy Spirit Himself.

The source of the power we need

People may say, “Okay, we all know that God has great power. That’s obvious. But what’s that got to do with people? We are like less than ants on this earth and in the universe.”

But amazingly, God wants to delegate His power to people!

To conquer life’s circumstances and to do God’s will, we need God’s power. We cannot do it in our own power. We cannot do it in the power of our own strength, minds, or emotions.

We can only do it in His power—the power of the Holy Spirit.

Without it, we are weak and impotent, like a feather in the wind, blown about, hither and yon. With it, mountains, not just feathers, are blown away at our command (Mark 11:23)!

There is good news! The power of the Holy Spirit is available to you, whomever you are, young, old, rich, poor, male, female, of any race or nationality, and regardless of education or I.Q.

Anyone can get the power. Are you anyone? The Bible says that God is no respecter of persons and does not show favoritism.

That power is available to every believer to do everything commanded or provided for in the written Word of God, the Bible—without exception. Unfortunately, God has provided many wonderful gifts and promises that often go unclaimed because the channel was not available due to unbelief or lack of knowledge. God says:

My people are destroyed (perish) from lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6).

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God (2 Corinthians 1:20).

All of God’s promises are “Yes” in Christ, but we have to apply the power by speaking the “Amen,” or saying “so be it,” and by faith acting upon it in specific situations.

To open up the channel, you have to know how to get the power and appropriate it. That is the purpose of this book—to tell you how you can be the channel God desires, a channel through which He can release His power to fulfill His purposes and promises. He wants you to be a vessel and channel of His power, and to bless you at the same time.

In a sense, obtaining God’s power is really easy. It does not come by performing religious rituals. It cannot be obtained by doing good deeds. It is free and cannot be purchased. You do not have to be a pastor or seminary graduate to get the power; in fact, intellectual studies under apostate and unbelieving professors can hinder your quest. It cannot be earned by being a preacher or an evangelist for 50 years. It cannot be earned by doing anything. It is totally free!

This power is obtained by a simple step represented by a small five-letter word, **F-A-I-T-H**, to be discussed later.

There is only one problem. To get this power from God you have to give up all your own power and selfish desires. It can only be given and used for God’s purposes, according to His Word.

Therefore, to be a consistent vessel for this power, it will cost you everything. You must put aside your selfish ambitions and desires. You must submit to the King's desires. You must die to self. Yet that is not as difficult as it may sound. It is really easier and better than not doing it.

Total power and authority

In a most incredible statement, after His resurrection and just before His ascension to heaven, Jesus Christ said:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me (Matthew 28:18).

Note the word *all*. He did not say some authority, or most authority. He said *all* authority. The Greek word for authority here is *exousia*, and the *King James Version* translates it as, "All power..."

In other words, there is no authority or power in the entire universe that the Father has not given over to His only begotten Son! The Son has it all.

The Father did not give some of it to Buddha, some to Mohammed, some to a few Hindu gurus, or maybe a little to other religious founders. He did not give it to government leaders. He did not give it to professors or academic leaders. He did not give it to Hollywood stars. He did not give it to network news anchors. Oh, yes, all these people have a degree of human influence, but that is nothing compared with the power we are talking about.

God gave it all to His Son. If the world only understood all the authority and power in the hands of the resurrected Son of God, it would no longer mock or be flippant towards Him or his followers, but would instead fall at His feet in reverent fear and adoration.

Where did Jesus get the power? Of course, He was the Son of God. But He had humbled Himself to become a man, laying aside His deity.

Being in very nature God, (Christ) did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2:6-11).

And in this earthly state, He had to get the power the same way we have to get it—from the Holy Spirit.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased (Matthew 1:16-17).

In this one verse, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are mentioned. This is the mystery of the Trinity, the triune nature of God. The word “trinity” itself is not mentioned in the Bible, but there are many references to it, such as the above. They are one but three, and three but one. There are not three Gods but three expressions of the one God. For example, Jesus said, “The Father and I are one,” and “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.” It is a great mystery, but truth.

Remember, we humans are finite and God is infinite. Our finite minds cannot understand everything about infinity, only what is revealed to us, or else we would be God, and I don’t think our resumes qualify. Typically, cults deny the triune nature of God mainly because cults typically deny the deity of Jesus Christ, a principal revelation of the Bible and a basic doctrine of the church since the first century, both Catholic and Protestant.

The authority of the believer. One of the most important but least understood truths in the Bible is the authority that has been delegated to believers in Christ, available if they believe it and act upon it. Jesus told His disciples (and us):

I have given you authority (Greek: *exousia*) to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power (Greek: *dunamis*) of the enemy; nothing will harm you (Luke 10:19).

With serpents, scorpions, and the enemy, Jesus is referring to Satan and his demons. Believers have been granted authority over all of them. The world and individual lives would be totally different if believers understood and exercised that authority, defeating them, instead of being their victims. Satan and his demons, acting through the wrong choices of people, are responsible for all sickness, violence, wars, and all other evils in the world. The exercise of this authority needed to defeat them begins when one receives the delegated power of the Holy Spirit, to be described.

Power delegated. Jesus also said:

You will receive power (*dunamis*) when the Holy Spirit comes on you... (Acts 1:8, emphasis supplied).

Remember, He said, “**You** will receive...” That’s us!

He was speaking to His followers, then, since, and now. He said that this same power He had would be given to His followers! Jesus was given all *authority and power* by the Father, and now by this authority He is delegating *power* to His followers.

Jesus referred to this as “the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about” (Acts 1:4). Note that this divine power being transmitted to humans is both a gift and a promise, and that the agent of transmission is the Holy Spirit: “When the Holy Spirit comes on you...”

Was this just a one-time manifestation in the first century? No, we know that this gift was not just a one-time thing because after the initial giving and manifestation of the gift just a few days later on the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter explained to a crowd:

The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:39)

Further, the same thing happened other times as described in the book of Acts. After one occasion, at the house of a Gentile Roman soldier, Cornelius, Peter explained:

As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?” (Acts 11:15-17).

Those in every generation who have dared to believe this incredible promise have actually seen this power manifested in their lives. As Peter said, who are we to think “that we can oppose God?”

The main purpose of the power

Chapter 5 describes in detail the two main purposes of the power. Jesus made clear His primary purpose:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

We must always remember that the power is not for our own selfish purposes. However, it does serve our purposes if our purposes are aligned with Christ’s purposes, which are always good.

And what are Christ’s purposes? He said it:

The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost (Luke 19:10).

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10).

With the thief, Jesus was referring to Satan, to whom man's sin gave rights in the earth, the reason for sickness, death, wars, crime, immorality, and other evils, all operating through man's fallen, selfish nature and wrong choices. God, of course, is not the author of these things. But Jesus came to save that which was lost through Satan's activities, and He came to give life, not death. His message is the message of life.

"You will be my witnesses..." The Greek word for witnesses here is *martus*, where we get the word for martyr. All but one of the original disciples in the first century were killed as martyrs for their testimony about Christ. This is proof that they had witnessed the resurrection and had not been involved with some cooked-up, self-serving conspiracy. Millions have been martyred since, including many in our day.

But whether or not we are physically killed, we are called to put to death our old selfish natures and let His life be witnessed in ours. Our old nature must be martyred.

The television miniseries, *Band of Brothers*, was a dramatic and vivid account of the combat actions of the famed 101st Airborne Division during World War II in Europe. At the height of one bloody battle, an older American soldier counseled a young private who was petrified with fear as he witnessed the carnage of dead and mangled Germans and fellow Americans strewn all around him. The young man feared an almost certain, similar fate for himself in the days ahead of sometimes building-to-building fighting, bullets flying and grenades and artillery shells exploding everywhere.

The older soldier's counsel was chilling but poignant: "Accept the fact that you are already dead. The sooner you accept that, the sooner you'll be able to function as a soldier is supposed to function... All war depends upon it."

Oh, what a biblical truism in the life and spiritual war in which we find ourselves as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ! Truth in the natural often portrays truth in the spiritual. The apostle Paul used similar words:

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20, NIV)—"For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3)—"If Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness" (Romans 8:10).

What is "being a witness"? Essentially, it is allowing the life and reality of Christ to be seen in us. The operative word is "being," not necessarily speaking. St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach often, and if necessary, use words."

Do you want the power?

Are you ready for your life to become one exciting adventure for God, an adventure unimagined by others?

First, I will describe how the power first exploded on the earth to large numbers of people close to 2,000 years ago, a pattern for us today.

Chapter 3

How the power first came to the earth

There is power just in believing God, but it is not the full power described in this book.

The power that comes with simply believing God was demonstrated early in Billy Graham's ministry. At that time back in the 1940s, Graham was struggling with questions he had about the Bible for which he did not have answers. But one day he got on his knees and prayed, "Father, I am going to accept this as thy Word—by *faith!*" This simple act of sincere faith released a power in Graham's ministry he had not before known and soon catapulted him and his ministry to proclaim the gospel to worldwide audiences.

But there is even more power to be obtained. In the Old Testament, the full power referred to in this book would sometimes be upon a few individuals, such as Elijah and Elisha, but in the New Testament God began to pour out this power on large numbers.

In fact, God spoke of the future through the Old Testament prophet Joel and said, "I will pour out my Spirit on all people" (2:28). It has not yet happened on "all" people, but the outpouring began almost 2,000 years ago.

It happened as described in the New Testament, shortly after Christ's resurrection and on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came in force, and all the disciples were filled with the Spirit and began to speak in tongues, so much so that onlookers thought the people were drunk with wine. But the apostle Peter said, "No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16).

In this chapter you will learn how large numbers of people got the power after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which will introduce the next chapter about how you can get it the very same way.

God has not changed. "I the LORD do not change" (Malachi 3:6). His Word has not changed. These truths have not changed. Millions of Bible believers all over the world attest to these truths.

We will go back and examine how the power was transferred from God to the disciples of Jesus, and later, to others. This will serve as a model for how modern-day people can get the same power.

This is too important to gloss over lightly. Please read each word of the Scriptures given very carefully. Denominational traditions vary on this subject, which is controversial, so it is important that we see exactly what God says about it, not what

man says. That way, you will have a clear understanding of the truth and will not be confused by what well-intentioned but uninformed people may tell you. It doesn't matter what I say or what anyone else says; the only thing that matters is what God says.

The prophecy. We know that the power comes from the Holy Spirit, because after Jesus' resurrection and just before His ascension into heaven, He prophesied to His disciples:

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit... **you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you**; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:4-8).

Notice:

- Jesus was prophesying what was to come.
- He said it would be “the gift my Father promised.”
- He specifically referred to it as being “baptized with the Holy Spirit.”
- He said the experience would bring power.
- He said it would happen when the Holy Spirit “comes on you.” This is important: Remember the words “comes on” (or KJV: “is come upon”).

The fulfillment. This prophecy was in the first chapter in the book of Acts. It was fulfilled in the very next chapter. Here is how the fulfillment was described:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:1-4).

Notice:

- What Jesus prophesied as a “baptism with the Holy Spirit,” when it was fulfilled is referred to as being “filled with the Holy Spirit.”
- All (not some) of those present were filled.
- The Spirit came like a wind. How appropriate: The Greek word for Spirit is *pneuma*, which means “movement of air, or wind.” Jesus said, “The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8).
- Tongues of fire rested on each one. The tongue represents confession and communication. From this moment on, the confession and proclamation of Christ as Lord would spread throughout the earth as a fire.

- They (all) began to speak with other tongues. The Holy Spirit did not speak with other tongues; the people did, enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Three different relationships with the Holy Spirit

Please take the time to follow the below very closely. It will be worth your while more than you can now imagine.

As odd as it may seem to some, the Scriptures reveal three different relationships with the Holy Spirit. I thank God for using His servant and my friend, the late Mike Richmond, to point out to me what should have been obvious. The Holy Spirit can be:

1. **With** you,
2. **in** you, and
3. **on**, or **upon** you.

Earlier, I asked you to remember the words “comes on” (or “come upon”). That is because the Bible reveals these three different relationships a person can have with the Holy Spirit. (I call them “prepositional” relationships, remembering my high school English grammar classes.)

Just before His crucifixion, Jesus was speaking to His disciples about the Holy Spirit, and said:

“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives **with you and will be in you**” (John 14:16-17)

Here Jesus describes two of the three relationships with the Holy Spirit: the “with you” experience (now) and the “in you” experience (future), which He prophesied.

The Holy Spirit was “with” them (present) at that time. However, the Spirit was not yet “in” them. Jesus prophesied that it “will be” (future).

The “in” experience did not happen on the day of Pentecost when the power came, as most believe, but earlier, after Christ’s resurrection but before His ascension, during one of His appearances to the disciples:

Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” And with that **he breathed on them and said, Receive the Holy Spirit** (John 20:21-22).

The word “receive” here is the Greek *lambano*, which also means to “take.” We do not passively receive it; we actively take it.

This is a most interesting and overlooked theological fact and sequence of events. Jesus had not yet even told them about the power to come from the Holy Spirit, yet we know for a certainty that here they received the Holy Spirit, by the authority of the Son of God and His own breath! Again, traditionally it is thought that they did not receive the Holy Spirit until the day of Pentecost when the power came. But Scripture shows otherwise.

Does anyone have any doubt that if the Son of God in His resurrected body came up to someone and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit," and breathed on them as He said it, that they would receive the Holy Spirit, right then and there? There can be no doubt.

Therefore:

- The Holy Spirit was "with" the disciples before the crucifixion (the "with" experience).
- The Holy Spirit came "in" to the disciples (the "in" experience) in John chapter 20, *after* the crucifixion and *before* the ascension. But remember, they still had no power, a power which Jesus told them about a few days later in Acts chapter 1, and told them to "wait" for, and which was to occur on the day of Pentecost.
- A few days after Jesus' ascension to heaven, they received the "on" or "upon" (KJV) experience in Acts chapter 2, when they received power. At that moment, this same formerly powerless Peter received so much power that the very same day he preached to the crowd in hostile Jerusalem, a crowd that had just assented to Christ's crucifixion, and as a result, 3,000 people believed and received eternal life, and a lame man was miraculously healed!

The phrase "baptism with the Holy Spirit." Much controversy surrounds the use of this phrase, and key Scriptures are often overlooked. Many believe that it is a separate empowering experience, while others insist it is what happens to all believers at the point of salvation, based on the verses, "We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body" (1 Corinthians 12:13), and "(There is) one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Ephesians 4:4).

But Scripture actually says there are different baptisms (Hebrews 6:2), even though each has a singular application. There is (1) the baptism with water (Matthew 3:13); there is (2) the baptism *into* the body of Christ at salvation (1 Corinthians 12:13); (3) there is the baptism *with* the Holy Spirit for empowerment (Acts 1:5); and there is (4) the baptism of fire (Matthew 3:11).

The Greek word for baptize literally means to "immerse into," or "dip."

In the process of any baptism, there are three components:

- a *baptizer* (one who performs the baptism, or the one who immerses the candidate),
- an *element* or *medium*, into which one is baptized or dipped into, such as water,
- a *candidate* (the "baptizee," or the one who is "immersed").

If you carefully examine the Scriptures, you will discover the following:

Baptism into Christ. “We were all baptized *by* one Spirit into one body” (1 Corinthians 12:13). We see that here the Holy Spirit is the baptizer. The medium is Christ. The candidate is the new believer. (These first two are a beautiful picture of how two Persons of the Godhead work together.) In this baptism, the Spirit immerses the believer into the spiritual and mystical body of Christ.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist prophesied, “He (Christ) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). Jesus is the baptizer here, not the Holy Spirit as in the previous explanation. The Holy Spirit is the medium. The candidate is the believer. This baptism is for power and service.

Baptism with water. In today’s practice, the pastor or evangelist is usually the baptizer, but Scripture does not limit it to them. The medium is water. The candidate is the believer. This baptism symbolizes being buried with Christ in His death and the death of our old nature, and being raised with Him in His resurrection. It is an outward sign of an inward work.

Baptism with fire. Jesus is the baptizer. The medium is fire (figurative). The candidate is the believer. This is the lifelong purging and purification process that every believer experiences where, to prepare us for eternity with Him, Christ is continually burning out the dross in our lives.

Summary of Biblical Baptisms

*** (Insert Image 1 from disk) ***

A repeated phenomenon

What happened on the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 is usually thought to have been the one-time birth of the church, and in many ways it was, because power first came and world outreach began. However, after this birth, the exact same experience was repeated several times in the book of Acts, using different terminology, and the same experience has been repeated ever since. We will briefly examine each example in Acts.

At Samaria:

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet **come upon** any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’

hands, he offered them money and said, “Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:14-19).

Note the words “come upon” in this passage. This passage is somewhat of a mystery in that these people in Samaria had accepted the Word of God and had been baptized in the name of Jesus, but they had neither “received” (*lambano*) the Holy Spirit nor had the Spirit “come upon” them.

It is not mentioned here that they spoke with tongues after this experience as they did on the day of Pentecost; however, many scholars assume they did because Simon witnessed something so supernatural, tangible, and moving that it caused him to offer money to obtain it.

Paul’s Damascus Road experience. Paul, formerly called Saul, was a strict Jew and persecutor of Christians. But after His ascension into heaven, Jesus dramatically appeared to Paul while Paul was on his way to Damascus to persecute more believers. Paul became a believer at this instant and received the “in” experience because he confessed Jesus as “Lord” and purposed to obey Him. Then Jesus told Paul to go into the city and to see a man named Ananias, who “entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit’” (Acts 9:17).

Note key facts here:

- Paul instantly became a believer, confessing Jesus as Lord, and purposed to obey Christ.
- By becoming a believer, Paul received the “in” experience of the Holy Spirit, which happens automatically upon believing in Him.
- Paul had not yet been “filled” with or empowered by the Holy Spirit, the “upon” experience.
- It does not say that Paul spoke with tongues here, but we know that he did, at least later, because in 1 Corinthians 14:18 Paul said, “I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you.”

At Cornelius’ house. As mentioned, Cornelius was a Roman military officer. Following a vision by both Peter and Cornelius recorded in Acts chapter 10, three men came to Peter, saying:

We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say (v.22).

Peter went with the men to Cornelius’ house and began explaining the gospel, and...

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell **upon** all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God (vs. 44-46).

Note the words used here: “fell upon.” This is the same as the previous “on” and “come upon” experience.

Also, as I mentioned, in Acts chapter 11, Peter was explaining what happened here to the believers in Jerusalem, and he made it clear that this was exactly the same thing that happened on the day of Pentecost, and even referred to it as the baptism with the Holy Spirit:

As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit **came on** them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but **you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit**’ (10:15-16).

Ephesus. Paul arrived at Ephesus, found some disciples and asked them:

Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit”.... When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit **came on** them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all (Acts 19:1-2, 6-7).

Note:

- They were previously believers. We know that all believers have the Holy Spirit “in” them. The fact that these disciples did not even know about the Holy Spirit does not prove that they did not have the Holy Spirit. But they obviously did not have the power of the Holy Spirit. Many believers today have the Holy Spirit in them, but they never get any teaching about the Holy Spirit and are ignorant about Him, just as these people at Ephesus, and many are not even aware that He is in them.
- When Paul laid his hands on them, “the Holy Spirit **came on** them.” Not with, not in, but on, as we discussed.
- They also spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Summary of people receiving the Holy Spirit power in the New Testament

There are five occurrences in the book of Acts when the power of the Holy Spirit came “on” or “upon” people:

1. On the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:1-4.)

2. At Samaria. (Acts 8:14-19.)
3. Saul, later called the apostle Paul. (Acts 9:17.)
4. At Cornelius' house. (Acts 10:44-46.)
5. At Ephesus. (Acts 19:1-2, 6-7.)

In all these cases of receiving power, except maybe at Cornelius' house, the people were already believers, and even at Cornelius' house, belief probably came at least an instant before the power came upon them. This means an interval, even if seconds, or even if a split-second.

In all cases except at Samaria, speaking in tongues was specifically mentioned as a result. In Samaria, we know something strongly supernatural and tangible was evident, and because of the other four instances, it may be a safe but not totally certain conclusion that speaking in tongues also happened there.

Summary of Holy Spirit Baptisms in Acts

***** (Insert Image 2 from disk) *****

(It is extremely significant that every empowering experience described in the early church, except possibly one, about which we are not sure, was evidenced by speaking in other tongues. That is a significant message for us today, to be discussed later.)

Results of the power in their lives

These individuals and groups of people, now infused with God's power, boldly went out among the nations and turned the world upside down with the message of God's great love and forgiveness available through His Son Jesus Christ.

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly (Acts 4:31).

In speaking "the word of God boldly," they were not only proclaiming God's message of salvation, but speaking His word into life situations, and seeing His miracle-working power displayed, the result of being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders (Acts 14:3).

You can have that same power!

Peter said:

The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call (Acts 2:39).

Is He calling you? I believe He is. That is why you have this book. It is no accident that it is in your hands at this moment. Nothing is by accident.

In just minutes in the next chapter, you can receive that same power.

Keep reading!

Chapter 4

How you can get the power

(“The world’s best kept secret”)

Now it’s your turn!

Marvel of marvels, and miracles of miracles. You can receive the same power as the original disciples as described in the previous chapters! Jesus called it “the promise of the Father.”

“Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you...” (Luke 24:49, KJV).

Remember, the apostle Peter said:

“The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39).

(As did Jesus in Acts chapters 1 and 2, and as used in the remainder of the book of Acts, I often synonymously use the terms “baptism with the Holy Spirit,” “filled with the Spirit,” and the Holy Spirit coming “on” or “upon” people.)

Jesus also said, “But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Acts 24:49, KJV). Tarry means to wait, and in the past some have believed that one must “tarry” or wait at the altar of their church, for minutes or hours, before they can receive the power. But this is not what Jesus meant. While they did not understand it at the time, He intended for the disciples to wait until the appointed prophetic time, the day of Pentecost ten days later, when the Holy Spirit would come and fill them. From the previous chapter, you can note that “tarrying” was not required in the other instances given when the Holy Spirit’s power came “upon” people.

I have heard of people who have tarried, hungered, and begged for hours at the altar and never did get filled with the Spirit. Sadly, they just did not know the Scriptures. That is not God’s will, which I will show you.

Mike desperately wanted the baptism with the Holy Spirit. He met the prerequisites below and prayed several times at the altar at church and he prayed at home, but nothing ever happened. He kept thinking that he had not tarried long enough. He even began to think that God did not want him to be filled with the Spirit, or maybe even that God did not like him, all ideas being totally contrary to Scripture and absurd. The devil tries to put all kinds of negative thoughts in our heads to rob us of God’s blessings and negate our effectiveness for Him. But when Mike discovered the biblical truth described below,

he asked for and immediately received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. You can too—right now!

Prerequisites. What are the prerequisites to receiving the Holy Spirit's power?

The number one requirement to receive the power is that one must be a born-again believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Some people are not accustomed to and are turned off by the phrase “born again,” thinking it is only terminology from the modern evangelical movement. Not so. It is an ancient biblical term taken from Jesus' own words. When approached by a religious leader, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again” (John 3:3). Jesus' own use of the phrase forever stamps it as theologically proper, whether or not it fits one's denominational tradition.

The phrase is full of meaning, synonymous with being “saved” (saved from an eternity without God), because when one places his faith and commitment in Jesus Christ, the Bible says that we become a new person and a dwelling place for God Himself. “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our spirits, which were dead, have become alive to God, or born again. We are saved from eventual perishing, God's wrath to come, and are given the gift of eternal life.

If you have never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and been born again, stop reading now and immediately turn to Appendix 3, then come back to this page later. Right now, the Holy Spirit is “with” you, prompting and urging you. But He must first be “in” you before you can have the “upon” experience of the baptism with the Holy Spirit!

Second, once you are a born-again believer in Jesus Christ, you must want Him not just as a fire insurance policy to escape hell, but you must want to serve Him and be His vessel and instrument in this world. The primary purpose of the power is to serve Him. You must desire to yield to Him and His will for your life.

Third, remember the Holy Spirit is “holy.” He is pure and perfect, free from all sin and vileness. While you will never make human perfection in this life (only Jesus did that), you should not ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit if you are consciously holding on to any particular sin or sins. For example, do not take this step if you are a habitual and unrepentant thief or one who practices immorality. Pray now, and ask God to show you what may be displeasing to Him in your life. If He shows you anything, confess it and sincerely turn from it (the meaning of repent) according to 1 John 1:9:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Now, are you ready?

I assume that you are now born again, you desire to be a servant of Jesus Christ, and you have sincerely confessed and turned from any known sin. You want the power of the Holy Spirit.

You are a modern-day Holy Spirit explosion waiting to happen!

Now, “Let’s roll,” using the expression of the late hero, Todd Beamer, on the doomed airliner on September 11, 2001. As you may know, Todd was an outspoken and committed Christian.

Here is how:

1. To ask anything from God with the certainty that He will give it and you will get it, you have to know His will on the subject. We find His will in His Word, which reveals the mind of God.
2. We know, “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God” (2 Corinthians 1:20). We know His promises are all “yes,” but we have to “amen,” or agree with and affirm them, by faith.
3. We know for certain that it is His will that you be filled with the Spirit, because He said it and, in fact, commanded it: “Be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). God worded that as mandatory, not an option.
4. Now this promise applies: “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him” (1 John 5:14-15). Note the word “confidence.” *Strong’s Enhanced Lexicon* defines that as “free and fearless confidence, cheerful courage, boldness, assurance.” I love that: “fearless confidence”!
5. Because we know that it is His will, we ask for it and, by faith, make a decision to receive it. Jesus said, “Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24).

According to Scripture, we know it is His will; therefore, we ask according to His will; therefore, we know that He hears us; therefore, we know that we have the answer now; therefore, we believe we have received it; therefore, we have it. Right now. Period. Done.

Summary:

- Know it is His will revealed in His own Word.
- Ask according to His known will.
- Know that He hears you according to His Word.

- Know that you have the answer according to His Word.

Or, (1) ask, (2) believe, (3) receive.

That simple five-letter word I previously referred to as providing for us this power was **F-A-I-T-H**.

This is the way God designed for us to receive all His promises. It involves faith in His Word, and action based on that faith.

Salvation works the same way: We know it is His will; we ask in faith; we believe; we receive; and we never doubt. That is God's way.

Steps to Receiving the Baptism With The Holy Spirit

*** (Insert Image 3 from disk) ***

A suggested prayer

Within the mystery and activities of the Godhead, we know that it is the Son, Jesus Christ, who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist tells us:

I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. **He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit** and with fire (Matthew 3:11).

(Remember, at salvation, the Holy Spirit has already baptized us "into" Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13).

Therefore, let us specifically ask Jesus, the one who baptizes, for this empowerment.

Here is a suggested prayer:

"Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for forgiving my sins and saving me by dying on the cross for me. Thank you for offering the fullness of your Spirit to me. As you commanded, I desire to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, and I know it is your will. And you said that if I ask anything according to your will, that you hear me, and that I have what I asked for. You also said that if I believe that I receive, then I can have what I ask for and it is mine. Therefore, in your holy name, Jesus, I ask you to baptize and empower me with your Holy Spirit, and for your Holy Spirit to come upon me right now. I receive by faith, right now. I now thank you for answering this prayer and baptizing me with your Holy Spirit. Now use me for your purposes and your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen."

Begin to worship and praise God. You may or may not experience physical or emotional feelings. That is not important. It is not based on feelings but on faith. Feelings may come now or later. The gifts of the Spirit may begin to flow through you immediately, or later, also by faith.

In their book, *How to Heal the Sick*, (Whitaker House, New Kensington, PA, 1981), Charles and Francis Hunter give a simple and powerful formula for receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit. They have probably seen more people receive this blessing than anyone on earth. Charles says:

“Ask Jesus to baptize you with the Holy Spirit, lift your hands up to God, begin to love and praise Him, but not in your native language. Start giving sounds of love rapidly so that the Holy Spirit can take those sounds and give you the language which will take any individual and make an extraordinary person out of him! Let your spirit soar as it talks to God for the very first time!” (1 Corinthians 14:2).

What’s this business about speaking in tongues?

As carefully pointed out previously, clearly in the book of Acts and in the early church, speaking in tongues was a normal part of the package of receiving the baptism, or infilling, with the Holy Spirit, when the Holy Spirit came “upon” people.

This is a very controversial subject, heavily influenced by denominational tradition, some of which is biblical and some of which is not. I know that whatever I say here will find disagreement with some of my dear friends whom I respect but who are on different sides of the issue. For that reason, we will look at exactly what the Word of God actually says, for which I am not ashamed and on which I must stand, and we all should stand. There is no other foundation.

If you find fault with what I say, I urge you to take another look at what God says in the Scriptures before your final decision. I know from past discussions on different subjects that some people have made up their minds and do not want to be confused with the facts, will hold to their traditional opinions no matter what, and have closed themselves off from further revelation from God’s Word. As I said earlier, it does not matter what I say or what any person says. The only thing that matters is what God says. All I can do is tell you what the Scriptures say, and it is up to the Holy Spirit to convince.

I am reminded of this profound quote by dear friend Pastor Jeff Good:

“In a nominal, complacent, secular society, any attempt at normal biblical Christianity will be considered radical.”

What we are talking about here is “normal biblical Christianity.” It’s radical, but it’s in the book.

Some may ask, “Do I have to speak in tongues?” The conclusion of my many years of study on this subject leads me to agree with the well-known and respected Christian leader Harold Bredesen, who once said: “You don’t have to—you get to.” But I would add that if you do not, from my experience, I must conclude that there will be a missing supernatural dimension in your life. See the explanation in my personal testimony below.

There is nothing in the Scriptures that says you absolutely have to speak in tongues or else, although it is revealed as God’s will. For example, through Paul, God says, “I would like every one of you to speak in tongues” (1 Corinthians 14:5). That could not be more clear. Regardless of our denomination or tradition, we must never think of ourselves as wiser than God. We must take Him at His Word, crucify our fallen human intellects, and do what He says.

Speaking in tongues following the “upon” experience of the Holy Spirit was a normative experience in the New Testament, which means it should be a normative experience today. But the problem today is that tradition and improper teaching have created misunderstanding and doubt about the phenomenon, which tends to block faith and instill fear in many people, robbing them of what God intended as a blessing.

For example, even among those who accept the modern-day reality of tongues, some point out the rhetorical question in 1 Corinthians 12:30, “Do all speak in tongues?” as proof that not all have this “gift.” However, this is a misunderstanding based on this isolated verse, out of context. In Chapter 12, Paul is speaking about the Spirit’s *corporate* manifestations in the church, or body of Christ: “The manifestation of the Spirit is given for the *common good*” (v. 7). Mention in this verse involves a message in tongues to a corporate assembly of believers, when that person or someone else interprets. Indeed, not all have this gift. He is not referring to the manifestation of the Spirit coming “upon” people as in the book of Acts and which in 1 Corinthians 14 he promotes for *all believers* as a special language for prayer and worship.

For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind (vs. 14-15).

In summary, from a comprehensive study of the book of Acts and 1 Corinthians chapters 12 and 14, we can conclude that:

- It was normal for all newly Spirit-empowered believers to speak in tongues, and because of that, it should be the same today;
- Yet not all have the gift of delivering a message in tongues to an assembly of believers;
- Yet all Spirit-baptized believers are exhorted to pray and sing in tongues.

Speaking in a tongue, as prompted by the Spirit, is not “jibberish” as some uninformed detractors claim. This is a reckless charge that frightfully borders on blasphemy against

the Holy Spirit, a sin that Jesus said could not be forgiven, a sobering thought. The Bible says:

For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit (1 Corinthians 14:2).

So, praying in tongues is actually speaking to God with one's spirit, not the mind, which is bypassed. If your mind is like mine, that is a relief! I frequently do not know how to pray and do not trust my own wisdom to decide. But with the Spirit, God provides the answer:

The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will (Romans 8:26-27).

Note: "Groans that words cannot express."

Paul and Jude also say that praying in tongues has a positive, blessed effect upon the one who is praying:

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself (1 Corinthians 14:4.)

Build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20).

To edify means to build up and to strengthen. Have you ever met one person who did not need edifying or building up? God does not make provision for just a few people to be edified and ignores everyone else because "God does not show favoritism" (Acts 10:34). His provisions are for everyone and cannot be dismissed without loss.

As to "edification," science now confirms what Scriptures says and what the faithful have believed for centuries. In a public statement titled, "Effects of Extended Verbal Prayer and Joyful Laughter," Christian psychiatrist Carl R. Peterson, M.D. writes:

I have had a number of inquiries concerning the efficacy of praying in the spirit (glossolalia) and its benefit to the human immune system, i.e., immunity enhanced by chemicals released from a part of the brain. I am attempting to clarify some information I have shared with a number of ministers. This is information that may be deduced from what we know about the way the brain functions. We do know the part of the brain affected most noticeably by extended prayer and laughter represents a significant portion of the brain and its metabolic activity. Therefore, voluntary speech during extended vocal prayer causes a major stimulation in these parts of the brain (mainly the hypothalamus).

The hypothalamus has direct regulation of four major systems of the body, mainly: a) the pituitary gland and all target endocrine glands; b) the total immune

system; c) the entire autonomic system; and d) the production of brain hormones called endorphins and enkephalons, which are chemicals the body produces and are 100-200 times more powerful than morphine.

In summary, a very significant percentage of the central nervous system is directly and indirectly activated in the process of extended verbal and musical prayer over a period of time. This results in a significant release of brain hormones which, in turn, increases the body's general immunity. It is further enhanced through joyful laughter with increased respirations and oxygen intake to the brain, diaphragm and other muscles. This same phenomenon is seen in physical activity in general, i.e., running, etc.

We know from the Word of God that there is a true joy that builds and sustains. Nehemiah tells us the joy of the Lord is our strength. There is joy in the presence of Jehovah. We, as believers having entered into that wonderful presence of our Lord, know this to be true. What we must continue to remember is that the joy of the Lord spoken of in the Word is so much more than any manifestation. We can truly have that unspeakable joy in the face of any trials we may encounter, if our joy is grounded in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.... Truly, we all benefit—body, soul, and spirit—from obedience and yielding to the Spirit of God in every area of our lives.

Love, not tongues? But some have said, “But I want love, not tongues.” I remember when I first heard about the power of God and His outpouring of power today, many rejected it and said, “I just want love,” as though we can cherry-pick from what God wants us to have. Some young people I remember jokingly referred to “the power bunch” (the charismatics) and “the love bunch” (the non-charismatics). It was interesting, however, that the power bunch usually also had love, but the love bunch had no power!

God's power and love are not mutually exclusive, but mutually supportive. If you are edified, you can be a more loving person. God wants us to have both. Who are we to argue with God?

As previously discussed, in the book of Acts, virtually all whom the Holy Spirit fell upon began to speak in unknown languages, or tongues (e.g. Acts 2:4, 10:46, 19:6). This manifestation of the Spirit coming “upon” people has continued through history and continues to this day, as attested to worldwide. I have Chinese, Hispanic, and other friends who pray in a language other than their native tongue or English. A friend from China who prays in tongues is a brilliant professor of mathematics at a major American university.

By faith. By faith we receive salvation. By faith we receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit. By faith we speak in tongues. By faith we receive all of God's promises. That is just the way He designed it. “Without faith it is impossible to please God, because

anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

If by faith you have received the baptism with the Spirit and feel unintelligible words or phrases begin to well up inside your spirit, do not hold them in but let them come out. Release your faith! With some people, it sometimes starts with only one word or syllable, but by faith they speak it out, and over time, faith and the language grow. If just one syllable or word forms in your mind—speak it out! “Do not quench the Holy Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 5:19, NKJV).

Some may point out that the evidence of tongues in the book of Acts seems spontaneous and involuntary, and they may ask why must it be done by faith today. The answer is that in many cases today it also is spontaneous and seems involuntary, although it is never totally involuntary, as the Holy Spirit never forces Himself on anyone. The speaker can stop when he wills. But in many cases, modern tradition and improper teaching have caused doubt and fear in people, which can block the spontaneous flow of the Spirit. That is the reason for suggestions on how to allow the Spirit to flow in one’s life by faith.

A bad rap. Let me clear the air on a fallacious impression. Some who oppose speaking in tongues charge that those who do speak in tongues think or act like they are spiritually superior. I have observed interaction between these two groups for many years and know that except maybe in rare cases, it is not true that those who do speak in tongues feel or act superior. It may be an impression, but a false impression. It is simply not true. Where it may be true, the same may be true of those who claim *not* to have the experience. Pride is a fleshly temptation to which all are subject.

What is the reason for the false impression? It is simply because those who do speak in tongues have found wonderful revelation in God’s Word, have acted upon it by faith, have received a blessing, and out of love, they often want to share this revelation and blessing with others, such as with salvation. The problem is that “others” are often not open or not interested. They have been wrongly taught that they already have everything God has for them, and they resent the idea that God may have more and that they have been lacking. The fact is that God always has more for us and we never exhaust His infinite supply. But such a resentment, rooted in spiritual pride, is a main cause of the so-called “divisive” nature of the subject. Another fact is that nobody is superior to anybody. We are all wretched beggars without God’s grace, which none of us deserve.

Many also point out that if one has the indwelling Holy Spirit at salvation, they already have all of the Holy Spirit and there is no more to be obtained through a “second experience.” However, if that were true, Paul would not have needed to exhort the believers at Ephesus to be “filled with the Spirit” (5:18). Nor would Jesus have later told His disciples, on whom He previously already “breathed” and said “receive the Spirit,” to wait for power from on high through what both He and John the Baptist called “the baptism with the Holy Spirit.” The above argument is simply not in accord with Scripture, no matter how logical it may sound to the uninformed. With our natural minds there is a tendency to want to quantify everything. The “filling” or baptism with the

Spirit is not a quantitative phenomenon, but a spiritual phenomenon, transcending human logic. Our finite minds are not able to technically dissect and explain spiritual processes, and we must take it by faith.

Can one be filled with the Spirit and not speak in tongues? Many claim to be filled with the Spirit, do not speak in tongues, and are wonderful and effective servants of God. But in my years of observation, I have found a difference. Let me tell you what happened to me, and maybe my testimony will help you decide for yourself.

My discovery

Here is what happened to me. Many years ago in a seminar, I learned about the Holy Spirit—who He is, what He does, and how to be filled with Him, all according to the above scriptural principles, except the tongues part. These truths immediately bore witness in my spirit. It was from the Word, and I knew this was from God. Based on God’s command to be filled, I knew it was His will. I knew if I asked anything according to His will, He heard me, and if He heard me, I knew I had the petition I asked for. Within minutes, I asked, I believed, and I received. And I have not been the same since.

I did not feel anything. No tingles. No emotion. No fire from heaven. No tongues. It was all by faith, as most things in my life have been. But over a period of days, I was told that a change began to be noticeable in me. I also noticed that I began to have more joy and peace, fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). And I had both a desire and a boldness to tell others about Jesus and the gospel, a main purpose of such an empowerment.

Previously, I would meet at the church on Tuesday nights to go out knocking on neighborhood doors. But when people came to the door, I did not know what to say to them except to invite them to church. I did not know how, nor was I empowered, to tell them about Jesus and the plan of salvation. And if by chance they would come to that particular church, they still would not hear much about Jesus!

At about that time, I did not understand about tongues and no one ever told me. It had been hidden from me because of the tradition of the churches where I had been attending. But little by little, the Lord began to show me what His Word revealed on the subject and I began to understand what the Bible, not man, says about it, such as explained above.

After I had been “filled with the Spirit,” people began to witness to me about the “baptism with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues.” I struggled with the difference, and I read everything about it I could get my hands on, especially arguments against it, so I could have all the facts. I decided to base my conclusion solely on the Word and the Word alone. By the way, one is only safe with the Word. But with that decision, four interesting things happened.

I could see it! First, I began to see in the Scriptures that the baptism with the Holy Spirit was a subsequent empowering experience and that speaking in tongues was a typical result and manifestation. It seemed so clear in the book of Acts.

Visit with my pastor. Second, I naively made an appointment to see my pastor whom I knew to be strongly opposed to any such thought, as was his denomination in general. I wanted to give him a chance to counsel me, and if necessary correct me, through the Word. He graciously invited me to his home to talk. I took my Bible but was nervous, believing that I dare not get into a Bible debate with this distinguished, older man with a doctorate in theology, who had been a pastor for many years. As a relatively ignorant layman, I knew he would blow me away. I felt very inadequate. But I went. He invited me into his study, where I saw the walls lined with thick theological books. I felt doomed. I held my Bible tightly. God's Word is all I had (but all I needed, I discovered). I was an intellectual midget compared with this scholar. We talked, and soon, to my surprise, one thing became very clear: His counsel and arguments were not based on the Bible. He did not even open a Bible or quote a verse. When I mentioned a Bible verse, he had no answer and avoided the question. I had mine open, but he didn't want to hear what it said. It was clear that any objection he had to the baptism with the Spirit and speaking in tongues was an emotional one and not a biblical or intellectual one. That experience taught me the power of the Word. No man can stand against it, not even doctors of theology. I left there more convinced than ever of what I had seen in the Word.

Considering a great scholar. Third, I decided to read a new book about the Holy Spirit written to oppose the powerfully new and emerging charismatic renewal. It was by one of the top biblical scholars in America, a distinguished pastor of a very large church, now deceased, and a man I respected very much, and still do. However, I found his book to be no argument against what I saw in the Scriptures. For example, in one instance the author quoted only the middle part of a verse that if read alone supported his view, but omitted the first and last part of the very same verse that opposed his view!

In case you are wondering, the verse was 1 Corinthians 14:5, where he said that Paul wrote, concerning tongues, "I would rather have you prophesy," the middle section of that one verse. However, the verse reads in total: "I would like every one of you to speak in tongues [*opposes his view*], but I would rather have you prophesy [*supports his view*]. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified" [*opposes his view by equating tongues and interpretation with prophecy*]. The net effect of the whole verse opposed his view. God's Word is amazing!

How could I, a nobody, see this and this great scholar not see it? I saw that as disingenuous, as surely this great scholar knew better. Or maybe it was spiritual blindness. Some people are so bound by their denominational doctrines that they have become spiritually blind to anything else. That is scary.

A startling confirmation. Fourth, after much study, I felt confirmed that the baptism with the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues as a separate empowering

experience from salvation was totally biblical, but I was still under attack from the devil about it. I know now that it was because the devil hates the manifestation of God's power, as it is his undoing, and he does everything he can to undermine this great biblical truth. Sadly, this causes some ministries to avoid the subject and ban tongues because it is "divisive," thus for fear of men depriving themselves of God's available power. But truth is divisive. The gospel is divisive. People have to make choices, and choices have consequences.

One day I had returned home from church where the above pastor had preached against it, as usual, and I was somewhat dejected, seeing something different in God's Word from what my own pastor was preaching. That saddened me. After lunch, I was sitting all by myself in my home meditating on the subject when all of a sudden the Holy Spirit came upon me in a dramatic way, strongly affirming what I had been seeing in the Scriptures. I had never experienced anything like that before or sense. It was like God saying to me, "**Yes—you've got it right!!!**" I was suddenly filled with an indescribable joy that began flowing from my innermost being, and overflowing. I was engulfed in this joy. I began laughing and laughing and laughing. I had to get up and go for a walk, still laughing. I walked into the woods, still filled with joy and laughing, almost uncontrollably. I had never experienced such joy. The trees and leaves around me appeared strangely alive and joyous themselves. It was surreal, a heavenly experience, like I had been transported into a new dimension. I was still in the same old place but everything became transcendent. This went on for about 10-15 minutes, then it stopped as suddenly as it began. I walked back home, elated that the Holy Spirit Himself had visited me! In this experience, the Holy Spirit strongly spoke to me that my conclusions about what the Word says on the subject were correct. It was also a small foretaste of heaven, as everything was filled with the joy, beauty, and the life of the Lord.

It is significant that I am not at all a "feely" person. This experience was totally out of character and contrary to my emotional nature.

I knew that God had given me a supernatural experience and confirmation of what was in His Word. By the way, that was many years before anyone ever heard of the phenomenon of so-called "holy laughter," or "laughing in the Spirit." But when this phenomenon appeared many years later, I knew what those people were experiencing. It was real, and from God, regardless of what the critics may say. The Bible says a lot about the fullness of joy. As to the other strange manifestations that sometimes accompany this in some churches, I believe they are evidence that the persons are being delivered from some demonic influence or activity, a work of the strong presence of the Holy Spirit.

It was wonderful, and I wish I could flip a switch and turn it on at will, but I cannot. It has never happened to me since with that intensity, although I have had some less intense times of supernatural joy and laughter when the Holy Spirit has visited me in a special way. Again, I am encouraged that it is all just a taste of the glorious joy of heaven in the presence of our Savior.

Acting on my faith. With personal confirmation from both the Word and the Spirit, I finally decided to pray for the baptism with the Holy Spirit. I did, and I received *by faith*, but the tongues part simply would not come out. I tried and tried and it would just not come. I opened my mouth expecting the Holy Spirit to speak, but nothing. I did this privately, of course, and I am sure I would have looked foolish to anyone watching!

Finally, a friend pointed out a profound truth. Acts chapter 2 records that on the day of Pentecost, it was not the Holy Spirit who spoke in tongues. It says that “*they* (the disciples) spoke with tongues.” I suddenly realized that the Holy Spirit does not have a mouth or a tongue, which is what we have! It is something we have to do, by faith, then the Holy Spirit honors our faith and gives spiritual meaning to the sounds. God always meets us at our point of faith. The friend also pointed out that it is like Peter stepping out of the boat and walking on water. It didn’t make sense to his natural mind, and it was illogical, but Peter actually stepped out of the boat and started walking on the water, by faith—until he started looking around at the circumstances and doubting, then he began to sink. Looking at circumstances instead of Jesus and His Word will always cause us to sink!

Praying in tongues bypasses the mind and human understanding. God says, “Lean not on your own understanding” (Proverbs 3:5), which is faulty. Such prayers free the human spirit to be guided by God’s Spirit.

I remembered that Paul said, “I **will** pray with my spirit... I **will** sing with my spirit...” (1 Corinthians 14:14-15). Clearly, this was an act of Paul’s *will*. This provided a major breakthrough in understanding for me.

One day soon after that revelation I prayed again and opened my mouth and began praying in another language, by faith and as an act of my will. It was as simple as that. I have never doubted, and now years later I still pray that way, usually daily.

An open door. People will debate the “infilling of the Spirit” versus the “baptism with the Holy Spirit” and speaking in tongues until Jesus comes, but I will tell you the difference it made in my life.

It did *not* make me more superior. Far from it. If anything, it made me feel more humble and helped me more fully understand, appreciate, and depend upon God’s grace.

But once I began praying in tongues, by faith in God’s Word (to my natural mind it still did not make sense), it was like this step of faith had ushered me through a whole new spiritual door and into a new dimension. It was like a fresh power came, not just to witness, which is important and needful, but power to see miracles, to see people healed, to see people delivered from demon power, and to understand the operation of the supernatural gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, typically ignored in most churches.

Blinders came off my eyes and at last I could understand the reality of the spiritual warfare constantly going on around me, and how to wage it and win. I learned how to cast out demons, and I have seen people set free from their power. I saw my new pastor (yes, I changed churches to one that preached the whole Bible) cast a demon of homosexuality out of an oppressed young man. The demon had tormented this extremely effeminate man and had strongly affected his personality. He was very uncomfortable around women and withdrew from them. The deliverance took only a few minutes, and the demon finally came out with a blood-curdling scream. But as soon as it did, the young man's countenance totally changed! His personality and even his voice returned to normal. It was absolutely amazing, just like in the Bible.

Our family visited Disney World, and against my better judgment, one of the attractions we visited was the haunted house. An hour or two afterward, my youngest son got sick. His stomach was very upset and he had a fever. Here we were, stuck in a hotel room in Orlando with a sick child. "Discernment of spirits" is one of the gifts of the Spirit described in 1 Corinthians chapter 12. As I was praying for Scott, the Lord manifested this gift of discernment in me and I saw that a spirit of fear had come upon him in the haunted house, not to possess him, as he belonged to Christ, but spirits can harass and affect even Christians. I said, "Scott, you are not going to understand this, but let me pray for you in a special way." I then pointedly took authority over that spirit of fear and cast it out in Jesus' name, just like in the Bible. My prayer took only about ten seconds. Scott immediately vomited (a typical reaction in deliverance), and in just seconds his fever totally vanished, his stomach problem was gone, and he felt normal again! This is a vivid example of the power of the spirit world over matter and the material world.

I often wonder how many people are sick from a similar demonic attack and how they could be set free and healed, if they only knew. That is a purpose of this book. The Bible speaks of...

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with **power**: who went about doing good, and **healing all** that were **oppressed of the devil**; for God was with him (Acts 10:38, KJV).

A door to the supernatural world of the Bible had opened for me, and I had boldly walked right through it, by faith.

Objective observations. I am not a member of a Pentecostal denomination, a charismatic, or a "full gospel" church, so I have objectivity here. But it is not coincidental that such churches and ministries, the ones that teach the baptism with the Holy Spirit as a second experience and speaking in tongues, are typically the ones that also believe in modern-day miracles, healing, and deliverance, expect them, and experience them. Many non-Pentecostal and non-charismatic churches and ministries that do not believe or practice speaking in tongues do a fantastic job of witnessing and helping in the fulfillment of the Great Commission (or at least part of it—see Chapter 5), but they rarely see miracles, healings, deliverances, nor do they expect them. That is a

big difference. I am convinced that it is because their tradition has kept that spiritual door closed, and they have not entered. I am reminded of two things Jesus said:

You nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition (Matthew 15:6).

You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God (Matthew 22:29).

Over the years it has been my observation, with exceptions, of course, that those who claim the experience of the baptism with the Holy Spirit generally exhibit three principal characteristics:

1. They have a greater hunger for the Word of God and His many truths;
2. They study and know more about the Word of God; and
3. They are more enamored with the person of Jesus and love to talk about Him in every day conversation. To the world and with many Christians, even His holy name is avoided.

I have known missionaries who have committed their lives to the Lord's service and are hard workers, but they reject the experience, and generally they do not have these same three characteristics. Even many who have been missionaries for years, their knowledge of Scripture is minimal, and talking about Jesus in personal conversations seems to make them uncomfortable and something they avoid. This is very, very strange to me, and should not be. One cannot be truly baptized with the Holy Spirit with Jesus and His Word not totally central in one's life. Otherwise, people are caught up in "religion," and not the Holy Spirit.

Do it now. Dear reader, you now know the Scriptures and the power of God. You know my testimony and the difference I experienced, as have millions all over the world.

Now, boldly ask, believe, receive, never doubt, and move on to be a channel of God's love and power in a very needy and sick world. Through you, Jesus wants to do the same today as He did when physically upon the earth.

The only difference now is that He is living in and operating through you. You are His dwelling place. You are His suit of clothes. You are the channel of His mighty power.

If you have not already done so, review this chapter again, receive His power, and do His works.

Chapter 5

How the power is used

So, you've got the power. Now what is its purpose? What are you going to do with it?

If you have followed the biblical principles previously described and have received the baptism with, or infilling of (or the "upon" experience of) the Holy Spirit and His power, what do you do now? How do you use this new power?

A most important principle to remember is that it is not you who does anything, but only God who does it through you. But for God to do anything through us, we must be obedient to what He says in His Word and follow the leading of His Spirit.

God wants to use this new power in you for two purposes:

1. Outreach, and
2. In-reach, a purpose often misunderstood and neglected.

The outreach is the operation of God's Spirit within you to reach the lost of this world to tell of His great love and forgiveness available through Jesus Christ. This is called "the Great Commission."

The in-reach is the operation of the Holy Spirit within you to be a blessing to other believers through the gifts of the Spirit in a corporate (church or assembly) setting, and also to help you be a personal overcomer in this life and to grow in the Lord. (As exemplified by our Lord Jesus, the gifts of the Holy Spirit may also be used in the outreach to unbelievers.) The Holy Spirit is called the "Helper." He is there to help all believers through the "in" experience and His indwelling. But His manifest power when present through the "upon" experience will be especially helpful.

The outreach: the Great Commission

The classic Great Commission passage is from Matthew 28:18-20, where Jesus met with the eleven disciples after His resurrection and before His ascension:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore **go** and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

In this passage, Jesus commanded them to do four things:

- Go.
- Make disciples of all nations.
- Baptize them.
- Teach them to obey everything He had commanded.

My experience. There is something about being filled with the Spirit that makes one want to “go” and tell others about the love, forgiveness and wonderful saving grace of Jesus Christ. I strongly felt a desire to share Christ with my U.S. Air Force co-workers, neighbors, and also with many family members. Some were turned off, and that always happens, but our job is to share. The rest is up to God.

One uncle whom I had always greatly loved and had a close relationship with ever since I was a little kid was so turned off that he had little to do with me after that. With another uncle, not long before he died, he did tell me that he had accepted Christ. A third uncle remained a mocker, denying Christ until he died, as far as I know. A cousin told me before she died that she had become a believer and had asked Jesus into her heart.

We should always share Christ with love, wisdom, and sensitivity. But even when we do, some will turn against us. I recall the words of Jesus: “A man’s enemies will be the members of his own household” (Matthew 10:36).

The experience with my mother was the most fulfilling. After I received the baptism with the Holy Spirit, I was stationed with the U.S. Air Force in Virginia and was planning on visiting her in Florida. On the telephone before I left, she warned, “Don’t come down here with any of that religion stuff.” I gave a vague, noncommittal reply, but smiling and thinking to myself, “Yeah, right. Just wait ‘til I get there!”

The first day I was there, the Lord gave me the boldness to talk with her about spiritual things and in probing I discovered that she had some lifelong bitterness against her mother, who had cruelly berated her as a child, she related. She said, “I can never forgive her.” I seized the moment and counseled her on the importance of forgiveness and what God says about it. Her heart began to soften, and in a few minutes, while holding my hand, she allowed me to lead her in a prayer of repentance, then asked Jesus into her heart. It was one of the most tender and momentous moments of my life. The next year she had a series of strokes, leaving her in a coma, and I traveled to visit her in the hospital. I baptized her while she was in the coma in her hospital bed, “sprinkling style” because immersion was not possible. God honored it. I am not ordained, but there is nothing in the Bible that says you have to be a pastor or ordained by men to baptize someone. My dear mother went to be with Jesus a few days later. At my step-father’s request, I preached her funeral and gave a salvation message to my unsaved relatives. When I got back to Virginia, the Lord clearly confirmed to me that she was with Him.

About that time I was the Inspector General of my headquarters in the U.S. Air Force at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. Shortly after my infilling “experience,” I began witnessing about Christ to my two secretaries. Then we began to meet in my office for a

brown-bag lunch on Wednesdays to study the Bible. Then others around the base heard about it and began coming. Soon all available chairs were filled. Then shortly thereafter, people were standing and literally lining the walls just to be there. We finally had to move to a large room in another building, the Chapel Annex. It was a beautiful situation, because the group included both officer and enlisted personnel and government civilian employees, male and female, of different races. We were all one in Christ! Sometimes we had 30-40 people in attendance. After I retired a couple of years later, the group changed leadership, then a couple of years later changed leadership again, and again, and kept on going. The last I heard it had gone on for many years, and for I all know, may still be going in some form. I know that the Military Ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ is now having a weekly meeting in that very same room! Much, much fruit has come forth. This was the work of the Holy Spirit filling one willing servant.

In addition to one-on-one encounters, after my U.S. Air Force career, I have been privileged to serve for more than 20 years in responsible positions with two of the world's largest evangelical ministries, to which God clearly called me. I made a decision that I wanted the rest of my life to be spent sharing this "good news" about God's pardon, peace, purpose, and power available through Jesus Christ.

Not everyone is called to serve in full-time Christian ministries, but everyone is called to be a witness in the surroundings where God has placed them and to serve Christ. Your calling, whether in your school, home, neighborhood, nursing home, or secular job, is every bit as important.

For example, even if you are confined to a nursing home, you can show the love of Christ to others and tell them about Jesus, and you can be a powerful prayer intercessor and warrior. Your humble prayers can help change the world, maybe touch millions, and maybe even change nations. The apostle Paul said, "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). God is not through with you!

Sometimes God uses His power to anoint talented men and women to raise up huge international ministries that may touch millions or even billions of souls, and we thank God for them. But most times, that same power will rest simply on one humble person, a person who in the world's eyes may seem weak, lowly, foolish, and totally without influence. Yet with God's power operating in and through that person, he or she contains all the power of the universe! Such a humble person, without pride and ego, is qualified to receive God's power.

God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

This matter of being filled with the Spirit and witnessing for Christ is serious business and not just for our goose bumps. It is a matter of life and death for the hearers and those whom they may later influence.

Obey “everything.” Keep in mind that Jesus told them “to obey everything” He had commanded them. I believe the word “everything” means “everything.” If so, this no doubt includes a command He gave them when He first commissioned them to “go”:

Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. **As you go**, preach this message: “The kingdom of heaven is near.” Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give (Matthew 10:5-8).

(This specific command was for the lost sheep of Israel, but after the resurrection, Jesus expanded the mandate to go to all the world.)

Jesus commanded them to do five things:

- Preach the message of the nearness of the kingdom.
- Heal the sick.
- Raise the dead.
- Cleanse lepers.
- Drive out (cast out) demons.

(See Appendix 1 for modern-day testimonies)

Declaring “the kingdom.” Note the message: “The kingdom of heaven is near,” and note what is supposed to happen when the kingdom of heaven invades the earth and a person’s being: healing, miracles, and deliverance!

In every kingdom, there must be a king. In the kingdom of heaven, Jesus Christ is the King. And the Bible says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). When the King and His kingdom are near, the supernatural is supposed to happen, and it will happen when faith is present (and sometimes even when it is not!).

In another instance, Jesus similarly told His disciples to “go” and “Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you’” (Luke 10:9). Some teachers differentiate between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God; however, in the same context with His disciples, the Lord uses the terms interchangeably. Sadly, many Christians gloss over this truth as just nice-sounding words, minus the power implicit.

On another occasion, Jesus exhorted His followers: “But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness...” (Matthew 6:33). If we are seeking His kingdom, we should be seeing typical things that happen when the kingdom is near!

Jesus also said, “The kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21). Think about that one. Let it sink in. It is more profound than we usually realize. Retired Canon Jim Glennon of the St. Andrew’s Cathedral of the Anglican Church in Australia, who has had a healing ministry for over 40 years, uses that as one of his principal healing verses. He shows

people that God's kingdom (and perfection) is in them, and all they need to do is, by faith, to allow it to be manifest. He cites many miraculous healings that have come with that revelation and realization.

In his book, *Lord, Increase Our Faith* (Bridge Publishing, 1994), Dr. Michael Landsman gives interesting insights on what it means to seek the kingdom, and characteristics of the kingdom.

In actual fact, the word "kingdom," in the original language, means the activity of reigning. For the believer, the activity of reigning is broken down into three aspects: bringing deliverance to the captives, exerting authority over the enemy, and conferring blessings upon God's people.

Landsman says that if we are truly seeking God's kingdom, we are not just praying and reading the Bible, but actually doing these three things—doing Kingdom activities: "bringing deliverance to the captives, exerting authority over the enemy, and conferring blessings upon God's people."

This is important to understand because to preach the kingdom and to fulfill the Great Commission, we need to be doing the things that Jesus commanded His disciples to do as they were preaching it: "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons."

In most Western churches, such a thought is totally bizarre, even reprehensible and heretical to some. Without a biblical basis, some detractors say that the age of miracles was over when the last apostle died some 1,900 years ago and that people now have the Bible and do not need God's manifested power. However, at that time, people had the Jewish Bible, which also speaks of healing and miracles, and letters from the apostles were circulating. There is absolutely no biblical reason to believe that God retired and is no longer doing what He did 2,000 years ago. The reason it is not seen more now is that over the centuries faith has been replaced by unbelief, tradition, and ritualism in the church. The truth is, with an exploding, biblically ignorant population, the world needs these manifestations now more than ever.

And in fact, these things are actually happening right now, not only in the U.S., but in the Third World through indigenous believers and faith-filled missionaries where the people have not been taught by traditionalists that such is not supposed to happen in modern times. The people are blessed to have an expectant, childlike faith, just like in the Bible, and their minds are not polluted by liberal theology and unbelief. (See Appendix 1, Testimonies). As mentioned, I have many wonderful evangelical friends who serve Jesus and who help fulfill part of the Great Commission who have never been taught about these things, and they are doing their best with the light that they have. God uses them greatly, but it is sad that this dimension of power is missing from their lives. So much more could be done, and so many more people could be healed and delivered from demon power. Plus, Jesus used miracles and healings to attract people to Himself and His message. This attraction is greatly needed today.

Another Great Commission passage is in Mark 16:15-18:

He said to them, “**Go** into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

Except for the poison part, each of these things happened in the book of Acts. For example, Paul was bitten by a snake but it did not hurt him (Acts 28:3-5). They also happen today. I have heard of attempts to poison missionaries, but they were not harmed, and many have probably escaped snake bites. (This does not refer to the cultic snake-handling sect of the Appalachians, whose adherents are wrongly tempting God.) This is another of Christ’s “go” commands of the Great Commission, with signs following.

After the Lord spoke the words above, Mark tells us:

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and **confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it** (vs. 16:19-20, emphasis supplied).

The Lord “confirmed his word by the signs...” Those were the same signs He had just mentioned.

He is still confirming His word by accompanying signs today, and will do it whenever His servants preach and teach “everything He had commanded them” and have faith-filled, expectant hearts.

Someone has said that Jesus shows up and performs according to the way He is preached. If He is preached as Savior, He shows up and saves. If He is preached as the healer, He shows up and heals. That might be an oversimplification, but there is truth to it.

What does this mean to you? As a Spirit- and power-filled believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible says that the same signs should follow you that followed the original disciples. You do not have to follow the signs; the signs are supposed to follow you. In fact, the Lord makes an even more extreme statement:

I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father (John 14:12).

Can you believe that? Can you receive it? It is a heavy statement, especially in our materialistic and unbelieving culture, but the Lord would not have said it unless it is true. Some write off the miraculous possibilities of this statement by saying that when the

Holy Spirit came, about which He was speaking, He would live in and work through hundreds, then thousands, then millions of people at the same time, but when He was on the earth He was only in one person. This is certainly true. But that does not rule out the supernatural. Also, Jesus says “anyone,” and uses the word “he,” not “they.” It works on an individual basis.

In summary, to be obedient to the Great Commission, we must obey all the “go” commands, proclaiming the kingdom, and do as Jesus and the disciples did when they saw a human need—they stepped out in faith and believed for the supernatural and the impossible. They got what they believed for, a lesson for us today.

Summary of “Go” Commands

*** (Insert Image 4 from disk) ***

- * The book of Acts shows what happened after the resurrection, a model for us.
- ** In this chart, the commands preach, teach, and proclaim are considered the same.
- *** No record in Acts, but there have been instances since then.

Of the eleven actions above, seven are clearly supernatural. Even the other four are supernaturally enabled.

The question may arise: Why were not supernatural actions and signs mentioned in the classic Great Commission passage of Matthew 28? It may be the same reason each of the four gospels does not repeat everything contained in the other gospels. But if God says something once, that is enough! Proof of the validity of the supernatural signs to follow the proclamation of the gospel is contained in the book of Acts and in the history of the church up to and including today. See Chapter 7 for examples of physical healing in church history.

In the book of Acts, it is recorded:

So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who **confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders** (14:3, emphasis supplied).

We are to proclaim the gospel, or good news, and the signs and wonders *confirm* the message of His grace. That is the purpose of them—to *confirm*. It confirmed them then, and it confirms them now. If anything, hearts in the world today are colder and in more unbelief than they were in the first century, and there are many times more people in unbelief. As mentioned, God’s supernatural power is needed today more than ever before. He is just waiting for His people to get on fire, believe Him, and do what He commanded. Then, just watch Him work.

By the way, you do not have to be an evangelist speaking to great crowds to be used by God in this way. It can be in a one-on-one situation.

For example, if you encounter a person with a sickness, and you sense the Lord leading, you can step out boldly in faith and say, “Would you like for Jesus to heal you?” If they say yes, place your hand on their head or shoulder and pray the prayer of faith, thanking the Lord for loving and healing that person. Don’t pray the faith-destroying prayer, “Lord, if it be thy will...” (see Chapter 7). As did Jesus and the disciples, pronounce them healed. Thank the Lord right then. Yes, so you are out there on a faith limb, but you are just where the Lord wants you! The devil is telling you that you are a fool and will be embarrassed. But you remember the Word, and stand on it: “They will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” Jesus will meet you at your point of faith, and that person will be healed, as God confirms “the message of His grace.” God does not lie.

Sid Roth, founder of Messianic Vision, who sees many healings and miracles, says:

If God sent you a telegram to witness to or pray for a specific person, you would swallow your fears and pride and do it. What if every time you saw a sick person you would consider that as God’s telegram to you? What if you began to pray for large numbers of sick nonbelievers? What would happen?

First, you would be shocked at the nonbelievers’ openness to your prayers. Second, you would see a greater percentage of instant healings. And third, *you would begin to lead them to the Messiah.*

What if they are not healed? That’s not your problem. You are not the healer. You are God’s messenger boy (or girl). Just make yourself available.

Yes, sometimes a person may not get healed. I have had that happen. The reason is a mystery known only to God. Our job is to be obedient and do our part. The rest is up to God. We must not let our pride or fear of embarrassment stop us and quench the Spirit. Pride and fear are not of God.

In some cases there may not be an instant healing, but the healing process may begin and you will never know the results. The Lord may use that delay time to teach and deal with the person. I recently went next door where a new home was under construction. The bricklayers were there, and I noticed that the bricklaying supervisor, a large black man, used a walking cane. After striking up a conversation about their trade and complimenting their work, I asked him about the problem, and he described a lifelong problem with both hips. I asked if he would like for me to ask Jesus to heal him and he said yes. I stood behind him and laid a hand on each hip and prayed for his healing, quoting the Word, while his workers looked on in amazement. So far, I am not aware of any healing, but I believe the encounter was a divine appointment. I did what I felt led to do, and the results are up to God.

Once I was at a concert and a featured singer suddenly developed a migraine headache and was about to cancel her performance. I felt led to go backstage and ask, “Would you like for Jesus to heal you?” Though surprised, she said yes. I laid a hand on her head and

spoke God's healing word to her, just as Peter spoke to the lame man. Her headache suddenly disappeared. She was elated, giving credit to the Lord, and was able to perform. Yes, I was apprehensive when I did this because I am human, but I did it by faith, and God honored my faith and His Word.

Believe, receive, act, bring deliverance to the captives, exert authority over the enemy, and confer blessings upon God's people.

The in-reach

The in-reach consists of:

1. Ministering to those who are already believers, that is, the church, or body of Christ.
2. Helping you live your own life as an overcomer. Eight times in the book of Revelation, the Lord promises special blessings to those who overcome in this world (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; and 21:7). For example:

To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God (2:7).

To overcome, we need the power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot do it in our own strength. To attempt it in our own strength is to fail.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, there are listed nine different supernatural manifestations of the Spirit designed by God for the corporate body, that is, the assembly of believers, or the church, although God may also manifest them in reaching the lost, as our Lord demonstrated.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will (vs. 4-11, KJV).

The word *gifts* here is from the Greek word *charisma*, where we get the word charismatic. In Christian circles, a charismatic is one who believes the above passage refers to actual supernatural manifestations described, nothing more and nothing less, as demonstrated all over the world today, and does not write them off as just natural abilities. For example, the word of knowledge is not obtained from a school or

university, nor healing from a medical doctor. Both are direct from God's Spirit, although God may sometimes use the natural means for other purposes.

Here is a brief explanation of each of the nine gifts:

Word of wisdom. This is supernatural revelation given to reveal a course of action needed to accomplish God's will in a situation for a person or group. It may be in the form of guidance for a needed decision. An example is in John 21:6 when Jesus told the disciples to cast a net on the right side of the boat so that they could catch some fish. For another example, a counselor may be given a word of wisdom for a counselee about an important decision in his life. The Holy Spirit may direct that person with a word of wisdom through the counselor. Or this can happen through friends. The one receiving the counsel should not make a decision based on this alone, but should pray for confirmation from the Spirit.

Word of knowledge. This is supernatural revelation concerning the facts of an existing situation. An example is in John 4:17 when Jesus told the woman at the well that she had five husbands. With a word of knowledge, a counselor may be given insight as to why a person is having a spiritual or emotional problem, such as because of unforgiveness or occult involvement. Or it may mean God wants to heal someone. For example, one day during my weekly Bible study at Langley Air Force Base, a reserve captain friend was visiting. Eldon was putting in his required annual active duty time. In the Air Force, Eldon was in the public relations field, but in his civilian job he worked with the Christian Broadcasting Network, in marketing. During prayer time, Eldon spoke up and said the Holy Spirit had just given him a "word of knowledge" that someone in the group had a hernia and that the Lord was healing it. He asked if anyone would like to volunteer that he or she was the person to whom the Lord was referring. No one said anything. The silence was deafening. Some in the group assumed that Eldon meant well but was mistaken and had missed the Lord's leading. However, during the next week's meeting, a normally very quiet lady asked if she could share something. She sheepishly admitted, "I was the one with the hernia but I was too timid to speak up. I was scheduled for hernia surgery, and when I went in for surgery the next day, the hernia was completely gone. There was not even any scar tissue." She was praising the Lord, as was everyone. In this case, and as is often the case, the gift of the word of knowledge was given along with the gift of healing.

Faith. This is the supernatural ability to believe God without doubt in a particular situation, such as for a miracle or healing. Jesus constantly manifested this gift. For other examples, see my testimony about legs and arms growing out in Appendix 1.

Healing. This refers to supernatural healing of the body without human aid, as Jesus constantly ministered. This does not refer to healing through modern medicine as some try to rationalize. It is supernatural healing by the power of the

Holy Spirit as described in this book. For example, in the New Testament, the power of the Holy Spirit healed the woman who had the issue of blood for 12 years after “she had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse” (Mark 5:26). Many people today spend all they have (or all the government or their health plan has) on doctors and still do not get better, but get worse. They need God’s power. See how to get this healing power in Chapter 7 and the testimonies in Appendix 1.

Miracles. This refers to supernatural power to accomplish God’s will in a situation that transcends or counteracts natural law. An example is when Jesus commanded the wind and the sea to be still (Mark 4:39) and raised the dead (John 11:43). I have known people to be led to exercise authority over the weather, and have done so myself at least twice as God has led. By the way, we cannot arbitrarily operate in any of these gifts just any old time we desire, but we must be led by the Spirit, who, as mentioned, “gives them (gifts) to each one, just as he determines” (1 Corinthians 12:11), or “as He wills” (NKJV).

Prophecy. This is speaking a supernaturally inspired utterance—speaking a message from God. More often than not, in New Testament times, prophecy is not predictive, the way we normally associate the word, but it may be. In fact, the Bible tells us that prophecy accomplishes three things: “Everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort” (1 Corinthians 14:3). If we are being led by the Holy Spirit, we may not even know when this gift is being manifested and someone or group is being strengthened, encouraged, or comforted by our Spirit-inspired words. Since Jesus was God, every word He spoke was prophecy, and much of it was predictive, as in Matthew chapter 24.

Discerning of spirits. All human activity is influenced by (1) human spirits, (2) the Holy Spirit, or (3) demon spirits. This gift is supernatural discernment in the spirit realm to determine which of these three sources is behind a certain activity. What appears to be human is not always human but is sometimes being driven by demon spirits. “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12). I have seen this gift manifested on numerous occasions. On two occasions, I perceived demons were actually looking at me with hate and mockery through human eyes. Of course, their human habitations were unaware of this. Much of what we see and hear in the entertainment world today represents demonic manifestations through unwitting human vessels, although I have heard of some entertainers who have willingly given themselves over to Satan. Jesus exercised this gift when He said to Peter, His dear friend and disciple, “Get behind me Satan” (Matthew 16:23). He was speaking to the spirit influencing Peter’s words at the moment. If we discern a demon spirit in someone, we need the Spirit’s leading to cast it out, and then we do so in total faith and confidence.

Tongues. This is the gift of supernaturally speaking a message to an assembly of believers in an unlearned language. In such a setting, it should always be accompanied by the next gift, interpretation. As such, it serves the same function as prophecy: to strengthen, encourage or comfort the hearers. Not everyone exercises this gift; however, a proper exegesis of this subject reveals that this is not the same as private praying or singing in an unlearned language spoken of in 1 Corinthians chapter 14:14-15, which any Spirit-baptized person can do (and should do, according to 1 Corinthians 14:5).

Why did God invent such a strange and controversial phenomenon as tongues? Should He have first checked with sophisticated, modern-day theologians and read some of their books? I don't think so. One reason He gives is: "Tongues, then, are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers" (1 Corinthians 14:22). How can this be, if the unbelievers hear nothing but unintelligible sounds? The answer may be in Acts chapter 2 when Jews "from every nation" (v.5) heard the disciples speaking in their own language, languages the disciples had not learned. Many believe this was only a one-time event, but I have heard of it happening in recent times. This is a different function from praying or singing in tongues. The other reason previously mentioned is, with interpretation, like prophecy, to speak to His people in an assembly to strengthen, encourage, or comfort.

The Bible also explains that privately praying in tongues enables the Holy Spirit to speak or pray through us without interference from our carnal mind (1 Corinthians 14:4). God gives guidance on worship services: "When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church" (1 Corinthians 14:26).

God may also have chosen tongues because James 3:8 says, "No man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison." The gift of tongues and praying in tongues harness this restless evil under the total control of the Holy Spirit, short-circuiting man's fallen brain. One of modern man's biggest problems is his fallen intellect, which is worshipped by many, and is also a source of the deadly sin of pride. But the truth is that all of man's intellect, in all the universities of the world, combined, is less than that of a termite compared with God's wisdom.

In arguing against the modern-day reality of tongues, some grasp at a straw with 1 Corinthians 13:8: "whether there be tongues, they shall cease" (KJV). To do so, however, they have to take it totally out of context, which says:

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away (vs. 8-10).

If the gift of tongues has ceased, then so has knowledge and speaking under the inspiration of the Spirit (prophecy), which we know cannot be true. For example, Daniel wrote that knowledge would actually increase in the last days (12:4). “That which is perfect” refers to Jesus’ return, not the early century compilation of the Bible. The controversy and sometimes mocking rejection of this gift by many modern-day Christians no doubt grieves the Holy Spirit, who only wants to bless us.

Interpretation of tongues. See preceding. When a message in tongues is not followed by an interpretation, it may not necessarily be because the message in tongues was not from God, but because the one to whom the Holy Spirit gave the interpretation may have been disobedient or too timid to have stepped out in faith with it. With regard to these gifts, they are placed into operation by faith.

Seeking gifts? Some say that we are to seek the Giver and not the gifts. That sounds very religious, but it is half wrong. Certainly, we are supposed to seek the Giver, as numerous Scriptures tell us. But the last part of that statement is not according to Scripture, which says, “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31, KJV). We are to covet gifts! Which are the best gifts? The best gifts are the ones needed to meet a need in a particular situation. If I am ministering to someone who has a need, or in a group where there is a need, my heart of love and compassion causes me to covet to be able to be used to help meet that need with one or more of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. God’s way is the way of love, and because of His compassion, the gifts are given to meet human need.

How to. How does one operate in these gifts? First, it has to be by the Spirit of God. We cannot will it to happen and act on our own. We cannot work it up. Remember the passage above says, “dividing to every man severally as he will” (KJV). The NIV is clearer: “just as he (the Holy Spirit) determines.”

Second, it will be for the edification of those gathered in the assembly and an act of love and provision from our loving God.

Third, make sure nothing about your action will glorify or exalt yourself. Do a quick attitude check. Your ego and self-interest must be stripped and totally missing.

Fourth, when the Holy Spirit is about to use someone in this way, there is an inner unction, or prompting by the Spirit. One senses it in his spirit, even if only a small voice or signal.

Fifth, it will not be forced upon God’s chosen vessel. That person must step out in faith with it. The Spirit is often quenched because the chosen vessel may be fearful of being wrong and embarrassed, and does not act on the inner leading. That is where faith and obedience come into play. The operation of the gifts of the Spirit requires faith, obedience, and the humbling of pride.

God sees a need; then God prompts; then by faith and obedience, we act; then God acts.

Result: God's people are blessed.

Other gifts. The above nine are considered the principal supernatural gifts or manifestations of the Holy Spirit, but the New Testament has other lists of gifts, contained in Romans and Ephesians. In this first list from Romans, prophesying is repeated from 1 Corinthians 12, but the others are more natural abilities given by the Holy Spirit:

We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully (Romans 12:6-8).

This next list from Ephesians is considered God's calling as "offices" with the church:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13).

Deliverance from demons. Demons are not myths nor the figment of ancient imaginations, but the Bible reveals that they are real spirit-beings, with personality. They serve their master, Satan, in the kingdom of darkness, and they try to manifest themselves in the world by becoming embodied in humans.

The 72 disciples whom Jesus had sent out to minister came back to Him to report with joy what had happened, that they had been casting out demons.

"Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name" (Luke 10:17).

Jesus replied:

I have given you authority (Greek: *exousia*) to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power (Greek: *dunamis*) of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:19-20).

Snakes and scorpions are symbolic words for demon spirits. This is confirmed in both passages above, such as when Jesus clarifies with the word "spirits." But note that as

important as this is, Jesus said the primary thing is to rejoice that our names are written in heaven. We must keep our perspective.

One of the commands Jesus gave to Spirit-empowered believers is to “cast out demons.” Spiritually lost people can be possessed by demons. In other words, their personality can be taken over by them, and no matter how nice they may seem, we already know that they are citizens of the kingdom of darkness (Colossians 1:13). If you have wondered how a terrorist can mercilessly kill many innocent women and children, or how a grown man can abduct and kill a little girl, or how a high school student can gun down fellow students, these are examples. Hitler was demon-possessed. The Nazis were heavily into the occult, which can cause demon possession. Occultism is extremely popular today. Many young people are into the occult and are obsessed with occult music and occult computer games, which take over their minds, causing a sharp rise in teenage suicides and crimes. Innocent? Hardly. The New Age movement is largely occult. Demons run free in our modern world and most people are not even aware of them, part of the modern-day deception, caused by the widespread rejection of the authority of God’s Word and His Son Jesus Christ. Evidence of demon possession may not be as dramatic as a serial killer or a Hitler, but may bring devastation and hurt to people in many ways, such as through theft, immorality, and blasphemy against God.

Even Christians can be harassed (but not possessed) and influenced by demons, especially if they have been disobedient to God, and thereby inviting them. Spirits (demons) of infirmity can even cause physical and emotional sickness in either Christians or non-Christians. More sickness is from demons than most people realize. Remember, Jesus “went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil” (Acts 19:38).

Demon activity can be detected by the gift of discernment, described above. They can be cast out of a person by any believer by the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, which demons must obey. Usually the victim must want to be delivered before deliverance can take place, because otherwise the demon has found a willing home.

Do not fear demons. Remember, Jesus has all the power, and that same power is operating in you if you are a born-again, Spirit-baptized believer in whom Christ dwells.

Simply assert your authority, in Jesus’ name, and command them to come out and depart. They must go. They have no choice.

Some religious tradition complicates the process of deliverance with elaborate rituals of “exorcism,” but that is not scriptural. The Bible is our only guide and Jesus is our model, and it says about Him, “When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits *with a word* and healed all the sick” (Matthew 8:16).

It says, “With a word.” Just say, “I command you to come OUT, in Jesus’ name,” and they must go.

A surprise visitor. Shortly after I received the baptism with the Holy Spirit, I was so desirous of telling others about Jesus that I decided to start a neighborhood Bible study. I designed a flyer to announce the first meeting and my sons put one on every door in the neighborhood. I also notified several of my Christian friends. Well, the announced day and time finally arrived. We were curious as to who if anyone would show up. As it turned out, only one person in the whole neighborhood came! She was a very nice lady, but we quickly learned that she was into the occult. However, several Christian friends came, one of whom was a Spirit-baptized Southern Baptist Air Force chaplain (captain), Bob, who was leading our group that night. While sharing in the group discussion, it became apparent that because of her occult involvement, the visiting lady had a demon spirit! She was willing for Bob to minister to her, and he cast out the demon right in my living room. It came out wailing and screaming, then suddenly the lady had a whole new countenance and peace about her. It was amazing. That night began a Bible study that lasted for several years, eventually attracting and touching the lives of many people, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit flowed freely.

Be an overcomer! At first glance, wanting to overcome and be victorious in this life may seem like a selfish motive. But do not forget that God loves us deeply and wants to bless us. He loves us so much that he sent His only Son to die for us. You cannot get any more loving than that.

Why does God want us to overcome? There are three main reasons:

- Because of His love, He does not want us to live in defeat and depression, but to live with His love, joy, peace, and other fruit of the Spirit described in Galatians 5:22-23.
- He wants us to overcome the weaknesses of life so that we can more effectively serve Him and help fulfill the Great Commission. How could we do that if we are defeated and depressed?
- He wants us to overcome the weaknesses of life so that we can be a blessing to our families and other members of the body of Christ. Again, how could we do that if we are constantly defeated and depressed?

How to be an overcomer. This is really an easy one, and it should be, because God knows we totally need Him in order to overcome, and He is always available and eager. The apostle Paul prayed a Spirit-inspired prayer for us when he wrote:

We pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, **being strengthened with all power** according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:10-12).

All we have to do is to allow Him, the Holy Spirit, to control us moment by moment.

Part of what we call the Lord's prayer says, "Deliver us from the evil one" (NIV), or "from evil" (KJV). The evil one, Satan, is responsible for attacks against us, to destroy or harm us, or to steal away things that God has freely promised us, purchased by Jesus' own blood. But from this prayer our Lord gave us, we know it is God's will that we be delivered from the evil one, and we know that if we pray according to His will, He hears us, and if He hears us, we know we have our requests (1 John 5:14-15).

We pray according to God's Word and will, we believe, and we receive by faith. It is ours. Our part is to obey God and flee from sinful temptations and activity. The Bible compares Satan to a roaring lion, roaming around, seeking whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). But Satan has only limited influence, according to God's sovereignty. In effect, you could say that God has this lion on a leash, or in a cage, with limited boundaries. Dr. Bill Bright says Satan is a caged lion and that the secret of protection from Satan is to stay out of his cage. But if we want to get chewed up and devoured, just step in the cage with him—that is, enter into Satan's world of darkness and participate in it, in thoughts and actions.

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you (James 4:7).

Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you (Philippians 4:8-9).

The power of love. God tells us that His love is so great that nothing can separate us from it:

We are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:37-39).

In this passage, God says that nothing will be able to separate us from His love. God's love is the key. About God's love, the Holy Spirit says:

There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives out fear (1 John 4:18).

Fear is a major cause of defeat and depression. Fear is the opposite of faith, and, in effect, fear is actually faith in the devil! Speaker Joyce Meyer says that fear is **False Evidence Appearing Real**. Someone else has said that it means "**F**orgetting **E**verything **A**bout the **R**esurrection."

Faith and Doubt

Doubt sees the obstacles;
Faith sees the way;
Doubt sees the blackest night;
Faith sees the day;
Doubt dreads to take a step;
Faith soars on high;
Doubt questions, "Who believes"?
Faith answers, "I."
--Unknown

Is love a reliable antidote to fear? Well, God also says:

Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:8).

"Never fails" is as reliable as you can get. Here is another key passage:

If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Romans 8:31-32).

To be an overcomer, embrace God's love. There is no fear in it. Nothing can separate you from it. It never fails.

Let the power of His loving Spirit fill, empower, and control you, moment by moment.

Reject all else.

Chapter 6

How to release the power

As previously mentioned, the Greek word for power is *dunamis*, where we get the word for dynamite. But dynamite is only latent power until it is detonated and released.

For power to be detonated and released, there must be a fuse and a fire igniting it. With God's power, *faith is the fuse and our words are the fire*. James says, "The tongue is a fire" (3:5, KJV), in the sense of imparting evil; but it can also be a fire for truth, because God Himself "is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29).

Let me emphasize:

God's *dunamis* (dynamite) power, like a stick of dynamite, is only latent (potential) power until it is detonated and released. Like dynamite, God's latent power needs both a *fuse* and a *fire*. Our *faith* is the fuse and our *words* are the fire that ignites and releases God's dynamite, supernatural power into the world, transcending natural law.

Summary: God's words (latent power) + our faith (fuse) + our words (fire) = God's dynamite power released.

This chapter will reveal key truths about releasing the power through both *faith* and *words*.

The power released through faith

The late Smith Wigglesworth was a giant in the faith who repeatedly witnessed God's miracle-working power, even raising from the dead. Here are some of his words, so profound that I must put them in bold:

"There is something about believing God that will cause Him to pass over a million people to get to you because of your faith."

What Wigglesworth said is scriptural, because the Bible says:

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him (2 Chronicles 16:9, NKJV).

Faith and loyalty are two sides of the same coin. You cannot have loyalty without faith, and faith without loyalty is dead.

Imagine the great Creator of the universe constantly scanning the human race and the world looking for the person of faith. Then He sees you! Out of the sea of humanity, your faith beams upward toward heaven like a laser light, and you catch His eye. He smiles. He listens to and heeds your words, because you are praying, speaking, and acting according to His own words, to which He is faithful, which you believe, and to which you are loyal. God will not deny His own words and promises.

In Romans 3:27, Paul speaks of “the law of faith.” The Bible has been described as a deep mine of treasures, continually inviting the seeker to dig deeper to discover them. Certainly “faith” is one of the treasures. We cannot exhaust the subject here, but I will share a few of the great truths, which can set you free.

Amazing faith. Faith is the most amazing phenomenon in the universe.

David Wilkerson observes, “When God says to humankind, ‘Believe,’ He demands something that is wholly beyond reason. Faith is totally illogical. Its very definition has to do with something unreasonable.”

Yet, even though illogical from a human standpoint, it is very real and transcends human logic as well as the physical world of the senses.

It is invisible, yet it has substance. God says:

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen
(Hebrews 11:1, KJV).

Faith gives actual substance to what we hope for (which becomes real), and in itself is the evidence of results not yet seen.

Faith is the ingenious invention of the Creator that makes sure every person in the world is treated equally. It is an equal-opportunity opportunity. An amazing thing about faith is that anyone can possess it, no matter how young or how old, no matter how strong or how weak, no matter how high or how low one’s intelligence, no matter how rich or how poor, no matter how much education one has, and no matter what race or nationality.

Faith cuts across all lines equally. Its potential is a common denominator of all human beings.

However, keep in mind that faith can also be negative. Fear is negative faith. Fear-filled and negative words can have the opposite effect of God’s words. They can cause torment, depression, sickness, and even death.

An example of negative faith is given by retired Jim Glennon of Australia, previously mentioned. He described a tribal custom of the native Australian Aborigines. If a member of the tribe violates one of the tribe’s taboos, the witchdoctor comes to the man

and performs a ritual over him. The ritual is to reach into a small leather bag, take out the bone of a bird, then point the bone at the violator. In all cases, after the bone is pointed, the person dies, sometimes instantly, but always soon. The ritual is called “pointing the bone.”

A similar practice in the civilized world is when a medical doctor tells a person that they have cancer or some other serious disease, and says that he may have only a certain amount of time to live, such as six months. In effect, that doctor is “pointing the bone” at the patient. While well-intended, this is nevertheless placing a self-fulfilling verbal curse on the person. Such curses are powerful, as with the bone. Typically, the patient has more negative faith in modern-day medicine than he does positive faith in God’s Word, and he typically dies within the time frame given. Glennon says that people trained in God’s Word are able to “step outside” such a diagnosis, calling upon God’s Word as a resource unknown to medicine. A doctor’s diagnosis and prediction cannot change God’s Word, but God’s Word can change a doctor’s prediction. For example, see the next Chapter 7. Glennon has seen many miraculous recoveries, unexplainable by doctors.

What would happen if a person rejected the bone being pointed by a doctor and decided to believe God, when He says:

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up (James 5:14-15).

That passage does not say, “unless he has cancer, or lupus, or multiple sclerosis,” or “unless he has _____ (fill in the blank).”

Can you imagine how national health care costs would plummet and how many medical offices would go bankrupt if every person believed and acted upon those two verses, words from God Himself? It doesn’t happen because most people, even Christians, do not believe God or take His Word literally and seriously.

Of course, people would have to find a church with elders who also believed that verse, but they are available.

Biblical faith is our access to the Creator. It is also the only way we can please Him:

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith is the door to the invisible, supernatural world.

The source of faith. What is the source of this mysterious but essential ingredient? Where does faith come from? God gives the answer in Romans 10:17:

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (NKJV).

Faith comes from God's Word, the Bible. Faith originates in the heart of God, who makes it available to us through His Word. As we prayerfully read and meditate on the Word, faith is transmitted to us. It becomes part of us. We become people of faith.

While faith comes by hearing, it stays by doing. But actually, you do not want faith to stay. You want it to be released. God does not want you to be a reservoir, but a river. He wants His power to "flow through" you to others. A man was bragging to a well-known minister, "I have a lot of faith." The minister replied, "That's your problem. You still have it. You need to release it."

Faith is dormant, inactive, ineffectual, and actually dead until it is acted upon by releasing it, as power is only latent power until detonated. That is why God says through James:

Anyone who doesn't breathe is dead, and faith that doesn't do anything is just as dead! (2:26, CEV).

Faith is an action word. Believe is an action verb. Faith always presupposes doing something—acting on our faith. For faith in us not to be dead, it must be released, and a principal way for faith to be released in us is through our words, as we agree with and confess God's own words and known will into the word and into our life situations.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says (James 2:22).

A favorite quote I discovered says, "*Faith is going to the edge of the light that you have, and then taking one more step*" (anonymous). In other words, a faith person goes over the edge! For example, Peter went over the edge of the boat and walked on the water, by faith in the Savior. God always meets us at our point of faith. When we are over the edge, miracles start happening, like walking on water. I love the exhilaration of being "over the edge."

The world says, "Show me and I'll believe it." But God says, "Believe me and I'll show you."

Change your thinking. This point is critical. One of the greatest hindrances to faith is thinking like the world thinks. The Bible says, "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2, KJV).

We tend to think of that verse as referring to moral vs. immoral behavior, but it refers to our *thinking*. Our thinking determines our behavior. Joyce Meyer says, "Where the mind

goes, the man follows.” God’s Word says, “As (a man) thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7, KJV).

God’s thoughts from the Bible are supernatural thoughts. It is easy to block out those supernatural thoughts with natural thoughts that conform to the world’s beliefs and standards. For example, through a doctor, the world may tell you, “You have a terminal disease.” The pressure from the natural world is so great that most people accept such a report, conform to it, and soon die. Instead, we should check and believe what God says, such as, “(He) heals all your diseases” (Psalm 103:3). For more Scripture on this subject, see Chapter 7. When we do this, we are not conforming to this world, but we are transformed as our minds are renewed by faith in God’s Word.

“We have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16). Think His thoughts, not the world’s thoughts. Act on His thoughts, not the world’s thoughts. Then you will get His results, not the world’s results!

The radical faith words of Jesus Christ. Below are some of the radical faith words of Jesus Christ. Christ would not be welcomed in many Christian circles today because he was a radical and an extremist. He would be criticized as a faith preacher. But His words are nevertheless the words from the Father and Creator of us all and are 100 percent true for all time.

“I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but **believes** that what he says will happen, it will be done for him” (Mark 11:23).

“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, **believe** that you have received it, and it will be yours” (Mark 11:24).

“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who **believe**: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well” (Mark 16:15-18).

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has **faith** in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (John 14:12-14).

These are just some of the faith words of Jesus Christ recorded in the New Testament. Is the Son of God reliable? Does He tell the truth? Can you believe Him?

We know the answer.

Releasing the power through words

Words are containers for faith, and the principal way for faith to be transmitted and effectuated.

God's will and power are released in the earth by His words, and His words are released through the *faith* of His people. Our words are faith's trigger. Without a trigger, a gun is useless.

When we speak God's Words and will by faith, the physical order is transcended and changed. Situations change. Bodies heal. Provision comes. Blessings come. Storms calm. Relationships heal. Threats subside. Even armies have been victorious and nations have fallen.

God's Word. The Bible, which consists of the combined Jewish and Christian Scriptures, is referred to as "the Word of God."

In the Greek language in which the New Testament was written, it is the *logos* (Word) of God, meaning "expression." The Bible is the written Word, or expression, of God.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ is the living Word, or expression, of God.

In the beginning was the Word (*logos*), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us (John 1:1, 14).

Jesus is the eternal Word who was made living flesh. But the written Word is also living:

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

The *King James Version* translates that as "For the word of God is quick, and powerful..." Quick, of course, means alive, and powerful is probably a better translation than active. The Word of God has a unique, built-in power that no other book has. The Bible is not just ink on paper, or bytes on my hard drive such as with my computer Bible. These are only a means of representing and transmitting life and power. The Bible has a life of its own. That is because it is the mind of God.

See Appendix 2 for a summary of the proofs of the Bible's divine origin.

My testimony. When I was a little kid, I believed the Bible, without doubt, but I did not understand why I was so trusting. My parents did not attend church. It was just

something God put in my heart. Years later as an adult, when God began to strongly deal with me, I began to really study the Bible for the first time.

One day about that time as a young captain, I asked my U.S. Air Force chaplain, “Is the Bible really infallible?” His answer was wishy-washy, which only fueled my interest. I learned later that many ministers attend theologically liberal seminaries where the authority of the Bible is under attack by unbelieving professors, no different from the way it has been under attack for centuries by avowed atheists. True, it doesn’t make sense. You would think those professors would find some other line of work and way to make a living than by teaching something in which they do not believe, and damaging the faith of others. God only knows how much faith they have destroyed and damage to the kingdom of God they have done. But they need to know that God keeps score.

All this caused me to make a study of apologetics, the discipline that marshals all the empirical evidence for the Bible’s reliability. I discovered that the evidence for the Bible’s complete reliability is absolutely overwhelming. If it has any errors in it, you could not be sure what or where they are. Who would you trust to tell you? A professor? Hardly. They do not have divine authority. If you lined up all the professors in the world end-to-end, you would not have enough to reach a conclusion. I had rather trust God. If you cannot trust all the Bible, you cannot trust any of it. If it has one error, you cannot even be sure if John 3:16 is true, and if you are not sure John 3:16 is true, you have no hope of eternal life. But thankfully, it is all true, including John 3:16, even though we will spend a lifetime trying to understand it all, and we will still be trying when Jesus takes us home.

Even after I came to this conclusion, it was years later before I realized the sheer power of the Word. Let me explain.

God’s words have total power

Eight times in the creation account, the Bible reveals simply that “God said...” (Genesis 1:3-26).

He just “said.” That’s all. And with simply those eight expressions, the entire universe and humanity were created! It was God’s words that created all that is. He spoke words, and it happened. The New Testament explains:

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear (Hebrews 11:3, KJV).

There was nothing; He spoke; then all of a sudden there was something. By the sheer power of His words, God “calls things that are not as though they were” (Romans 4:17).

Once creation was completed, it is now God’s words which sustain it all:

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word (Hebrews 1:3).

God speaks through the Bible. They are His words, transmitted through human vessels. And because they are His words, they have no less power than His words at creation. They have ongoing creative power. As mentioned, they are "alive."

God wants us to be His mouthpiece

God says, "I have put my words in your mouth" (Isaiah 51:16).

His words, from the Bible, when spoken by us, carry His power and purpose into the physical and spirit world, as we may be under His anointing. When we speak God's words, they carry that same creative power as when He first spoke them.

The English word "word" is also translated from the Greek word *rhema*. This means words from God, from the Bible, that carry His special anointing and revelation for a specific person or situation. For example, a person can read a certain passage from the Bible many times and it may mean nothing to him. You can mechanically read the *logos*, as do many skeptics and doubters. But on another day, you may read the same passage again and all of a sudden a light comes on in your mind. Your spirit leaps. The passage suddenly has meaning, and it jumps out at you like it was ablaze with neon lights. You have received a revelation from God. You have received a *rhema* word.

A good example of the power of the *rhema* word is some years ago I was suffering from chronic, painful lower back pain. I knew what God said in His Word about healing, and one day I decided because of God's Word I didn't have to take the pain any more. I decided to take my Bible and go upstairs to my bedroom, lock the door, and not come out until I got my healing. I was totally determined and was confident of both God's power and willingness to heal me. After being locked in the bedroom for an hour or so and reading the Bible, all of a sudden my eyes fell on a verse I had read many times before, but it never held any significance for me. But this time, it was as though the words were illuminated, not literally, but they just jumped out at me. They were from Hebrews 12:13: "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." Even if out of context, God had sent me a *rhema* word, and suddenly my back pain was totally gone! I had received my healing, via the power of a word from God. Sometimes *rhema* words come out of the biblical context, but they are still His words of power. It is important that we be open to them.

Another dramatic example happened over ten years ago when I began to have irregular heartbeats. This went on for several weeks and I became quite concerned. But I never went to the doctor because I was trusting God to take care of it. One day at a large church I was visiting, the congregation was singing and the words of the song were projected upon the front wall. The song included a Scripture, from Psalm 73:26: "God is the strength of my heart." Now I had read that Scripture before. I liked it, but it never meant anything personal to me. But on that particular day in that particular church, God

spoke to me. Those words, “God is the strength of my heart” were a *rhema* word to me from God. The symptoms suddenly disappeared during that service and never returned!

True to His nature, God’s purpose in the world is to bring life. Jesus was the exact representation of God (Hebrews 1:3), and He only did the Father’s will. He said,

The thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may **have life**, and have it to the full (John 10:10, KJV).

He also said:

The **words** I have spoken to you are spirit and they are **life** (John 6:63).

When we speak the life-giving words of God from the Scriptures, we also impart life to people. Or if we speak words from Satan (words that are contrary to God’s words), we impart death, or harm, to people.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit (Proverbs 18:21).

God is saying that you will eat the fruit of whatever you say! That is a sobering reminder of the power of our words, for positive or negative, for life or for death.

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing (James 3:9-10).

Angels implement God’s Word

Angels are spirit beings created by God to serve His purposes and to minister to His people:

Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:14).

Angels hear and act upon God’s words:

Praise the LORD, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his **word** (Psalm 103:20).

Some people may think that this only applies to words currently spoken from the throne of God in heaven directly to the angels. But the fact is, His words in the Bible were already spoken from the throne in heaven and they carry the same authority, power, and relevance now as when He first spoke them. Those words are eternal.

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away (Luke 21:33).

When God's words from heaven are spoken in the earth through our faith-filled mouths, God's power is released. Angels hear the words, obey them, and do God's bidding, fulfilling their job description.

The power of confession

The apostle Paul wrote,

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak (2 Corinthians 4:13).

Because of extremism in some circles, which you find with any truth, the emphasis on speaking God's words or the "power of confession" has come into disrepute, really an undeserved rap. Isn't it just like the devil to take one of God's most powerful truths and pervert it, thus denying its use by God's people to destroy Satan's work? That is what has happened. The devil has invented disparaging, mocking slogans such as "confess it and possess it," "name it and claim it," and "blab it and grab it" to make this great truth appear ludicrous.

But the fact is that our confession releases God's will, words, and purposes in the earth. Often, if we do not confess it, we will not possess it. I had rather confess it and possess it than not confess it and not possess it.

Follow this logic:

- We were created in God's image; that is, we are spirit beings who can talk, unlike other living creatures.
- When God speaks, things are created. "(God) calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Romans 4:17, KJV).
- In Ephesians 5:1, Paul says, "Be imitators of God."

If we are created in God's image as spirit beings who can speak, and we are; and if God calls things that be not as though they were, and He does; and we are commanded to be imitators of God, as we are; then by the known will of God we can also call things that be not as though they were, as long as we are speaking His words and are aligned with His will. That does not mean we can arbitrarily decide we want a new Mercedes automobile or anything else material and we can confess it into being unless it is God's will for us. But if it is His will for us, we may not get it unless we confess it, and we may miss it if we continually confess lack!

Confession is nothing more or less than agreeing with God and saying what He says. He has spoken in His Word, and we agree with what He has already said, then we speak His Word.

Confession is just affirming what God has already said in His Word or revealed by His Spirit, in agreement with the Word. We are just vocalizing our agreement with Him and releasing our faith through our words. Our words are a major way in which our faith can be released.

Christianity is called “the great confession.” Salvation begins with confession:

If you **confess** with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you **confess** and are saved (Romans 10:9-10).

Why is confession so important as to be a determinate even of salvation? Jesus explained it: “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matthew 12:34, KJV). The mouth reveals and releases into the world what is in the heart.

Remember, it was Jesus Christ Himself, not a modern faith preacher, who said:

For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall **say** unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he **saith** shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he **saith** (Mark 11:23, KJV).

Note the thrice-repeated reference to confessing, or speaking, in this one verse: say, saith, saith.

Job says, “You will also decree a thing, and it will be established for you” (22:28, NASB).

It works in reverse with negative confessions. We can confess negatives, and we will reap them. Job said, “What I feared has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me” (3:25). People wonder what was the real reason Job suffered so much. Dr. Michael Landsman discovered the answer: It was Job’s fear, which was the root cause of his problems. And no doubt, he confessed this fear, and got what he confessed.

Look at the importance God gives to what we say with our mouths:

From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing (James 3:9, NASB).

You are snared by the words of your mouth (Proverbs 6:2, NKJV).

For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned (Matthew 12:37, NASB).

A man has joy by the answer of his mouth (Proverbs 15:23). (Do you want joy? You can speak it out of your mouth.)

It is with your mouth that you confess and are saved (Romans 10:10).

According to *Strong's Enhanced Lexicon*, "saved" (Greek: *soteria*) in the preceding verse, Romans 10:10, means "deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation." It is also translated as "health." Therefore, you could accurately paraphrase that verse and say, "It is with your mouth that you confess and are delivered, preserved, are safe, are saved, and have health."

In verse 9, immediately preceding, it says, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." "Saved" here is the word *sozo*, which means "to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health." I frequently confess out loud, "Jesus is Lord and I am sozoed!" I am confessing Jesus' lordship over me, which includes wellness, healing, and health.

Confess what God says, His promises, and His blessings, and you will get them, and you will spread them to others. Do not confess negatives, fears, and the lies that the devil says, or you will get them and also spread them to others.

Speaker/author Kate McVeigh tells of a friend who had diabetes for 40 years and had to have an insulin shot every day. One day the lady began to practice this principle and every time she took an insulin shot, she would simultaneously confess her healing, calling forth her healing (which was not) as though it were. One day some time later she became very ill and had to be rushed to the hospital. The doctors did extensive tests and finally gave her their diagnosis. They told her that the problem was caused by the insulin she was taking because she was not a diabetic!

Senior citizen Emily Dotson testifies that she was near death with lupus 13 years earlier. The doctors had given her only a short time to live. But after being ministered to by a full-gospel pastor who showed her God's Word for healing, she began confessing her healing throughout every day, constantly quoting Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Peter 2:24. It took about 12 months, but she did not give up and was finally and totally healed. A pastor asked her how many times she had to confess before she got her healing. She replied, "I never counted it. I don't know. I can only tell you that I did outtalk the devil." (Yes, the devil will try to outtalk, discourage, and defeat you. But don't let him. Do not give up! Keep confessing what God says. Outtalk the devil with God's words, and he will shut up!)

The power of Psalm 91. Do you or others need protection? Begin to read, confess out loud, and by faith claim the promises of God in Psalm 91 and similar passages for yourself and/or others. Your faith and confession will release God's power. For example, God's Word promises:

I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” Surely he will save you from the fowler’s snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.... If you make the Most High your dwelling—even the LORD, who is my refuge—then no harm will befall you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands... (Psalm 91:2-7, 9-12).

By faith and by your persistent confession, release God’s words and power from Psalm 91 into your situation.

Quantum faith

Speaker Annette Capps writes:

In 1972, I first heard the teaching on faith and confession. It took faith in God's Word to believe that you can have what you say. I had never heard of such a concept and had it not been for the fact that the principle was plainly written in the Bible, I would have considered it to be crazy. However, there it was in red letters, spoken by Jesus no less!

“For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.” (Mark 11:23, KJV).

Looking at it from a surface level, it would seem a ridiculous statement. How is it possible that spoken words would send a mountain into the sea? For the past 27 years, it has required faith on my part to believe that my words are powerful. Recent study in the area of quantum physics, however, has convinced me that what Jesus spoke is absolute scientific fact!

Words are energy. Supporting Annette’s statement about quantum physics, and containing information that she used, is an interesting article by Charles Capps that appeared in the *Concepts of Faith Journal*, third quarter 1999 edition, excerpted below:

Words are energy and energy affects matter. The energy of your microwave vibrates the water molecules and heats the water. The energy of electricity flows to your washing machine and powers the motor that spins the tub and cleans your clothes. So, we can rightfully say that energy affects matter. Your words are energy that affects the matter in your life. When you speak the words, "This is the worst car I have ever had! You stupid piece of junk!" Those words are vibrations

of energy that affect the atoms that make up that car. You have spoken to it and it will obey you!

Scientists have performed experiments with atoms and their sub-atomic particles such as electrons. If you paid attention in school, you saw the diagram of an atom with the electron orbiting it like the earth orbits the sun. The interesting thing is that scientists have discovered that the electron that is shown orbiting the nucleus is not always there in particle form. It exists in a wave state (like a cloud, everywhere at once) until someone looks at it. When the scientist observes it, it suddenly appears as a dot (particle). What we all want to know, is, "How does it know someone is looking at it?" It obviously is responding to the observer.

One of the difficulties in quantum physics is that the particles behave somewhat differently for each observer, which leads me to the question, "Does it behave according to what the scientist believes?" In any event, we can definitely conclude that Jesus was right when He taught that all matter responds to faith and words. The substance from which our world is made is influenced and manifested by words. The things that you desire are made up of atoms. They know what you believe, hear what you say and behave accordingly.

Beliefs produce energy. The thoughts and beliefs that you carry also produce an energy around you. Have you ever noticed that when you are angry, things go wrong, and people are insulting and angry with you: Your thoughts and beliefs produce an energy that people can perceive and react to. If you believe that no one likes you, then you put off that rejecting type of energy, and people will be driven away from you.

If you love people and care about them, they will feel that and be drawn to you. Have you ever been around someone who is pleasant and full of love? It is an energy you can actually feel. The energy of love is a powerful drawing card for good in your life. After all, God is Love.

When you believe that God loves you and wants you to prosper, then you change your words and beliefs about money. When financial challenges used to come my way, I would fall into fear and begin to say things like, "Well, now we won't be able to pay off the car, house, (or whatever)!" The fear and speaking of it is an energy that affects your checking account and stops financial freedom. Now, I have learned to think and believe and say, "Things always work out for me. Everything that I do prospers and I have abundance, in Jesus' name." God is not limited to the things that you and I see. There is an infinite supply of substance waiting to be manifest according to your beliefs and words! "Faith is the substance of things hoped for..." (Hebrews 11:1).

...When Jesus spoke to the fig tree and said, "No man eat fruit from thee hereafter forever," then that fig tree dried up from the atomic level because of His words. When He spoke to the winds and the waves, they obeyed Him. He was teaching

us the undeniable biblical principle that THINGS OBEY WORDS.

Jesus did not demonstrate this just to prove He was the Son of God. He demonstrated it and then told his disciples that they too can speak words of power. He wanted us to have the revelation that we are powerful spirit beings who can speak to the mountains in our life and they will obey us.

...Things are responding to your words every day, so speak good things to all that surrounds your life. If you really believe Jesus' words, you will monitor your thoughts and conversations, because you are the one giving substance to your world through words.

Persistent confession. Kate McVeigh gives the example of the woman in Mark 5:25-35:

Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better, but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came behind Him in the crowd and touched His garment. **For she said**, “If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well.” Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction. And Jesus, immediately knowing in Himself that power had gone out of Him, turned around in the crowd and said, “Who touched My clothes?” But His disciples said to Him, “You see the multitude thronging You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’ ” And He looked around to see her who had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth. And He said to her, “Daughter, **your faith has made you well**. Go in peace, and be healed of your affliction.”

When the above passage says, “For she said, ‘If only I may touch His clothes, I shall be made well,’” Kate points out that *The Amplified Bible* clarifies the linguistic nuance of the phrase “For she said,” and translates that as “For **she kept saying**.” She kept on saying! She was persistent in her confession. And Jesus told her that her faith (demonstrated by her actions and repeated confession) had made her well.

Hebrews 10:23 (KJV) says, “Let us hold fast the profession (confession) of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised...)” Hold fast. Do not waver. He is faithful.

God’s people should always be speaking God’s words of healing, life, faith, and hope into everyday situations, and not Satan’s words of sickness, death, fear and doubt. When such words are spoken by faith, they carry the full force and power of God Himself. For example, in Acts chapter 3, when Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer:

Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple

courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. **In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.**" Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

Note that Peter did not pray, "Lord if it be your will, please heal this man. But if it is not your will, just let him stay crippled." Peter knew it was the will of God to heal this man, both from available Old Covenant Scripture, from his experience with Jesus, who never refused to heal anyone, and by revelation of the Holy Spirit. So he merely spoke the words, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk," and the man walked.

Peter released his faith through his spoken words, words formed from a knowledge of God's Word and will. God anointed the faith-filled words, backed them up, and healed the man.

How many sick beds would be emptied today if Christians would be so bold and obedient?

Constantly affirm what God says in His Word about specific situations in your life, not what the world says or what the devil says. Speak the language of Scripture. You have heard the expression, "coinage of the realm," that is, the currency of a country. David Ingles says that our words are "the coinage of the kingdom."

Ingles says there are two kinds of truth: (1) sense knowledge truth, which comes from the five senses and the physical world, and (2) revelation knowledge truth, which comes from God's Word. They are often in disagreement. For example, sense knowledge may tell you that you are sick with an incurable illness. But God's Word says that He has laid your illness upon Jesus (Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 8:17, 1 Peter 2:24). Do not confess negative sense knowledge, but only confess what God says about any situation.

This is not denial! It is only the recognition of and the embracing of a higher, transcending truth. The sickness may be true in the physical realm, but the spiritual realm of truth transcends it. Spiritual forces are greater. "Greater is He that is in you, than He that is in the world" (1 John 4:4, KJV).

Don Gossette says we should affirm these things constantly by our confession:

- God is who He says He is.
- I am who God says I am.
- God can do what He says He can do.
- I can do what God says I can do.
- God has what He says He has.

- I can have what God says I can have.

How to know we are being used by God

This is not a magic formula. We cannot whimsically and recklessly speak God's words and expect anything to happen. God is very purposeful. We are not doing our will, but His. We must be led by the Spirit.

Years ago I read where the late, beloved Pastor John Osteen of Houston advised that the major test of whether we are being led by the Spirit is not the presence of goose bumps, but whether or not we are acting and speaking in love and not out of any selfish motive. Osteen pointed out that "God is love" (1 John 4:8), and He works through love channels. We must make sure that we are motivated by unselfish love and compassion for another person or persons.

If you are sure you are acting in love and compassion, then by faith begin to speak God's words to people in their need. You will be amazed at what happens and how God backs up His own words.

If people need salvation, speak God's good news (gospel) to them (Mark 16:15).

If people need healing, speak God's healing words to them (Mark 16:16-18).

If people need a blessing, speak God's blessing to them (Numbers 6:24-26).

If people need peace, speak God's peace to them (John 14:27.)

If people need comforting, speak God's words of comfort to them (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

If people need a sense of self-worth, speak God's unconditional love for them (John 3:16).

If people need provision, speak God's promises of provision to them (Philippians 4:19).

The potential list is endless.

Speak, believe, and expect results. See what God says:

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it (Isaiah 55:11, KJV).

Never again!

Recently I ran across the below powerful "never again list" (anonymous author). Be blessed, and disregard anyone criticizing you for "confessing" God's truths.

Never again will I confess "I can't," for "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13).

Never again will I confess unmet needs or poverty, for "my God will meet all my needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Never again will I confess fear, for "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Timothy 1:17, KJV).

Never again will I confess doubt or lack of faith, for "God has allotted to each a measure of faith" (Romans 12:3, NASB).

Never again will I confess weakness, for "The Lord is the strength of my life" (Psalm 27:1, KJV). Also, "The joy of the Lord is your strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).

Never again will I confess supremacy of Satan over my life, for "Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (II John 4:4, KJV).

Never again will I confess defeat, for "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14, KJV).

Never again will I confess lack of wisdom, for "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Corinthians 1:30, KJV).

Never again will I confess sickness, for "...with His stripes I am healed" (Isaiah 53:5, KJV). And "Jesus Himself took my infirmities and bore my sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17, KJV).

Never again will I confess worries and frustrations, because I "Cast all (my) anxiety on him because he cares for (me)" (I Peter 5:7).

Never again will I confess bondage, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (II Corinthians 3:17).

Never again will I confess condemnation, for "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

Let this be your confession

The below is taken from an article given to me and I am not sure of its origin, but this is a modification.

God framed His world by His words. (Hebrews 11:3)
I am created in His image. (Genesis 1:16)
By the dominion He has given me, (Genesis 1:28)
I frame my world by my words. (Proverbs 18:21, Mark 11:23)

I am the prophet of my own life.
My words, in my life, determine
my well-being, my provision, my health,
my future, and my place in eternity. (Proverbs 23:7, Luke 6:45, Romans 10:9)

My faith-filled words are alive and full of power.
Jesus is the High Priest of my confession. (Hebrews 3:1)

My words are the voice of Jesus in the earth.
Jesus is my voice in heaven. (Hebrews 7:25)

All things are under His feet.
I am in Him,
Therefore, all things are under my feet. (Hebrews 4:14, Ephesians 1:22-23)

My faith-filled words dominate
the laws of sin and death. (Romans 8:2)
Satan is always defeated in my life
By the blood of the Lamb and my words. (Revelation 12:11)

I am what the Word says I am,
I can do what the Word says I can do,
I can have what the Word says I can have.

I'm not moved by what I see.
I'm not moved by what I feel.
I'm moved only by what God's Word says about me.
I am the dwelling place of God's Spirit.
He lives in me. (1 Corinthians 3:16)

I am the righteousness of God in Christ.
He gave it to me. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

From the abundance of my Word-filled heart,
my Word-filled mouth speaks. (Luke 6:45)

I am filled with the Holy Spirit of the Creator.
I have His love, His joy, His peace,
His power and His Purpose.

Today is not a sick day, (3 John 2)
Not a sad day, (Isaiah 61:3)
Not a fearful day. (2 Timothy 1:7, 1 John 4:18)
But every day is a joyful, victorious,
Spirit-filled, Word-filled, Jesus-exalting day!

Now that's a good confession. May those words and the blessings be yours!

Chapter 7

The power for physical healing

Notice: I believe people will be healed as they are reading this chapter, as they believe, absorb, and act upon God's words quoted herein. The healings may be instantaneous or they may be gradual, beginning this very day.

The biblical truths in this chapter cannot only bring physical healing for yourself, but you can use them to minister healing to others. I pray that many reading this right now will become vessels for God's healing power to many others who are sick.

The power of His words. In view of the previous chapter, this passage is particularly relevant (emphasis supplied):

My son, give attention to **my words**; Incline your ear to my **sayings**. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are **life** to those who find them, And **health** to all their **flesh** (Proverbs 4:20-22, NKJV).

Do you want life? Do you want healing and health? God's says that His words provide both.

The above passage reveals what God says about healing and its relationship to His Word. But note His related instructions.

- Give attention...
- Incline your ear...
- Do not let them depart ...
- Keep them...

There is power in God's words! Therefore, "Keep them in the midst of your heart."

Jesus is alive! This is a fact beyond debate: The Lord Jesus Christ not only healed people when on the earth, He still heals people today!

God revealed Himself in the Bible as "I am," not "I was" (Exodus 3:14). He wants you to know that He not only "did," but He "still does." He is in the now, always in the present. He lives in timelessness and is not bound by our calendars and clocks. What He did 2,000 or 4,000 years ago, He stills does today. In eternity, it is the same moment. His words and promises written in His holy Word 2,000-3,500 years ago are alive and valid today.

God says, “I the LORD do not change” (Malachi 3:6). He has not changed and will not change. Healing was, and still is, a part of His gospel, or “good news.” That is one reason it is good news!

This good news of God’s love is much more than forgiveness and saving one’s soul for eternity, as wonderful as that is. Physical healing is one of the benefits of the atonement (at-one-ment) of the God-man, Jesus Christ, bridging the gap between a holy God and sinful man, which He provided by His substitutionary suffering and death in Jerusalem almost 2,000 years ago. His great sacrifice provided reconciliation with and access to God for all those who believe in and put their trust in Him.

The various benefits of Christ’s atonement are actually listed in two prophetic Old Testament (Covenant) passages written hundreds of years before He was even born: Psalm 103:3-6 and Isaiah 53:4-5. Physical healing is included in both of these passages! Here is the promise in the very first verse:

Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and **heals all your diseases** (Psalm 103:3).

Do you know what the word “all” means? While some politicians may be uncertain about the meaning of “is,” there is no doubt about the meaning of “all.” It means *all*! God does not say “some” of your diseases, nor “half” of your diseases, or a few, but *all* of your diseases! Strangely, most modern-day Christians readily accept the first part of that verse but will not accept the second part of the very same verse!

Here is the second passage from the Old Testament, speaking prophetically about Christ’s future coming:

Surely **he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows**, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and **by his wounds (stripes) we are healed** (Isaiah 53:4-5).

The word “infirmities” above is clear. In the Hebrew it is *choliy*, which means sickness. The word for “sorrows” is *makob*, which also means pain. The passage is clear that Jesus took our *sicknesses* and *pains*.

Later, after Christ came, in the New Testament, Matthew clearly confirms the physical healing meaning of Isaiah 53:4, written hundreds of years before:

When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases.” (Matthew 8:16-17).

Numerous other passages confirm it, some of which are included in this chapter.

Receiving forgiveness, eternal life, and the other free benefits of Christ's atonement is the most wonderful thing that can ever happen to a person. It results from receiving *Him*. If you have not yet received Christ and been born again, stop reading here, mark this page, and go directly to Appendix 3, then return to this later.

He is sending you His Word. "He sent forth his word and healed them" (Psalm 107:20). God has sent His Word to you this day. God's Word is "living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

Receive God's Word for you today, as shared below. Expect your healing!

But is healing God's will?

To believe for your healing, you must discover in His Word beyond all doubt that it is God's will to heal you. Once you get that revelation, your healing is already on its way. It's as good as done, providing you believe it and act upon it. If you do not see it, you will not be able to believe for your healing. This is crucial.

Most people believe God *can* heal but they are not sure it is His will, either for themselves or for others. For lack of a right understanding of God's attitude and will on healing, many people remain sick and die. God says, "My people are destroyed (perish) from lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6), and that includes lack of knowledge about God's healing provisions in His Word.

We learn from God's holy Word that it is clearly God's will to heal. When we realize this, we can pray according to His will, and He says, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him" (1 John 5:14-15).

So, how do we know that healing is, in truth, God's will? There are several reasons.

1. The Father's will revealed in Christ. First and foremost, God clearly demonstrated His will in His Son, Jesus Christ, who is "the exact representation of his (God's) being" (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus said, "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

If Jesus, then, was a full and perfect representation of His Father, it is very important to understand that Jesus healed *all* who came to Him. "Many followed him, and he healed *all* their sick" (Matthew 12:15). Jesus "healed *all* the sick" (Matthew 8:16).

Jesus never had to pray, "Father, if it be thy will, please heal this person." He knew God's will. In fact, He *was* God's will incarnate!

There is not one instance in the Bible where Jesus refused to heal anyone! This is significant. He healed them all. And remember, Jesus always did the will of the Father. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing" (John 5:19).

It could not be more clear. The Lord Jesus Christ, God in human form, healed everyone who came to Him, clearly revealing to us the Father's will about healing. That is reason enough to believe. You do not need the other reasons. But read on anyhow!

That the sick people took the initiative is probably very significant. Jesus never forced healing on anyone. We should first desire and seek Jesus, just for who He is. As we find Him, and touch His garment, so to speak, as did the woman sick with an issue of blood for 12 years (Luke 8:44), our healing can come.

Jesus commanded His disciples to go and heal the sick, which they did. Further, as previously learned, healing the sick is part of His Great Commission for the church age. He commanded, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.... And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons... they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." (Mark 16:15,17-18).

2. God has not changed. Has Jesus changed, no longer healing people as He did before? Emphatically, no. There is not one shred of evidence in the Bible that Jesus has changed. The Bible says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). What He did when physically on earth, He is still doing today by His Spirit. Jesus was God incarnate, and God says, "I the LORD do not change" (Malachi 3:6). What He did 2,000 years ago, He still does today.

3. God did not create sickness. There is no mention in the Genesis creation account that God created sickness. In fact, concerning everything He did create, it is written, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). Sickness is not "very good." Sickness and death were introduced by Satan when sin came into the world. Sickness was never God's will. The Bible speaks of "...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).

4. There is no sickness in heaven. That fact is beyond doubt. There is no cancer, diabetes, arthritis, or any other disease in heaven. This clearly reveals God's will about sickness. And Jesus told us to pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:9)! Can you imagine heaven filled with crutches, wheelchairs, the sick, the blind, and the lame? Not really. From the Bible we know that heaven is a place of perfection, eternal joy, and bliss; a place where there is no sickness, sorrow, or death. If a person believes it is, indeed, God's will for them to be sick, they should not go to the doctor, or else they will be fighting against God's will, which is sin!

5. Sickness is a curse of the Law, from which Christians have been redeemed. See Deuteronomy chapter 28 for a description of how sickness is a curse caused by breaking

the laws given to Moses. However, Galatians 3:13 says, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.’”

6. The Great Physician. In the four Gospels, someone has counted 41 separate accounts of Jesus healing people, 72 in all with duplicated accounts, and Jesus attributed many of the healings to the faith of the sick person and not just His power alone. Those healed were not just individuals but sometimes multitudes. Christ was the Great Physician then; He is the Great Physician now.

7. The revelation of John. Not only is God’s Word full of promises for healing, revealing His will, we learn of His deep desire for our health by His words prayed through the apostle John in 3 John 2: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (KJV). God said “above all things.” This verse alone is sufficient proof that health and healing are God’s will!

8. The Great Commission. As previously described, healing the sick was part of Jesus’ command to go into all the world.

9. Declaring the kingdom. As also mentioned, Jesus commanded that the kingdom of God be declared, and the kingdom is a place without sickness, and declaring it is to bring healing, deliverance, and blessings to people. As Dr. Michael Landsman wrote, “the word ‘kingdom,’ in the original language, means the activity of reigning. For the believer, the activity of reigning is broken down into three aspects: bringing deliverance to the captives, exerting authority over the enemy, and conferring blessings upon God’s people.”

10. God hates sickness. The Bible reveals that God not only advocates health, but He actually abhors sickness! Leviticus 21 clearly reveals that God would not allow sickness in His presence, which in those days was in the temple. Now, in New Testament times, our bodies are His temple! According to 1 Corinthians 3:16: “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” Actually, the word temple here (Greek: *naos*) is mistranslated. Used elsewhere, the Greek word *nieron* means the full temple, where there was also the Court of Gentiles (symbolic of the world of sin and sickness). The word *naos* really means the especially sacred part of the temple that is the sanctuary, or Holy Place, where the Holy of Holies was. There, no Gentiles (sin and sickness) were allowed. Sickness has no divine right to be in our *naos*, or sanctuary, is contrary to God’s will, and by faith in His Word and power, we must drive it out!

If you are sick, the fact that God hates sickness does not mean that you are unworthy or that He hates you. He just hates the sickness that you have, because it is not from Him. It is His perfect will to heal you and for you to be in health (3 John 2).

In Old Testament passages such as Deuteronomy chapter 28, where it appears that God is putting sickness on people, Dr. Michael Landsman explains that the nuance of the

Hebrew wording shows that because of the people's disobedience, the text really means that God is "caused to allow" the sicknesses. Our behavior can "cause Him to allow" sickness to come upon us, even though it is not His perfect will. For example, suffering from AIDS is not His will, but if man indulges in promiscuous behavior by his own free will, which God will not violate, God is "caused to allow" AIDS. Man has brought it upon himself, as did the ancient Israelites. Rebellion against God and His commands can cause Him to remove His protective shield over us, such as promised in Psalm 91 and elsewhere, and to allow the natural consequences.

11. A "better covenant." As mentioned, one of many healing promises in God's Word is Psalm 103:2-3. "Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases." But this is important: This promise in Psalm 103:3 and that of Isaiah 53 are part of the Old Covenant. Hebrews 8:6 says that with Christ and the New Covenant, we have an even "better covenant" than the old one! Under this "better covenant," we should certainly expect nothing less than, but even more from, the old!

12. Our Healer. One of God's names is revealed in the Bible as "Yahweh (Jehovah) Rapha" (Hebrew) which means "the Lord, your healer," or "the Lord, your doctor." In the Bible, God uses various name suffixes to reveal His provisions for humanity's needs. For example, "Jesus," or Yeshua, from Yeshoshua, means "the Lord (Yahweh) is salvation." Jesus is our provision for salvation. His Old Covenant name, Yahweh Rapha, is our provision for our sicknesses.

Conditional. Many of God's promises are conditional. They are all free and cannot be purchased or earned, but they are dependent upon some action on our part. An example is the promise of health in Proverbs 3:7-8: "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones" (Proverbs 3:7-8). Note the clear reference to "health to your body." The three conditions are:

- That we are not wise in our own eyes (but dependent upon God's wisdom).
- That we fear the Lord, or have proper respect and reverence toward Him.
- That we shun evil.
- Result: health to our bodies. It's a promise!

Imitation. The well-known phrase "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" is from Hebrews 13:8, but people are usually unaware of verse 7 that immediately precedes it: "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and **imitate their faith.**" Remember, those people whom we are told to imitate lived and walked in the supernatural, and when they prayed for sick people, the people got healed. And God says that we are supposed to imitate their faith! Paul also said, "I urge you to **imitate me**" (1 Corinthians 4:16), and

“Be imitators of God” (Ephesians 5:1). In our culture and even in many of our churches that dismiss the supernatural, we usually write that off as meaning to imitate their moral qualities, and it does, but why would it not also mean to imitate other aspects of Jesus’ and the apostles’ ministry as well?

From all these examples in the Bible we clearly learn that it is God’s perfect will to heal and that His children be healthy. Knowing this, that we are actually agreeing with God and that we are praying in His will, it should be easy for us to pray the prayer of faith and receive from Him.

But why sickness?

Sickness is not from God. How do we know? One way is because, as mentioned earlier, after He created everything, “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good” (Genesis 1:31).

Because God has given man a free will, He is sometimes forced to *allow* sickness for certain purposes, but He does not cause it nor like it.

Sickness is from the devil, about whom Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).

We live in a world that has rebelled against God. It is a sin-sick world. Beginning with Adam, the first man, all people have broken God’s laws. “All have sinned,” the Bible says (Romans 3:23). Physical sickness is a result of the general condition of sin in the human race, and not always our own personal sin, although it may be, such as the many diseases transmitted through sexual promiscuity and other unhealthy behavior.

Deuteronomy chapter 28 tells us that sickness is a “curse” that man has brought upon himself for disobeying God and breaking His Commandments. Because of rebellion, the human race is under a general curse. The curse of sin brings not only eternal separation from God, but sickness.

God in His infinite mercy and kindness determined a way for that curse to be removed! He is the Judge of the universe. As a righteous Judge, He operates on 100 percent, totally consistent principles of justice. He is a holy and perfect Judge. Justice must always be served. Without exception, God must always punish sin, which can produce sickness. Otherwise, He would deny His very nature.

At the same time, He is a God of perfect love. God, then, was faced with the necessity of both judging and punishing sin, but also being perfect love.

Did God have a dilemma? Seemingly, but in His infinite, perfect wisdom, He had the perfect solution. He would take all our punishment upon Himself! That is what Jesus did, the glory of the gospel. He became our substitute, taking our sins and giving us His righteousness!

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came from heaven to take all the judgment that we deserved.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree (Galatians 3:13).

This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases (Matthew 8:17).

When we acknowledge what God has done for us and receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are no longer under a curse! By faith in Christ and His finished work on the cross, we can then receive all that God has provided for us.

By His stripes we are healed

Question: On what basis can we expect a healing? How much does it cost?

Answer: Jesus paid for it already! His grace is free to us.

It is important for us to realize that God does not just give a whimsical promise for our healing, without cost. It cost Him terribly. Jesus paid dearly for it, with horrible, excruciating pain, and with His own divine, precious blood. And what He paid so greatly for, He wants us to understand and benefit from. He did it just for us. For you! Let His sacrifice not be in vain. Ignoring, denying, or taking lightly His great sacrifice for us is an offense to Him.

Hundreds of years before Christ, the prophet Isaiah wrote about this Messiah to come: “with his stripes we are healed” (53:5, KJV). It is the stripes, or scourging, Jesus experienced that we need to better understand. If you review the events of that awful day we call Good Friday, you remember that Jesus Christ was tried before Pontius Pilate, then surrendered to the Roman soldiers to be scourged. The word “stripes” doesn’t have much impact until one realizes what it really means. In scourging Jesus Christ, the Son of God, they took Him and tied Him to a pillar, or post. Then they stripped the clothes from His back. He was handed over to a Roman legionnaire, a man used to brutality and violence, a course man of brute strength. He was a Roman soldier.

They gave this soldier a cat-o'-nine-tails, a whip that had nine thongs with little metal, bone, or stone pellets at the end of each of the thongs. The scourging was what the Jews called “the near death”: 40 lashes less one—39 stripes. This ordeal alone actually caused death in many victims.

STRIPE! The lash whistled through the air into the back of Jesus. Little bits of flesh tore loose and red welts developed. STRIPE! STRIPE! STRIPE! Again and again, the lash. More skin torn off. The flesh was opened up. Bone began to show. The Savior's blood was pouring down His back out of those cuts. They called them stripes. They looked like paint stripes but it was not paint—it was the blood of Jesus, pouring from those 39 deep, oozing slashes in His body.

This is vitally important—Jesus did not have to endure this horrible scourging for our salvation! He was still going to the cross for that. Yet, each of those momentous events on that Passover day was for a specific, divine purpose. Why the stripes? Jesus came to deliver us from the curse and to make us whole in spirit, soul, and body. He paid the total price. The stripes were for our physical healing! “With his stripes we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5, KJV). We are healed for eternity, but it is also available now until the day the Lord takes us home.

Confirmation during the Church age

After the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Father, these healing promises of God and His Word were repeatedly confirmed in the actions of the early church, then in the New Testament writings and among believers to this very day.

Referring to events after His departure, Jesus said, “These signs will accompany them that believe; In My Name... they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:17-18, KJV).

As recorded in the book of Acts, believers in the early church expected and experienced physical healing. In I Corinthians 12:9, healing is described as one of the gifts God has given to His church in perpetuity. In James 5:14:15, God again confirms the provision of physical healing for His people with instructions for the church. In addition, the fulfillment of the healing promises has been experienced by multitudes through the centuries and in our generation.

Physical healing was a part of the early church and should be no less so today. Christine Darg, of Exploits Ministry, gives these examples:

Throughout the history of the Early Church, the healing ministry of Jesus was upheld as was His teaching ministry. But eventually the Church fell into the scandal of doubt and unbelief from which it is recovering in our days as we contend for the faith.

In *City of God*, Book 22, Chapter 8, St. Augustine testified to the reality of the work of healing in the church: "...there are miracles at this day wrought by God, with what means He likes best, Who wrought them of yore.... "

The evidence of the 4th Century liturgies shows the expectation of supernatural cures. The Church claimed to be endowed with the charisma of healing, and her

ministers regularly exercised the power to impart healing. One of the earliest known of these liturgies is the *Testament of Our Lord* (circa 350 AD):

"...O Christ...Who art the Healer of every sickness and of every suffering...send on this oil...the delivering [power] of Thy good compassion, that it may... heal those who are sick... for Thou art mighty and praised for ever and ever. Amen."

Notice, the above prayer did not include the doubt-inducing disclaimer, "if it by thy will."

There were many such liturgies, according to evidence outlined in *Anointing of the Sick* by F.W. Puller. And according to James Moore Hickson's booklet, *Healing in the Early Church*, the form of consecration of the oil in the Gregorian Sacramentary, compiled by St. Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome from 590 to 604, was this: "A means of protection for mind and body, for getting rid of all pains, all illnesses, all sickness of the body...."

Here are some of the healing references found in the Holy Communion liturgies (Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, Liturgy of St. Mark): "Let not, O Lord, the communion of Thy holy mysteries be to my judgement or condemnation, but to the healing of my soul and body...." [This survived in the English Office of Holy Communion.]:

"Furthermore, O Lord, heal the diseases of our soul, cure our bodily weaknesses, O Physician of souls and bodies, Overseer of all flesh, oversee and heal us by Thy Salvation."

Thus we see that for many centuries, our Lord's original command to heal the sick was obeyed and carried out in its literal sense. The ministry of healing was unqualified with the disclaimer "if it be thy will." The Church had learned from her Master that wholeness, or salvation of both body and soul, is indeed covered by the Will of God. **And this conviction found utterance in another way by the frequent address to our lord as "saviour of our souls and bodies," or, "physician of our souls and bodies."** The latter was an expression common to the ancient liturgies.

For example, in the Liturgy of St. Mark, the ministry of healing is honorably upheld:

"Master, Lord and our God, Thou Who didst elect the twelve-lighted lamp of the twelve Apostles, and didst send them into the whole world to preach and to teach the Gospel of Thy Kingdom... heal every sickness and every infirmity in the people..."

In an article titled "Healing for All" in the *Pentecostal Evangel* magazine, author J.M. Mullens provides further insights:

The Lord Jesus continued to bestow this power to others for many years after His ascension. Twenty years after, Paul had this power (Acts 19:12); 26 years after, gifts of healing were given to ordinary believers (1 Corinthians 12:9); 27 years after, the rules for healing were laid down for the sick (James 5:14-16); 40 years after, Clement, Paul's contemporary, said, "Men received the gifts of healing."

Irenaeus said, 110 years after, "Men healed the sick by laying their hands on them." Two hundred years after, Origen said, "Men had marvelous power in curing, by invoking the divine name, that of Jesus"; 1,820 years after, Dorothea Trudell, of Mannedorf, saw 10,000 healed by prayer, and the German government was compelled to recognize and license her hospitals. In our own day, these gifts are being exercised in every part of the world. God is restoring His lost gifts.

All sufferers who came to Jesus were healed in His day. He is the same "yesterday, and today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Healing of the body as well as the soul is provided for in the atonement of Jesus Christ, for Matthew, quoting from Isaiah 53, declares, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Jesus declared, "These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils—they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17,18).

If you are sick, come and get your portion of life and health from the pierced hands of Christ today.

Jesus Christ healed when on the earth; He healed in New Testament times; He still heals today. He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Call on Him now, and receive your healing from Him!

Overcoming Doubts

Overcoming the Number One doubt. The number one cause of doubt is the thought, "But not everyone gets healed, so it must not be God's will, so I probably won't get healed either." This thought destroys faith, is not of God, and blocks healing. We have already discovered God's will on healing. Not everyone gets saved either, and we know it is not God's will that anyone perish. All who do not get saved either (1) do not hear the Word, or (2) reject it. You have heard God's Word about healing; now do not reject it.

Other reasons. What can block our healing? In his outstanding book, *Christ the Healer*, the late F.F. Bosworth cites 22 reasons why some people fail to get healed, not one of which is God's will. All 22 reasons fall on man's shoulders. An interesting one is his number 3, "Community Unbelief," on which he devotes five pages. He points out that even Christ Himself, under the full anointing of the Holy Spirit, could not do any miracles in his hometown of Nazareth because of their "lack of faith" (Mark 6:6), although He did heal a few people. Bosworth writes these profound words:

“On the subject of healing, people have been taught today to believe in traditions in the place of the plain Word of God. This has turned the whole world into a veritable Nazareth of unbelief.”

Another of Bosworth’s 22 reasons for not being healed is “watching the symptoms” instead of keeping the eyes on God’s promises. Do not be preoccupied with symptoms. Instead be preoccupied with what God says about your healing.

If you are in faith and have no unconfessed sin in your life, such as bitterness or unforgiveness, and are not doing damaging things to your body, you should definitely expect your healing.

A “pointed bone”? Another possible reason for not getting healed is that a medical doctor has “pointed the bone” at you (see previous chapter), putting a powerful curse on you with all the sophistication and credulity of his honored profession, which is almost god-like in our culture. Typically, the patient believes the doctor instead of God’s Word, in effect believing the doctor is smarter than God, thinking maybe that God was just old-fashioned and not aware of modern diseases and modern medicine. As ludicrous as it sounds, many people give that impression.

By way of review, retired Canon Jim Glennon of St. Andrew’s Cathedral of the Anglican Church in Australia describes a tribal custom of the native Australian Aborigines. If a member of the tribe violates one of the tribe’s taboos, the witchdoctor comes to the man and performs a ritual over him. The ritual is to reach into a small leather bag, take out the bone of a bird, then point the bone at the violator. In all cases, after the bone is pointed, the person dies, sometimes instantly, but always soon. The ritual is called “pointing the bone.” This is what happens when a doctor tells you that you have a fatal disease with only so long to live.

Paul’s “thorn in the flesh.” Doubters often cite Paul’s thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7) as proof that it is not always God’s will to heal, a misinterpretation that Satan has used to sow doubt and rob probably millions of people of their healing. In so doing, they improperly generalize a doctrine against healing based on an isolated text with questionable meaning, which is not even good theology. It is important to note that (1) there is no evidence that Paul’s thorn was a physical sickness but strong evidence that it was not; (2) we know it was a “messenger of Satan,” probably a spiritual attack as verse 7 implies; and (3), this is very important—the phrase “thorn in the flesh” was a Hebrew idiomatic expression for what today we would call “a pain in the neck.” When that expression was used in the Bible, it usually referred to a person. The late F.F. Bosworth brilliantly devotes a whole chapter in his book, *Christ the Healer*, to analyzing this subject in depth and solidly concludes that the thorn was not a physical sickness.

This is also very important to remember: The Bible reveals that Paul’s thorn came only because of his deep, totally unique revelations and actually being caught up into Paradise, to keep him from being proud. Even if a sickness, which it was not, you should never

expect a similar thorn unless you have had the equivalent of Paul's revelations and similar trip to Paradise! Yet, many people falsely identify with Paul's "thorn" and unnecessarily give up hope for their healing.

There are many reasons why some people do not get healed, but only one that would clearly rule out your healing, and that is if God has truly decided that your designated time on Earth is complete, unlikely unless you have finished out the duration He has revealed in His Word. In Genesis 6:3, God revealed to Noah 120 years for our life expectancy, to which a few now attain. Science has recently confirmed God's words in Genesis 6:3 about a 120-year life span! In his book, *The Bible Cure*, Reginald Cherry, M.D. (Creation House, 1998) points out that researchers have discovered that human cells are able to reproduce themselves only about 50-60 times. They have discovered a built-in "cellular timetable" that would place the human life span maximum at 120 years. That is exactly what God said over 4,000 years ago! (My wife's great-grandmother lived to be well over 100, reportedly to 120, but this cannot be confirmed.)

While 120 years may be biologically possible, some wrongly believe that the Psalms reveal a lesser life expectancy than in Noah's day: "The length of our days is seventy years—or eighty, if we have the strength" (Psalm 90:10). I used to think that this maximum 80-year time span superceded what God had previously revealed to Noah above; however, I later realized that Psalm 90 was not written by David but by Moses, who himself lived to be 120, and the psalm was written well past his own age of 80! Also, Moses was apparently lamenting that those Israelites in the wilderness were dying at such a young age because of their rebellion against God.

Of course, now it is rare to see people live beyond 100, due to modern lifestyles, soils depleted of nutrients, modern food processing, and environmental pollution in food and air. But God is still God, and all things are possible with Him, the Bible says.

Do not let the devil rob you of your healing because of traditional, false interpretations! Jesus said that the devil is a thief, and he always subtly tries to rob people of God's blessings.

God gave me this sickness to teach me something. If God gives sickness to teach us something, we should all be constantly praying to get sick, as we all have so much to learn! Also, we should never go to the doctor, which might keep us from learning what God wants to teach us! Of course, that is silly, not scriptural, nor does it make sense. God is not the author of sickness, Satan is. Of course, God takes evil and turns it to good, and He may use a sickness experience to teach us, but that does not make Him the cause nor does it detract from His promises to heal you.

How to receive healing

"Your faith has made you well," Jesus said to the woman who had been bleeding for 12 years (Luke 8:48. NASB).

Where does faith come from? For a discussion on how power is released through faith, see Chapter 6. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Today you are hearing God's Word on healing. God has sent His Word to you to heal you and build your faith. His Word, that living and sharp Word, has penetrated your soul and spirit, even to the marrow of your bones.

Now is the moment to call on Jesus, the One who took your sickness with the painful, bloody scourges. Jesus said, "Ask and you shall receive... For **everyone** who asks receives" (Matthew 7:7-8).

There are several ways your healing may come, as God may lead you to use one or more of them. The below Bible prescriptions bring healing in churches and in Spirit-filled prayer groups and Bible studies all the time. The Bible says, "God does not show favoritism" (Acts 10:34), so you can get your healing.

In the church. God has given very specific instructions for healing in the church throughout the centuries.

Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up (James 5:14-15.)

This is God's prescription for healing in the church. Do not ignore it. If your church does not believe in or literally practice this direct command from God Himself for the benefit of His people, you should lovingly consider finding a church that does. It could mean the difference in sickness or health, and in some cases, life or death. Speaker Emily Dotson says that the church you attend can literally cost you your life!

Gift of healing. By His Holy Spirit, God gives certain people the gift or manifestation of healing, as revealed in 1 Corinthians 12:9. This may include a pastor, an evangelist, or actually, any believer. They can pray for you, and you can receive your healing. I know a layman in a church through whom God often manifests this gift, and God has used him to bring healing to many people.

By any believer. Jesus said to anyone who believes, "They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:18, KJV). Any believer, one who believes and acts on God's Word, can do this for you. The "laying on of hands" is one of the six basic principles of the doctrine of Christ described in Hebrews 6:2 (look it up), a great truth neglected in many churches.

In their book, *How to Heal the Sick*, Charles and Francis Hunter devote three chapters to the laying on of hands. Charles compares the Holy Spirit's power to that of an electric generator, our hands to that of a light switch, and a sick person to that of a light bulb. If you are a believer, the Holy Spirit lives in you. Jesus said that you can lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. Your hands placed on a sick person with faith in God's Word

is like turning on the switch and allowing the power to go through to the sick person and turning on the bulb, so to speak.

We can lay hands on ourselves and get the same results. Jesus did not exclude ourselves. I have seen it work. (In fact, as strange as it seems, I have seen and heard of animals being healed by the prayer of faith. Jesus loves animals too!)

Alone. We draw spiritual strength from the fellowship and prayers of others. However, your healing may also come to you directly, all by yourself, from any of the many healing promises in God's Word and as you meditate upon, believe, and receive them. See the many verses in this chapter. In some ways this is best because it relies on God's Word alone and not on people. In later attacks of doubt by the devil, which always come, we know on what we stand, and we stand.

Confession brings healing. God says:

If you **confess** with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be **saved**. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you **confess** and are saved. It is with your mouth that you confess and are **saved** (Romans 10:10).

As mentioned in Chapter 5, according to *Strong's Enhanced Lexicon*, the first reference to "saved" above is the Greek word *sozo*, which means healing and health, as well as salvation from eternal death. It means "to save a suffering one (from perishing), i.e. one suffering from disease, to make well, heal, restore to health." The second use of the word "saved" at the end is the Greek *soteria*, and means "deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation." It is also translated as "health."

It is important to confess out loud and continue to confess God's healing words, "for they are life to those who find them, And **health** to all their **flesh**" (Proverbs 4:22, NKJV).

Never say, "my cancer," or "my arthritis," or whatever, which by such confession you are claiming possession of the disease. Do not refer to them as yours. They are not yours, but something the devil is trying to put on you. Do not accept them. As Kate McVeigh says, "Do not sign for that package!" David Ingles adds that if you sign for that package, "Satan then has the receipt!"

Receive (and keep) your healing! (1) Saturate your spirit with God's Word and promises, (2) ask, and if necessary keep on asking, then by faith, (3) receive, and begin to thank and praise Him.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them (Mark 11:24, KJV).

As mentioned earlier, the word "receive" here is the Greek *lambano*, which means to "take." We do not passively receive it; we actively take it. God holds it out to us in His

Word; by faith we grab it and say, “Thank you, Lord. Praise your name.” I do that all the time.

The late Norman Grubb, a dear saint and former missionary to Africa, in his classic book, *The Law of Faith* (Christian Literature Crusade, Fort Washington, PA, 1947, page 116), makes interesting commentary about “asking” vs. “taking”:

Faith is the spiritual hand, exactly as, in the natural world, nothing is received and put to use merely by wishing or hoping or by asking for it, but by taking and using it, so in the spiritual. The hand must reach out and take the food or the book. Faith must reach out and take the promises, and the spoken evidence of such taking is the spoken word of faith. Probably the effect in the realm of the Spirit is the same as in the realm of matter. God offers all in His promises. The word of faith is the act of taking and applying His power according to need. What we actually take we actually have, and when the decisive word of faith has been spoken, God in His grace begins to work; and as the stand of faith is persisted in, the answer appears.

That is why the declared word of faith is so vital and should be so stressed. It is the act of taking in the invisible, and we suggest that the serious lack in so much of our prayer life, both public and private, is that it hardly gets beyond the stage of asking. Hardly ever do we hear a person in a public prayer meeting, having asked, take and thank; yet probably it is much more important to have “taking” meetings than to have “asking” meetings. Our constant asking must have the same effect on God as would a child on his parents, who keeps asking for food, when they have set his meal before him and told him to take and eat it.

Radical faith. Biblical faith is not passive. It is active—acting on God's Word. Confess it. Act like it. The devil, and some Christians, will try to talk you out of it. Lying symptoms from the devil may even remain, or come back, but reject everything but God's Word.

Sometimes we must get “violent” in our faith. Jesus said:

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force (Matthew 11:12, NASB).

This is referring to forceful faith often needed to obtain kingdom benefits. That is because Satan was given certain dominion in the world at Adam's fall. The second Adam, Christ, came to break Satan's power and restore God's authority on earth. This is done through the obedience and faith of Christ's followers. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, but God's people must be aggressive in their faith to forcefully seize back what Satan has stolen. Remember: This is spiritual warfare! (See Ephesians 6:10-18.) It may seem physical, but it is a spiritual battle. Satan may not give up easily, even though he was already defeated at the cross.

Earlier, I mentioned a favorite quote: *“Faith is going to the edge of the light that you have, and then taking one more step”* (anonymous). In other words, a faith person goes over the edge! I’ve been over the edge for years!

In the past, I have had serious symptoms of sickness and decided not to go to the doctor but to radically stand on the truth and reliability of God’s Word. Satan did everything he could to talk me out of my healing, and symptoms often persisted, but I steadfastly stood on the Word and fought him with the sword of the Spirit (the Word), and won, praise God. As mentioned, F.F. Bosworth says to not look at symptoms, but to look at God’s Word. Note: I cannot tell you not to go to the doctor as that would be unwise. Let the Holy Spirit lead you, and according to your faith be it unto you.

Important note: I have had many supernatural healings, but I must tell you that some of them did not come quickly but required extended spiritual battle and persistent confession. Your healing may come instantly, but not all come quickly and are progressive, so do not give up. Keep believing and confessing God’s Word. Remember what the late Norman Grubb said, quoted above: “When the decisive word of faith has been spoken, God in His grace begins to work; and as the stand of faith is persisted in, the answer appears.” Scripture says, “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast” (1 Peter 5:10).

Speak to that mountain! A sickness can be like a mountain in our lives. If yours is a mountain to you, remember this powerful promise of our Lord:

Have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever **says** to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he **says** is going to happen, it shall be granted him (Mark 11:22-23).

Jesus said to actually “speak” directly to the mountain in our lives. Speak to it! Take authority over it. Command it! Remember: Romans 4:17 says that God “calls things that are not as though they were.” To receive from God, we speak His Word and call healing and health into existence! And do not doubt in your heart. God says it will be granted you!

This is not denial as some cults practice, because we admit to the sickness; we just call on a higher authority and principle to transcend it. We call those things that be not as though they were, not those things that are as though they are not!

Angelic help! As mentioned, God’s angels “perform His Word, obeying the voice of His Word” (Psalm 103:20, NASB). When you speak God’s Word in faith according to His will, God dispatches angels to make it happen, bringing it “into being” in your circumstances! “For He will give His angels charge concerning you, to guard you in all your ways” (Psalm 91:11, NASB). “Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?” (Hebrews 1:14).

Hold on to God and His Word. Your healing will be manifest. It is yours. "By His stripes, you have been healed."

Drive out spirits of infirmity. As mentioned in Chapter 5, spirits (demons) of infirmity can cause physical and emotional sickness in either Christians or non-Christians. Demon activity can be detected by the gift of discernment of spirits, previously described. They can be cast out of a person only by the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, which they must obey. Do not fear demons. Remember, Jesus has all the power, and that same power is operating in you if you are a born-again, Spirit-baptized believer in whom Christ dwells. Simply assert your authority, in Jesus' name. They must go. They have no choice.

Immediate or gradual. Some healings are immediate, but many are gradual. If yours is gradual, hold on. Do not give up. Never say, "Well, it's not working," which cancels your faith. If you say that, you will get what you confess! Or never say, "Well, I guess God is not going to heal me." Your healing will come in His perfect timing. Assume that it begins the very moment you believe for it—today! He wants you to keep believing His Word and His promises. He has not forgotten you and is pleased with your faith.

Again—do not ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever, ever give up! See the story of the woman with the goiter in Appendix 1. Continue to affirm your healing. Continue to confess God's Word about your healing. Be persistent. Never stop. Never give up.

Hindrances to healing

There are some hindrances to healing that God expects us to correct.

Unconfessed sin in our lives is one hindrance. We are never perfect in this life, but I am referring to any specific sin that we have refused to release. This may especially include unforgiveness or bitterness towards others. It has been shown that such attitudes can affect our physical health.

Trusting in man and not God. The Bible says, "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8, KJV). A well-known evangelist who routinely sees many healings and miracles in Africa was preaching in Europe. He told his hearers that they will not see the miracles there that he sees in Africa, because they trust in their government health care system. He said the people in Africa see the healings and miracles because God is all they have. They cannot trust in man. So whether or not you are able to have medical help, make sure all your trust is in the Lord as if He is all you have.

Not recognizing (discerning) the Lord's body. This is rarely mentioned by others, but it is clearly Scriptural. Concerning partaking of the body and blood of our Lord at communion, Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak

and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 11:29-30). I believe he is speaking of not recognizing the body of Christ as they symbolically eat His body and drink His blood. Many believers angrily deny that others outside their particular church or group who also trust Christ are really His, thus not recognizing His body. This is not healthy!

Other reasons for sickness are: (1) Some people abuse their bodies, using harmful substances, or not allowing enough rest; (2) excessive stress; and (3) some people do not provide the body with nutritious food, often substituting junk or processed food. Much modern commercial food is deficient in nutrients and contains chemical additives, such as hormones and antibiotics, such as in meat and dairy products, and environmental pollutants. Also, many people violate God’s food guidelines in the Bible and still expect to remain healthy. Examples are in Leviticus chapter 11, no longer a legal requirement but still the wisdom of God. Paul said, "Everything is permissible—but not everything is beneficial" (1 Corinthians 10:23). God’s law of sowing and reaping always applies, but His grace transcends our past mistakes. Allow God to show you any area that needs attention.

Suggested prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I see in your Word that healing is your will, and that the Lord Jesus has paid for my healing by His stripes. I believe what He has done. I confess and repent of (name any known sin, including sins of attitude). I confess and repent of (any unhealthy habits or carelessness in taking care of God’s temple, your body). I receive my healing now, by faith. I thank you in advance. Be glorified in me and in my body. In Jesus’ name. Amen.” (Thank and praise Him until your healing is manifested, no matter how long it takes, and keep thanking and praising Him afterward.)

Typical Questions

“Should I see a doctor and follow his advice?” When sick people came to Jesus and asked to be healed, He did not reply, “Sorry, but I only heal through doctors. Please make an appointment with Luke. He is a doctor.” God uses doctors, who can be especially helpful on many things, especially with fractures and wounds. Those in healing ministries usually encourage the sick not to ignore proper medical attention, nor to stop their medications (possibly to protect themselves against lawsuits, but also maybe wisdom in many cases). It is not necessarily a lack of faith to see a doctor, and your healing will be a witness to the doctor of God’s power. However, be careful, because doctors’ three main methods—slash, burn, and poison—often do more harm than good: (1) slash (surgery, often dangerous and mutilating), (2) burn (radiation, with bad side effects) and (3) poison (drugs, most all with bad side effects that you may not be told about). If Jesus tarries, I believe someday current medical practices will be considered primitive and outrageous. More people are refusing these highly invasive and potentially harmful medical procedures and are opting to trust God, and perhaps also using natural alternatives. Even many medical doctors have become disenchanted with the failures of their profession and are turning to alternative (complementary) medicine. Studies show that doctor and healthcare mistakes are the third leading cause of death in the United States, whereas God has never made a mistake. I know a lady who rejects both God’s

power and natural methods, yet had suffered badly with a chronic infection. The doctors kept pouring harmful antibiotics into her, with all their bad side effects, and nothing worked. But she stubbornly stuck with them. Make all such decisions prayerfully and carefully. Personally, I usually just stand on God's Word and do not see a doctor, and God always heals me. Some years ago, the Lord gave me this from His Word, previously mentioned: "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man" (Psalm 118:8, KJV).

"What about good 'ol brother or sister so and so, a 'good Christian,' who did not get healed?" No one is ever good enough to be saved or to be healed. It is only by grace through faith. If faith seems to be applied and someone still does not get healed, we have to trust God's sovereignty and grace. We do not understand everything about everyone's situation. His Word says, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us" (Deuteronomy 29:29). The secret things do belong to Him, and we may not understand them; however, "the things revealed belong to us," and we must act with faith on what He has clearly revealed in His Word about healing!

"What about when an infant or child dies? Was there not enough faith?" Millions of children die around the world due to neglect and starvation, part of the general curse on the earth. Children of affluent families also die, ostensibly due to no one's fault, and again part of the curse of sickness in the world. I believe God's angels surround and take these little ones directly into the arms of Jesus, as with babies murdered before they are born. Again, Deuteronomy 29:29 applies. However, there are cases where tenacious faith on the part of parents and loved ones have brought back babies and children from certain death. In Appendix 1, I mention that in 1997 a 12-year-old cousin was in a coma for weeks due to brain encephalitis. The doctors finally gave up and suggested removing her life support. The parents said no, preferring to trust God. A prayer network diligently sought for her healing. Miraculously, the child later regained consciousness and is back at home and in school. We must pray fervently, believe, leave the results to God, then praise Him, no matter what.

"But some people say..." About healing, someone always remarks, "But some people say (such and such)," citing all kinds of arguments against God's healing provision. I once heard the wise, elderly minister from Australia, Jim Glennon, respond to that remark. A Bible scholar who had been in the healing ministry for some 40 years, he had heard every objection, and had seen many people miraculously healed. His simple response rang with eternal truth and power: *"It doesn't matter what people say. The only thing that matters is what God says!"* Let that be your guide. Be convinced of what God says, act upon it, and be unconcerned at what people say. As Satan once used the disciple Peter, whom Jesus rebuked, he will sometimes use well-intended Christians to talk you out of your healing.

For meditation...

Continue to meditate upon God's words, which build faith and bring healing, remembering his promises. The following are passages, some a repeat, included for your further reading and meditation:

My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart; for they are life to those who find them and health to a man's whole body (Proverbs 4:20-22).

Your word is truth (Psalm 119:160; John 17:17).

Every word of God proves true (Proverbs 30:5, RSV).

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (1 Timothy 3:16).

Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).

Forever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven (Psalm 119:89, KJV).

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you (Romans 8:11).

Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever (Psalm 119:160, KJV).

I will restore you to health (Jeremiah 30:17).

He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave (Psalm 107:20). (God's Word actually heals.)

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

Other promises of deliverance:

The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles (Psalm 34:17).

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation (Psalm 91:15-16).

I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD (Psalm 118:17, KJV).

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God (2 Corinthians 1:20).

The following are other passages included for further reading and meditation:

Exodus 23:25

Psalms 30:2; 41:3; 103:1-3; 107:20

Isaiah 57:18-19

Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 10:1; 10:8; 14:14

Acts 3:6-7; 5:12-15; 19:11-12

Final but important advice

1. Jesus said, “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you” (John 15:7). Remain in Jesus. Let His words remain in you. And then, by the authority of the Son of God, you can be assured that you can “ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.”
2. Praise and worship God continually, thanking Him both before and after your healing. He is loving, kind, full of mercies, compassionate, wonderful, all-powerful, and worthy of our praise. Review and recite to Him the praise psalms, such as 144-150.

A senior Christian leader who has seen many healings and miracles told the story of a girl who had sought diligently for her healing, but it never came. One day the Lord spoke to her heart and told her that she needed to stop asking for healing and instead to start worshipping Him (which involved faith and acceptance). She immediately began worshipping the Lord, and her healing came soon thereafter!

The lesson in this story is that we need the Healer more than the healing. We must draw close to the Lord Jesus, get to know Him better, honor Him and give Him glory. That must be our top priority. Then we can better rest in Him, confident of His love and power.

Then our healing can come.

May God bless you richly, and heal you. In Jesus’ name.

Strongly recommended reading:

Christ the Healer, F.F. Bosworth (1973, Fleming H. Revell, Grand Rapids, Michigan)

Appendix 1

Testimonies of God's supernatural power manifested in our day

Actual miracles and healings

There are probably hundreds of millions, if not billions, of examples and testimonies in the world of God's power in action, resulting in bodies being supernaturally healed, and instances of God performing miracles. Below are just a few.

The Lord gave me this Scripture many years ago: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD" (Psalm 118:17, KJV). After many years on this earth and many personal healings, His grace to believe His healing Word and declare His works are the only reasons I am still alive, and it is a great privilege.

Join me in declaring His works! Tell others. Believe, receive His power, and act in faith and boldness, and you will have your own testimonies. Keep a record. All of this glorifies the Lord. I am convinced that He loves to do the things such as the below. He is just waiting for us to receive His power and step out in faith.

Man gets new heart. Dr. Gary Brown (not real name), whom I have met, is a professor and department head at a major state university. He was also an unbeliever. He had no religion or faith of any kind. He was scheduled for open heart surgery on a Monday morning. His wife was a Spirit-filled believer in Jesus Christ. She urged him to go to church with her on Sunday night, the night before the scheduled surgery, where there was a healing service. Brown did not want to go but reluctantly agreed. He refused her request to go down front to get prayed for, so she said, "I will go down for you and be your proxy." She did, and after the service they left for home. Gary went to church as an unbeliever and skeptic and left as an unbeliever and skeptic. But God honored his wife's prayers. When he went in for surgery on Monday morning, the doctors did some more checking and made a shocking discovery. They announced to him that there was no longer any need for surgery—that his heart was perfect and was that of a young man. Gary still did not become a believer, but he soon saw God do 2-3 other miracles, and was finally persuaded beyond all doubt of the truth of the gospel. This college professor soon became a born-again believer and a turned-on evangelist for Christ who has since touched many lives. He has shared his testimony on television.

Goiter disappears. This is the story of a woman who was prayed for the healing of a huge, ugly goiter on her neck, and it demonstrates the power of a consistent faith confession. For the next year after the prayer for healing, every Sunday morning at testimony time she would get up and say, "I just praise the Lord with all of my heart for

the wonderful healing I received for a terrible goiter on my neck. Praise His wonderful name." She would be standing there with the goiter hanging out in all of its ugly dimensions. Everyone in the church believed that she was strange because everyone could see that the goiter had not changed and had not shrunk at all. One Sunday morning the church had important visitors from the state administration. Sure enough, the lady got up to testify and the pastor felt like crawling off the platform. She said, "I just want to thank and praise the Lord for the marvelous healing He gave me for an ugly goiter that was on my neck." Then suddenly the church members gasped in amazement because the goiter disappeared before their eyes, and her neck was smooth, slender and normal in appearance.

A medical doctor friend, Dr. Jean Kincaid, gave me this story. She said, "As Hebrews 11:1 states, 'Now faith IS the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen.' We just need to hold on, awaiting the evidence which we see by faith. Praise the glorious Name of Jesus, who paid for ALL of our diseases. It also came to me this morning, 'Just what part of ALL, is excluded from the promises' (Psalm 103:3, Matthew 8:17)?"

Healing in Kosovo. This is from evangelist/ missionary friend Christine Darg, about her husband Peter, both of whom I have known for years.

Thank you for praying for all of our travels. Just yesterday my husband Peter returned from war-torn Kosovo, where he was negotiating for air-time for the 700 Club Christian talk show. Right before he was to make a vocal presentation to a TV manager, a wasp flew into his soft drink and stung Peter right in the middle of his tongue. It began to swell painfully to the point that he could not speak, but he resisted the attack in the Name of Jesus. "I just would not have it," he told our prayer meeting yesterday. "As I was walking up a short flight of stairs to meet the TV manager, the swelling was terrific, and I sounded like Elmer Fudd, but I kept believing and confessing my healing. When my foot hit the top stair, the pain and swelling were gone and I made the fastest presentation in my life as I had an airplane to catch. The TV manager, incidentally said, 'The 700 Club sounds like a wonderful program. When can you start sending the tapes?'" Peter said afterwards, "The healing was so great and instant, it was as if the sting never happened!"

Teens experience God's miracle power! A mother, Harriet, sent me this testimony recently about a group of teens who were acting by faith in the power of God. It is so thrilling to see God using teenagers in this way.

My 14-year old daughter recently spent ten days in Peru with 90 other teens on a mission trip with Global Expeditions (Teen Mania). The teens, in three groups of 30 people per group, had trained intensively for three days prior to arrival in Peru to learn to perform a drama about man's need for redemption, and Jesus' provision of it. The drama included a powerful mime crucifixion scene. At the end of each drama performance the Team Leader would "cast out the net," and many people would give their lives, in tears, to Jesus. Each team performed the drama about

three times per day in different locations in cities and villages. The final "count" from Teen Mania was that the harvest by those 90 teen-aged missionaries in ten days was over a thousand people!

Anyway, about the miracles. At the end of each drama, the teams would separate into their "Ministry Group" of five teens, and would go into the crowd to minister to individuals. At one of those times, on the first day in Peru, my daughter's Ministry Group prayed for a lady who had just given her life to Jesus. She had two tennis ball-sized tumors, one on each side of her abdomen. Two teens placed a hand on each tumor and my daughter said that as they prayed, "the tumors disappeared right under our hands"! Praise the Lord!

And there were more miracles. Her group prayed for a little boy whose left knee was displaced, and his leg was so crooked that he could hardly stand, and his knee and leg were made straight "right before our eyes," she said. In addition, four children's deaf ears were opened, and many people were instantly healed of severe bronchitis. Hallelujah to our great God! Praise His name! He is so Wonderful, and so worthy of our praise!!!

More teen miracles. Another mother, Eileen, told me:

Our daughter (who was 13 at the time) went with Teen Mania last year to Trinidad. They too saw many salvations, healings, and deliverances. My daughter and several other teens laid hands on a deaf Hindu. His ears popped open and he could hear for the first time in his life, and he received Jesus as his Lord and Savior!! This ministry is awesome, and God is using these younger people in powerful ways in these last days.

This past summer our daughter (who is now 14) went to Mexico with Potomac Youth Ministries, and some powerful things occurred there as well. What an exciting time to be alive in these last days, and what a blessing it is to see God use our youth like this.

Raising from the dead. In the past few years I have heard credible, confirmed reports of the dead being raised in different parts of the world, such as China, India, and other Third-World countries. This is no doubt because people there have more simple, childlike faith in God's Word than most in the pseudo-intellectual West.

Example # 1. On September 25, 1999, after preaching in a village near the town of Bostime, Uganda, Rev. Idrifua was preparing to leave the meeting when a Muslim man approached him. The man had met a weeping mother walking along the road on her way to bury her dead child. He had told her that there was a man in town preaching about Jesus' power to raise the dead. The Muslim man brought the woman with the dead infant to Rev. Idrifua wanting him to pray for the dead child. Rev. Idrifua asked the mother if she was a believer. She said she was. The Spirit of God came on him. He told the woman, "Remove your breast and prepare

to nurse the baby” (a common practice in Africa). She did so and he laid hands on the baby and strongly rebuked the spirit of death, then commanded life to return. Immediately the baby came to life crying and began to swing its arms and legs, then quieted down and began to nurse!

The Muslim man got so excited he went to a friend's house whose baby also had died several hours before the first baby. This dead baby was the child of a Muslim cleric, a Haji. He brought this dead child and its mother to Rev. Idrifua. God raised the second baby to life too! Five Muslims gave their hearts to Jesus that day—including the Haji!

Example # 2. The following story is told by Paul Eshleman, the director of the worldwide JESUS Film Project ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International:

The Malto tribe lives in the north of India, in the state of Bihar. The people are resistant, even hostile, to the gospel. It is an area saturated with the worship of Satan and hundreds of false gods. A “JESUS” film team approached the Malto tribe. But the resistance was so stiff that they bypassed the area and went to more receptive villages to show the film. A few days later, a 16-year-old girl died in one of the Malto villages.

It was evening and the family had finished preparations for burial. Many had gathered around to pay their respects and support the family. They were about to bury the body when the girl suddenly, miraculously awoke! In stunned disbelief, the people told her, “Then you were not dead!”

“Yes, I WAS dead,” she told them. “I went to the place of the dead. But God told me I must come back and tell you about the real God, the true God.”

Still astonished, the villagers began to ask her, “Then who is the true God?” She went on to tell them that it was the God proclaimed by the film teams they had turned away. “God has given me seven days to tell as many people as I can that He is real,” the girl said.

The next day, she sought out and found the film team in another village. She told them her story, and that God told her she was to go with them. For the next seven days, they showed the film to the now receptive Malton villages. Before every crowd, she fearlessly proclaimed, “I was dead but God has sent me back to tell you that this film is about the true and living God. He has given me seven days to tell you. You need to believe in Him.” Then after the seventh day, although physically she appeared fine, she collapsed and died.

Paul explained that as a result of this, hundreds of people who were bound by the chains of Satan turned to the living Christ, and at least six churches were established in the Malto area.

Example # 3. German Evangelist Reinhard Bonnke has led crusades in Africa for 30 years and has seen countless healings and miracles. He says that the remarkable resurrection of Daniel Ekechukwu is so well-documented that no one can be unaffected by the report.

Bonnke's Christ for All Nations (CfAN) ministry has released a video of Ekechukwu's testimony, and also reported how the Nigerian pastor had been certified dead and injected with embalming fluids before reviving three days later at a Bonnke meeting.

The video features interviews with one of the doctors who certified Ekechukwu dead, and the mortician.

Nneka Ekechukwu says that when her husband was pronounced dead after (an) accident, she remembered promises God had given her that she would not suffer any more misfortune. "I said, 'This can't happen. I must do something, to prove God again.'"

Ekechukwu's wife was so sure that God would bring her husband back to life after he was fatally injured in an auto accident that she persuaded the local mortuary to allow her to take his body to the church where Bonnke was preaching. On the third day after the accident, Ekechukwu's body was taken in its coffin to the church in Ontisha, where Bonnke was preaching at a service. The body was taken out of its coffin and put on a table in the church's conference center, where several pastors began to pray, and were amazed when the man started to breathe again as they prayed for him.

Senior pastor Pat Nwachkuw, Sr. tells that when members of the church learned about Ekechwuku's resurrection, a woman who had been on crutches threw them away and started running, and her husband ran to the church altar to ask God to forgive him his sins.

Ekechukwu says when he was being taken to the hospital in the ambulance, he was visited by two angels and taken to heaven. There he saw a "multitude" of people dressed in white who were singing and praising God. Then he was taken to hell, he says.

The angel told him that he had "another chance" to go back, and that the rich man's request to Lazarus—to warn those still alive about hell—had been "granted to this generation." Ekechukwu said that he had been told he could return to the living to give "a last warning to this generation."

In commentary on the video, Bonnke says that the testimony, which has been reported in Nigerian newspapers, spoke of "stubborn faith and the miracle power of Jesus." Ekechukwu's story is a "sign from heaven," he says.

Reinhard Bonnke described the incident on television, saying, "This resurrection was granted to this generation because the coming of the Lord is so near." His Web site where the video can be obtained is at <http://www.cfan.org/>.

Example # 4. This is the testimony of a lady named Lisa Rae. These are her exact words as sent to me (and her abbreviations and capitalizations).

On December 1st, 2000, at the age of 39, I had a massive heart attack. I was brought to a little hospital here in my hometown that doesn't even have a cath lab. At first they thought I was having gall bladder problems, but after blood cultures were done every so often they realized and at 4:23 a.m. to proceed to find a cardiologist...luckily there was a doc listening to a scanner 30 miles away at another hospital. He came quickly. They took me by ambulance to a cath lab. Brought me into surgery and started the angioplasty...I was a little shocked that they were not going to put me to sleep. I laid there with these 9 monitors over my gurney, watching as the doctor explained his every move to me. I knew it was amazing to watch the dye light up my arteries and see the wire travel through my body and I never felt a thing. As he got to my heart...I saw my life beating...I thought of all the things I had done and how I had changed. I had recently given my life, that heart, back to God. I asked him to come into my heart, I was baptized, and I received the power of the Holy Ghost and had been able to sing in tongues only 3 months before. As all this was going through my mind, the doc tells me, "Lisa, your main artery that feeds blood to your heart is 95% blocked, that is like I-10 being shut down, so I am going to have to put a stint in it to hold it open" I asked him to put me to sleep. He told me he couldn't but that I would be fine. He needed me awake. So I started praying. There were 18 people in that operating room, and every eye was on those monitors. He was getting the stint in place, and he said, "OK, Lisa you are going to feel a heavy sensation on your chest, you are going to feel like you can't breath, your legs and arms are going to go numb, and you will have a bad headache, this will only last a minute while I inflate the balloon to get the stint in place" I said "OK, doc, I am ready. Lets do it." It happened so fast, my eyes were glued to that monitor, and then it happened...my artery tore...my heart stopped and yet I was still awake. I felt 36 hands on me and heard everyone in that room began to pray. I knew I was going to die. The doctor jumped up and ran to the phone to consult with a team in San Antonio. A nurse came in and said "Missy, if it helps you any at all your husband is out there on his knees beside the door talking to God." I closed my eyes and felt the hot tears of helplessness and love began to slide down the sides of my head. I went to a very dark place and felt the "presence." I talked with Jesus. I was so relaxed and calm and I felt so beautiful and I didn't want to go back. I wanted to go forward but Jesus told me, "NO MY CHILD, THIS IS NOT YOUR TIME, YOU HAVE A JOB TO DO. GO AND START WITH YOUR CHILDREN, TELL THEM, SHOW THEM, BY YOUR EXAMPLE, TELL THE WORLD I AM COMING SOON, VERY SOON. YELL IT FROM THE MOUNTAINS. GO BACK TO THE STREETS, ONLY THIS TIME, I WILL BE YOUR HIGH, I

HAVE BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE DEPTHS OF HELL AND GIVEN YOU A MESSAGE. TELL MY PEOPLE I HAVE PREPARED A PLACE FOR THEM. I LIVE. I LIVE IN YOU. OPEN YOUR HEART TO ME. KEEP YOUR EYES ON ME. GO BACK MY CHILD OF GOD FOR I WILL SEE YOU SOON." I confessed all my sins to Jesus that day. I was in His presence what seemed like forever. It was beautiful and I didn't want to come back but I knew I must obey. I opened my eyes as they were going in through my artery in my neck, they butted another stint up against the other and it held. There was not a dry eye in that room. They all knew I should have died. They all knew a miracle had just been performed. I have the minutes from the operating room with all my medical records...my heart was stopped for 6 minutes...I can tell you all...that 6 minutes I spent with Jesus seemed like a zillion of my lifetimes....ya all know what they say about Eternity? It's FOREVER.... MY REQUEST... Please if anyone has an ear let him hear...HE IS COMING...JESUS IS COMING...AND HE IS COMING SOON...DO NOT BE LUKEWARM...GET INTO YOUR BIBLE...FALL ON YOUR KNEES...TELL EVERYONE YOU SEE. The devil knows his days are numbered and he is out to kill, steal, and destroy as many souls as he can...please, please don't let it be yours... GOD LOVES YOU... JUST ASK HIM... GOD, PLEASE SHOW ME THE WAY TO YOU, COME INTO MY HEART, I BELIEVE YOU SENT YOUR ONLY SON JESUS CHRIST TO DIE FOR MY SINS ON THE CROSS, I BELIEVE HE SHED HIS BLOOD ON CALVARY AND BY HIS BLOOD I AM CLEAN. I ACCEPT YOU LORD, I LOVE YOU AND I THANK YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS. AMEN. In HIS Beautiful Grace and Mercy

(Note: If this is not enough to motivate us to tell others, I don't know what is. We are very blessed not to need a massive heart attack or to get hit upside the head with a 2 X 4 to get this message. God has gently given us the message. Let us tell others. Jesus saves, and He is coming soon!)

Daughter's growths disappear. Speaker/writer Norvel Hayes tells about how God supernaturally removed over 30 growths from his daughter's body. He had prayed about them for a long time but there had been no change. Then the Lord gave him revelation on how to pray and reminded him that he was responsible for everything that went on in his house. Hayes relates what happened then:

I went to my daughter and I cursed the roots of those growths on her body. I told them 'In Jesus' name, you must die. You are in my house and you must die.' After saying this for 30 days, nothing happened; in fact, the growths looked worse. But I kept on. Finally after 40 days, God's power came into my house and swept over my daughter's body. That afternoon my daughter had come in from high school and walked into her bedroom. All of a sudden, I heard a noise like the dresser falling over. She came running out of her room and down the hallway screaming, "Daddy, Daddy, this is spooky. This scares me, Daddy. Look at me. Look! Look at my legs. Look at my arms. All of the growths are

gone! I have new skin on me.” From *How to Live and Not Die*, Norvel Hayes (1987, Harrison House, Inc., Tulsa).

Cancer healing. The following is an excerpt of the testimony of a dear, elderly gentleman named Hal Weeks. I have spoken with Mr. Weeks, a delightful man. His story below is on the Internet at <http://home.san.rr.com/healing/mystory.htm>. If you are on the Internet, Hal has many other miraculous healing testimonies and references. His testimony follows:

This is the story of my healing of cancer without medical intervention, except for diagnosis and an initial radiation treatment, which did not cure me.

In July 1971, at the age of 58, I discovered a lump in my left groin about the size of a large olive. This was diagnosed to be a lymphoma or cancer of the lymphatic system. It was treated with cobalt for a period of 21 days. I continued to have periodic check-ups until early in 1975.

As time went on I discovered several nodes in my neck and under my right arm that seemed to be growing. In August, 1977, at the age of 64, a large node was removed from my right armpit. It was diagnosed as a poorly differentiated nodular lymphoma. I was then referred to an oncologist for treatment. However, he agreed to defer any treatment on the basis of my belief that I had been divinely healed. I was scheduled to return in three months. When I returned, he could find no evidence of the cancer. He said, "If I were examining you for the first time, I would have diagnosed you as not having the disease."

I continued having periodic check-ups until August, 1982, at age 69, at which time he transferred me back to my family doctor. Then in 1995 I discovered two large lumps over the right collarbone. It was determined to be lymphoma that had apparently returned. I did not have a biopsy since I did not plan to have medical intervention and the surgeon said there would therefore be no point in it. Again, I turned it over to the Lord.

After six months, during which time the tumors increased in size and number, I began to have second thoughts about medical treatment. As clear as I have ever heard the Lord speak, He said "I thought you had turned it over to me." I repented of my concerns and again trusted God for a healing. It stopped getting worse for two months, at which time the Lord said it would be gone in three months, and it was.

Since then I have had many other conditions healed, again without medical intervention. There has been no further reoccurrence of the cancer.... I am now 88 years old. (Note: As of this writing, he is at least age 89.)

Healings in Brazil. This is from Becky Hitt, through Mr. Weeks, above.

(Husband) Bill and I had been hearing about the wonderful healings God was doing in nations with low economic conditions. So at the end of May, we traveled with Global Awakening to Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Belo is about 150 miles north of Rio de Janeiro. It is a city of 2.5 million. We ministered in one Four Square Church, one Methodist church, and three Baptist churches while there.

What occurred during those meeting was awesome, something that we had never experienced to this degree. Pains and medical conditions, some as old as 30 years, disappeared. Many of the people did not know what their conditions were as they could not afford to go to a doctor. Others had been to a doctor and had been told nothing could be done for their condition. Many had prayed before coming to the meeting. Most came with high expectations (faith) that they would be healed. It seemed like everyone we touched was healed and it wasn't just us that was experiencing this. All fourteen team members were experiencing the same thing. God even used two people who had NEVER prayed for the sick. Many (including Bill) had the privilege of feeling tumors reduce in size and finally disappear as they had their hands on them. What a wonderful God we serve!!

During the Sunday morning service, we were the busiest. People were crowded around the ministry team members patiently waiting their turn for prayer. There were so many and so little time before our bus was to leave. (On this particular day, we had not brought any cash with us to take a taxi back to the hotel if we missed our bus.) So we prayed the shortest prayers ever as time for departure neared. God still honored the prayers and continued to heal. This same morning, a 35-year-old woman approached us with her arm in a sling. She had her arm all bandaged from above her elbow to her fingertips. All we understood from our interpreter was that she was in tremendous pain and that her painkillers were not helping. So we prayed until all the pain was gone (4-5 minutes). Then we sent her up to give her testimony for the videotape.

Later on the bus, our leader, Randy Clark, talked about a woman with a scar at her elbow and forearm wrapped in bandages. We looked at each other, then asked if we could see the video tape. We saw the woman for whom we had prayed. The full story was that as a result of an accident three years earlier, she had lost the use of her arm. There was great pain in her shoulder if she tried to move it. The elbow, wrist, hand, and fingers were frozen. She said that she'd had twenty-three operations and twenty infections. The result was that the doctor said that she'd never use her arm again. Obviously, her doctor did not know about Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals!!! As she was giving her testimony, it seemed as if she was being healed right on camera. As she said each thing that she couldn't do before, she started doing it! It wasn't long before she appeared to have full mobility of that arm, hand and fingers. Everyone around her was so excited they started to jump and scream. It was thrilling to see God perform this right on camera. God's love, mercy, healing, and grace were abundantly released.

More cancer healed. Several years ago I was privileged to meet and hear Jim Glennon, whom I previously mentioned is a retired canon of St. Andrew's Cathedral of the Anglican Church in Australia and now well into his 70s or more. Jim has had a healing ministry in that church for many years and has witnessed many supernatural healings. Then he began traveling and speaking on the subject, sharing the biblical principles of healing, and testimonies. One testimony he shares in his book is about Marion Summers, a member of his church and healing ministry. She suddenly became acutely sick and was diagnosed with advanced cancer of the uterus. Jim explains that one of the clergy and two lay people from the church visited her in the hospital, laid hands on Marion, anointed her, and prayed this simple prayer, "Thank you, Father, for your promise of healing. We accept this now and believe it for and with Marion. By faith we affirm that she has received the answer to this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen."

A few days later they went to see her again. Marion was sitting on the side of the bed with a radiant smile. She said, "I have wonderful news. On Tuesday, as soon as our prayer concluded, my body was filled with a burning and vibrating heat, which lasted for two hours. I knew I was being healed! Today I was taken to the theatre to have radium inserted around the tumour, but the doctors could find no trace of the cancer. They were amazed, and they have told me so." Marion was discharged from the hospital without further treatment.

Jim Glennon's excellent book, *Your Healing is Within You*, is available from Bridge Publishing (possibly from www.amazon.com).

Breast lump disappears. Friend Janie in Florida was scheduled to have a biopsy for a lump in her breast. She is a prayer warrior, and she had others praying. When she went into the hospital, the doctors discovered that the lump had totally disappeared! There was not even a trace of it. The doctors had no explanation (but we have)!

The miracles of Blood! Retired U.S. Army officer and personal friend William Carr (Bill) Blood has experienced many miracles in his life, which he has documented in his book, *Miracles! More Than Believing*. One experience that changed his thinking was when he was at a "healing service" and saw a cross-eyed baby prayed for by the evangelist. After the prayer, the baby's eyes were perfectly straight. Bill saw this from only 18 inches away. He knew that a baby cannot fake this and that he had seen a bona fide miracle. Many others followed.

One time Bill had developed a large ganglion cyst under the skin of his right wrist. The doctor told him it was like an octopus, with tentacles growing out from it to nearby bones. Several weeks of pain and many aspirins later, while trying to decide whether to have surgery, he was listening to a tape recording of a church service that had taken place a month before. The speaker told everyone who had a health problem to put their hand on the part of their body that needed to be healed. Bill says, "I put my hand over my right wrist and closed my eyes. The speaker prayed for God's healing and I lifted my left hand. I looked at my right wrist in amazement! The lump was gone!" Bill says that for the next ten days he could feel the muscles under the skin of his arm and hand moving

back over the bones, and every day he felt the space where the tentacles had been become smaller and smaller.

Bill's book is full of many more miracles and is currently available by calling him at 407-876-3793, or Lift Jesus Higher Ministry, Inc. at 770-832-2102 (or try www.amazon.com).

Congenital eye defect healed. In my home Bible study previously mentioned, a neighbor couple, Bob and Barbara Smith, also in the Air Force, began attending. They had recently adopted a beautiful and tiny Korean girl, Sarah. But Sarah had a noticeable defect in both eyes from birth. Arrangements had been made for surgery. But one night they brought Sarah to our Bible study for prayer. Our study leader, Clay Hudson, an elder at our church, laid hands on Sarah, just like in the Bible, and prayed a simple prayer for her eyes. To everyone's astonishment, her eye problem corrected itself right before our own eyes! A visit back to the doctor confirmed that the problem was corrected and surgery was no longer needed. Sarah is grown and married now, but many years later, Bob, with whom I am still in contact, recalls that story with emotion.

Numerous supernatural healings. Many healings of various sicknesses are documented in the outstanding book, *Christ the Healer*, by the late F.F. Bosworth (1973, Fleming H. Revell, Grand Rapids, Michigan). These include cancers, vision restored, lameness, nervous breakdown, Bright's disease, high blood pressure, and others. This book is highly recommended and is available in bookstores and on amazon.com.

Personal testimonies

Below are some of my personal testimonies of healings, miracles and God's intervention.

Legs and arms grow out before my eyes! One day years ago I saw an evangelist with a ministry of miracles and healings pray for people who had one leg or arm shorter than the other and the Lord lengthened them right before our eyes. I personally witnessed it. It was uncanny. Shortly later during the latter years of my career in the U.S. Air Force, I was on TDY (temporary duty) to Warner-Robbins Air Force Base in Georgia. I met a sharp young captain, an Air Force Academy graduate, who was a squadron commander, and who I discovered was a Spirit-filled Christian. He prayed for me and I saw both a leg and an arm grow out close to an inch. I was so filled with faith in God's power that when I got back home I shared it with my home Bible study, and the Lord began to do the same thing for us. In that group and with others, I probably saw this happen a half dozen times following my prayer. This experience taught me that *faith is contagious*. These testimonies will inspire others to be bold in their faith, and they will see similar results.

One day I learned about an older lady in my church who was incapacitated from a severe back problem and was almost an invalid. I felt a nudge of the Holy Spirit leading and boldness to visit her and pray for her healing. I knocked on the door and waited. Slowly, she finally opened the door, standing before me on crutches. I explained the purpose of

my visit and she was delighted. I asked her to sit down so I could take a look at the length of her legs. She obliged, and I was shocked to see that one leg was shorter by about three full inches, not the one inch or less as I had previously seen. At first I was intimidated, but I thought that if one inch was not too hard for God, then three inches would not be either. I started praying, commanding the leg to grow out in Jesus' name, and I kept praying for 3-4 minutes. Nothing happened at first but suddenly the leg began to grow, and in seconds both legs were the exact same length! The Lord healed her back at the same time because she got up, walked normally, and never used her crutches after that. She threw them away.

A young lady worked in an office adjacent to mine at the Christian Broadcasting Network. Due to a severe burn several years earlier, one arm was several inches shorter than the other. She let me pray for her and within seconds the arm grew out to a normal length. It was another miracle, a major one, by God's power.

This one is really bizarre. Our church was having a series of revival meetings with an evangelist from South Africa who had a ministry of healing and miracles. One fellow in the church had a severe birth defect—a deformed arm, which was markedly shrunken and only about half the length of the other arm. Before this revival meeting, he had made up his mind that he was going to get a miracle new arm! He got in the long healing line on the stage of the high school where the meeting was being held. He waited about 30 minutes before it was his turn to be prayed for. Finally, he reached the front of the line. The evangelist held his withered arm and prayed, and all of a sudden the withered arm shot out to normal length! However, a split-second later, it retracted back as before. I clearly saw what happened, and so did others, and we were all mystified. Oddly, no one ever mentioned a word of it later. However, I believe the Lord showed me later what happened. It was like Peter walking on the water. Peter had the faith to step out of the boat and walked on the water momentarily, but when he began to take his eyes off Jesus and look at the circumstances and physical reality, he began to sink. He lost his miracle. Jesus saved him, but said, “You of little faith. Why did you doubt.” (Matthew 14:28-31). I believe the normal arm was such a shock to him that his faith suddenly evaporated and, like Peter, he could not hold on to his miracle. Moral of this story: If we get a miracle by radical faith, we must hold on to it with radical faith.

Cancerous-looking mole drops off. In Chapter 1, I said: “I had a mole on my chest for many years. One day I noticed that it began to look suspicious. It became darker and funny looking, a warning sign the magazines tell you about, one that would normally cause one to run to the dermatologist to have it removed and a biopsy made, with dreaded results. My natural mind thought, ‘cancer,’ and fear tried to come upon me. But my supernatural mind kicked in one morning while shaving and I released the power into it. The very next morning, while shaving again, the mole suddenly dropped off into the wash basin and washed down the drain. There was not even any scar tissue left to tell where it was. It was like a baby's skin. Later I will tell you how I did it. You can do it too.”

How did I do it? Well, I remembered Jesus' words in Mark 16:17-18: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall... lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Standing there shaving, looking at the mole in the mirror, I thought to myself, "There is nothing in the passage that says I cannot do that to myself. I believe, I am sick, and I can lay hands on myself just like it says." So I did. I laid my hand on the mole, spoke healing to it, claimed God's promise, commanded the mole to wither and die, just like Jesus did to the barren fig tree, and said amen. You know the rest of the story.

Cancerous-looking sore heals. Years later I had a small sore on my face near my eye. It had been there for years, but one day blood began to run from it. I never went to the doctor, but an M.D. friend suggested I do so because he thought it looked cancerous. But as I usually do, I go to Dr. Jesus, the best doctor I know about. I prayed the same prayer as with the above mole, the bleeding soon stopped, and I was healed.

Severe burn healed supernaturally. One day I was cutting my lawn when I decided to adjust the height of the mower blade. With my left hand I reached down to pick up the new mower so with my right hand I could adjust the first wheel. With searing pain, I suddenly realized that my left hand had inadvertently grabbed the hot muffler. Being a new mower, I was not that familiar with it, and the muffler location was not readily apparent, being somewhat camouflaged. I jerked my hand back and the pain was extremely excruciating on the full palm and all my fingers. Within a period of about 10 seconds, two contrary thoughts rushed through my mind.

THOUGHT NUMBER 1. Severe burn. Blisters about to arise. Rush to the emergency room for burn treatment. I envisioned a bandaged, useless hand for several weeks. (I have a big burn scar on my right arm where it accidentally touched a mower muffler about 20 years ago in a similar accident.)

THOUGHT NUMBER 2. No, I reject that. I will immediately apply God's healing Word to it and claim my healing. No problem. I actually saw this as a potential testimony of God's power.

OBSERVATION: The palm and fingers of my left hand were beet red. I could see where blisters were about to pop through. The pain was terrible.

ACTION: Within seconds, I laid my right hand on my injured left hand according to Mark 16:18 and claimed my healing. I began to confess healing Scriptures, such as Matthew 8:17 and 1 Peter 2:24. I continued to confess these Scriptures.

OBSERVATION: The pain was still there, and the hand looked terrible, but the prayer of faith seemed to be blocking the blisters.

ACTION: I have learned to receive healings just by myself based on God's Word, but I know that prayers of agreement with fellow believers can always help. I spoke on the

telephone with a friend in Texas and asked him to pray. He prayed a powerful, authoritative prayer. As soon as we hung up, I was shocked to see that the appearance of my hand had suddenly changed during his prayer. It was more normal looking, and there was no sign of the earlier beginning blister formation. A great improvement. A few minutes later I spoke with a pastor friend in Kentucky. Ron added another powerful prayer, and when I hung up there was even more improvement in the appearance, and less pain.

Some pain continued throughout the rest of the day, but there were no blisters or breaks in the skin. By bedtime, the hand was looking normal, but there was still some pain. By morning, the hand looked perfectly normal and all pain was gone. A miracle!

Back suddenly healed. Some years ago, I was suffering from chronic lower back pain. I knew what God said in His Word about healing, and one day I decided because of God's Word I didn't have to take the pain any more. I decided to take my Bible and go upstairs to my bedroom, lock the door, and not come out until I got my healing. I was totally determined and was confident of both God's power and willingness to heal me. After being locked in the bedroom for awhile and reading the Bible, all of a sudden my eyes fell on a verse I had read many times before, but it never held any significance for me. But this time, it was as though the words were illuminated, not literally, but they just jumped out at me. They were from Hebrews 12:13: "And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." Suddenly my back pain was totally gone! I had received my healing, via the power of a *rhema* word from God.

Heart healed. One day over ten years ago, I began to have irregular heartbeats. This went on for several weeks and I became quite concerned. But I never went to the doctor because I was trusting God to take care of it. One day at a large church I was visiting, the congregation was singing and the words of the song were projected upon the front wall. The song included a Scripture, from Psalm 73:26: "God is the strength of my heart." Now I had read that Scripture before. I liked it, but it never meant anything personal to me. But on that particular day in that particular church, God spoke to me. Those words, "God is the strength of my heart," were a *rhema* word to me from God. The symptoms suddenly disappeared during that service and never returned!

Rheumatoid arthritis healed. Several years ago, my wife came down with painful and debilitating rheumatoid arthritis. She could barely walk, and even then with great pain. I anointed her with oil and prayed the prayer of faith over her as described in Chapter 7. She believed for her healing, but felt like the Lord might want to heal her through a doctor. She went to one of the most respected arthritis specialists in Central Florida. The doctor told her, "There is no known cause and no known cure." So much for conventional medicine. My wife rejected what the doctor said, saying in her heart, "I know there is a cause and I know Jesus is my healer." The doctor prescribed a drug for her, which through her own research, my wife discovered had serious side effects, as almost all drugs do, which would later require another drug, and another drug, ad infinitum. She refused to take the drug. She decided to hold to God's promise in Exodus

15:26: “I am the LORD that healeth thee.” One day she suddenly felt a great peace envelop her and she had an inner knowing that God was going to heal her. She then wanted to pray that God would give us a Christian doctor, which we did. We soon saw an advertisement in the newspaper for a doctor that uses alternative medicine, which we had come to believe in, because God’s natural ways are always better. She made an appointment, and we prayed that God would confirm that this was the right person. We discovered immediately that he was a committed Christian. And in contrast to the first doctor, one of the first things he said was, “Let’s see what the root of the problem is. I want to get to the root of the problem.” He then explained some possible causes that conventional medicine rejects. He put her on a natural regimen, with supplements, and within about three months there was remarkable improvement. All her symptoms continued to disappear, and in about 10 months she was totally healed, with no symptoms, and they have never returned! But while natural means were used, we both give credit to the Lord for this “supernatural” healing, and we trace her healing back to our prayers. Another miracle is that even though she could barely get out of the car and up the small steps to her job, she never missed one day of work, except to go to the doctor. That was supernatural enabling.

Co-worker healed. A young man I worked with shared with me in my office one day that he had a long-term problem with depression that was really affecting his life. I asked if he would like to have Jesus heal him. He said yes. I closed the office door, got out my bottle of anointing oil (not always necessary), anointed him, laid hands on him, and prayed the prayer of faith over him, claiming God’s healing. While not in accord with his denomination, he was a little surprised by all this, but he thanked me, and left. He did not mention it for several months, and I was waiting on him to say something. Finally, one day he came to see me privately and said that ever since I prayed for him he had not had any problems. He was very happy with what Jesus had done for him.

Near-death teenager healed at point of “pulling the plug.” Several years ago my wife’s 13-year-old cousin in another city came down with brain encephalitis and was in a coma for several weeks, with absolutely no response coming from her. She was on life support. The outlook was grim. One day the doctors admitted giving up hope and recommended “pulling the plug” to the parents—that the life support be removed, allowing her to die. Hearing this from another city, I was able to reach the mother by telephone near her daughter’s bed. I urged the mother, “Don’t do it! Let’s trust God for this healing.” I asked if she could put the phone to her daughter’s ear, because I had been told that people in a coma could actually hear. I wanted to speak God’s healing words into her ear and spirit. But the mother said that was not possible. So I asked that the mother just touch the daughter and let me pray with her, which she did, and I did. After I hung up, I marshaled an army of powerful intercessors for the girl on the Internet, which kept praying. One day about 2-3 weeks later, to everyone’s shock, the girl suddenly popped out of her coma, sat up in bed and exclaimed, “Where’s daddy. I’m hungry.” The crisis was over. A short while later she was back home and in school again.

Aircraft emergency averted. In Chapter 1, I said, “A few years ago I was on a commercial jet airliner when a serious mechanical problem developed just after takeoff

from Orlando International. The pilot announced over the speakers that we should prepare for a crash landing. An older lady seated next to me was almost hysterical with fear. I gently put my hand on her hand and said, ‘Ma’am, everything is going to be all right. Jesus has assured me.’ I knew, because I had released the power into the situation. Astonishingly, just a minute later the captain came on the speaker and said that everything was now back to normal! He gave no explanation. We were both stunned at this miraculous manifestation of the power.”

This reminds me of the saying, “Fear knocked at my door. I sent faith to answer, and no one was there.”

How did I do that? Well, I believed God had led me to take that trip, for a purpose, which had not been fulfilled. Therefore, I was not rattled when the emergency occurred and had an inward assurance that everything would be okay. I knew that God would take care of it. When it happened, I simply thanked God that He was in control and that He was going to keep me safe, and thus the airplane and its passengers safe. I thanked Him for the angels, which He had given charge over me (Psalm 91:11). By faith, I knew they were there and I knew we were safe. I simply told the lady what I knew, and my faith through my words released God’s power into that situation. But as a former pilot, I was shocked at the quickness with which the mechanical problem disappeared. It remained a mystery. But I know God’s power solved the problem.

Miracle of multiplying food. I love the verse that says, “Nothing is impossible with God” (Luke 1:37, NIV). We must never limit God. He is still in the miracle business. Jesus is still multiplying the loaves and fishes just as He did in Matthew 15:35-38. A few years ago, my wife and I had a buffet dinner party for some other members of the ministry where we were working, and many came. Near the end of the dinner, the food was almost gone, but one couple was very late and had not yet arrived. It appeared that there would be no food left for them. I prayed and left it in the hands of the One to whom nothing is impossible. The late couple finally arrived and went through the food line in the kitchen as though everything was normal. I was amazed to see their plates piled high with food, which seemed in abundance. Then some others came back for seconds and thirds. It was astonishing. And like the loaves and the fishes, there was food left over. Things like this surprise us, but they should not. Experiencing God’s miracle power should be part of the normal Christian life, just like in the Bible. Jesus has not changed.

Miracle violating laws of physics. Years ago I was responsible for the 700 Club central telephone counseling center, which was staffed with volunteers. One day an eager young man came to my office carrying a big Bible. He said he wanted to be a volunteer counselor. Upon questioning, I discovered that he was only age 17. I thanked him, but being a stickler for “rules,” I told him I was sorry but we had a minimum age limit of 18, but I offered to let him sit in the counseling room so he could observe what went on. He liked the idea, so I took him there, sat him down at one of the vacant counseling positions, and made sure the telephone was off the hook so it would not ring. Later, I found out that while he was sitting there, the telephone, which was off the hook, actually rang (which was scientifically impossible). He decided to answer it, and it was a young

lady on the other end of the telephone, the exact same age, 17, and from his own denomination. She needed someone to talk to and he was just the right person to share with and pray for her concerning her need. By causing that phone to ring, which was impossible, God had miraculously overruled my legalism to accomplish His loving purposes. That day I learned a very dramatic lesson that I have never forgotten: God is in charge, not me! There were other instances of telephone calls coming in and being “randomly” routed through the telephone bank to just the right counselor for the occasion.

Divine dental work. I confess that so far I have never had the faith to believe for divine dental work. Our teeth are a part of our body and would be included in God’s promise to heal. I obviously need to grow in this area. However, I have personally witnessed God sovereignly do dental work in other people. It has been happening in many churches all over the world and has happened many times in a church I frequently visited in Oviedo, Florida, Greater Life Assembly of God Church, where I came to know the outstanding, Spirit-filled pastor, Jeff Good. I have seen it with my own eyes, usually fillings and crowns. On one occasion it happened to a visitor friend sitting next to me. Like faith, it seems to be contagious. Someone visiting from another church will experience it, then they go back to their church where it also happens. For example, a pastor from a Baptist church in another part of Florida visited this church, then when he got back home it started happening in his home church. I have observed that the dental work appears in services where the worship of Jesus is intense and expressive. A test is the effect it has on people, and it is my observation that people who experience or witness this have a renewed sense of awe and respect for the Creator and His power, and people are more turned on to praise and worship Him. This may be happening to you from just reading this paragraph. Grab your mirror and check!

I know this phenomenon has its critics and scoffers because there is no specific mention of teeth being healed in the Bible (although teeth are a part of our bodies); however, we should not limit God. He can do anything He wants to do. Why does He do this? Maybe He just enjoys it, demonstrating His power and blessing His people who dare to believe Him for the impossible.

Appendix 2

The irrefutable authority for this book

A summary of biblical apologetics

Frank H. Leavell wrote, “Christianity does not need defense; it needs proclamation.” That is a great truth. However, it is good to know the proofs of the faith. And Peter said, “Always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15, NKJV).

Biblical apologetics is the field of marshalling and presenting the many facts proving the total inspiration and reliability of the Bible as God’s holy Word. The word *apologia* means “defense.” Apologetics defends the truth of the Bible. Paradoxically, the derived word “apology” means to express regret. There is no expression of regret concerning the truth of the Bible, only praise to God for giving it to us!

It is critical that the Bible’s authority be firmly established, without a shred doubt. Or else there would be no basis for faith. Faith must be based on fact, or else it is blind faith, which we do not need.

When you are hanging out there in the realm of faith, where both circumstances and other people tell you that you are crazy, your faith must not be a blind faith, which would be foolish and would soon collapse. It must be hinged to something as solid as a rock, or it will fail you. But if your faith is based on *fact*, it cannot fail you. The faith proposed in this book is based on undisputed fact.

The information in this book is so revolutionary, it is absolutely necessary that the authoritative basis be constantly clear in the mind of the reader. Otherwise, you could not believe it, and if you cannot believe it, you cannot act upon it and receive what God has for you.

But you *are* able to believe *and* act upon it, because it is based on irrefutable fact.

If the contents of this book were just my ideas, you might as well trash it now. The world has millions of books that are just the ideas of mere humans, and few are worth more than the paper upon which they are written.

But these are not just my ideas. The principles herein come with the Ultimate Authority.

Can you think of a more final and credible authority than the Creator of the universe, the one who spoke and more than 100 billion galaxies were created, according to the findings of the Hubble telescope? That's galaxies, not planets, nor even solar systems! And for all we know, better telescopes in future generations may find hundreds of billions, or maybe trillions, more, ad infinitum. If God is infinite, why not?

God's attributes

Consider this comparison: Each of us is less than a speck in the vastness of our city or town; our city or town is but a speck on the earth; the earth is but a speck in the vastness of our solar system; our solar system is but a speck in the vastness of our galaxy; and our galaxy is but a speck in the vastness of the universe of the 100 billion or more galaxies.

This Creator has unimaginable power. And we know that He is holy, without flaw, pure and perfect. He cannot lie. You can always take what He says to the bank. He always tells the truth, without exception. The Bible says, "God is not a man, that he should lie" (Numbers 23:19).

He has revealed other attributes of Himself, such as omnipotence (all power), omniscience (all knowing), omnipresence (everywhere present), just, loving, merciful, faithful, to name a few.

God's perfect message to the world

This Super Person, God, revealed His actual personal name to Moses with the Hebrew consonants equivalent to YHWH. Scholars believe the original pronunciation was Yah'-weh, or Yahweh. A few hundred years ago this was mistakenly translated to Jehovah. In most modern Bibles, YHWH is mistranslated as "the LORD."

YHWH has given us His holy, written Word, what we call the Bible. The Bible consists of what Christians call the Old Testament, or what Jews call the Tenach, and the New Testament. Both comprise His revealed Word, considered inerrant by thousands of scholars throughout the world and throughout history.

The Bible was physically written by different humans, but it only has one Author, God Himself, who guided the thoughts and writing of those humans, His servants. Of this there can be no doubt, for the reasons stated below.

How do we know the Bible is true and from God, say, compared with other religious books that are claimed to be sacred? How do we know it can be trusted as a message from the Creator and not just a nice book full of nice religious platitudes? The evidence is overwhelming, and conclusive!

There are at least eight main reasons why we know that the Bible is from God.

- Proof from its supernatural uniqueness among all books ever written.
- Proof from archeology.
- Proof from prophecy, or the accurate prediction of future events.
- Proof from its own unique, internal claim of flawless inspiration.
- Proof from Jesus Christ Himself.
- Proof from science. (Yes, I said science!)
- Proof from mathematics. (This will blow your mind.)
- Proof from its impact on people and the world.

Finally, there is the amazing “**Factor X**,” I will tell you about.

Proof from the Bible’s supernatural uniqueness

Scholars who have studied the writings of the various religions report that the Bible is unique and distinctive for many reasons. Here are a few:

It was written over a period of at least 1,500 years, or about 40 generations.

It was written in different places on three different continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe.

It was written in three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

Its 40 authors were from different walks of life, including kings, fishermen, scholars, statesmen, and peasants.

It includes hundreds of subjects.

Yet with the above incredible diversity, the Bible has an amazing unity. This consistency and continuity (along with other characteristics described below) make the Bible logically beyond human ability to accomplish. *The presence and influence of an external Guiding Hand are necessary!*

Here is more uniqueness:

The Bible’s survivability. It has withstood attacks not given to any other book, attacks from despots, doubters, and skeptics throughout the ages. From the days of the Roman emperors to modern-day fascists, communists, and tyrants of false religions, the Bible has been outlawed and attempts have been made to stamp it out. Over 200 years ago,

Voltaire predicted the Bible's soon demise. Ironically, after his death, the Geneva Bible Society used Voltaire's printing press to publish more Bibles! The Bible is also attacked by both moral and intellectual pride. Many people have opposed the Bible because they do not want to believe that their moral condition makes them need mercy from the Supreme Being. They see their self-perceived moral goodness as qualifying them for favor from God, in a sense making them His moral equal, or debtor. Intellectual pride is also a factor. For example, it is beneath the "dignity" of many academics to think that they need a Savior. They have a surprise coming!

Number of manuscripts available. In spite of these unparalleled attempts to destroy it, the Bible has survived as the most authentic and accurate ancient document, based on both age and number of manuscripts available. Homer's *Iliad* ranks closest to the New Testament in number of manuscripts available, 643, with the earliest copy written about 500 years after the original. There are only about 10 good manuscripts of Caesar's *Gallic Wars* available and the earliest was written over 900 years after the original. By contrast, there are over 5,000 complete or partial Greek manuscripts available of the New Testament (plus over 10,000 Latin Vulgate and over 9,000 other versions), with the earliest written only 25 years after the original!

Shakespeare's 37 plays are only about 200 years old but there are said to be about 100 significant textual variants that are the subject of scholarly dispute. The New Testament is about 2,000 years old and it is estimated that there are only 20 or less such passages. Does anyone ever doubt the reliability of Shakespeare's work?

It can be concluded that if the same tests were applied to all available ancient literature, the Bible would be clearly hailed by all as by far the most reliable ancient document. Or else all other ancient literature, including the classics, would have to be rejected as unreliable!

Proof from archaeology

The science of archeology is confirming the utmost accuracy of the Scriptures as previously unknown records and artifacts are being discovered. For centuries, enemies of the Bible tried to cast doubt on its details, such as the existence of certain people and places that seemed in conflict with available knowledge. Now, just in our generation, doubts have been put aside one by one by researchers combing and digging over ancient sites.

For example, the Old Testament refers to a city that was built from solid rock. Skeptics would scoff about the reality of this unknown city, but Petra has been discovered and it is now a major tourist stop in Jordan.

In the New Testament, in Acts 13:7, the author, Luke, speaks of a "proconsul" who was the governor of Cyprus. For years many scholars thought that Luke had made a mistake in terminology because the Roman government was thought to have used the term "propraetor" instead. Recently, however, archaeology has determined that Rome did, in

fact, use the title mentioned by Luke. It was the scoffing critics, not the Bible, who were found to be in error, as they have been time after time.

The late scholar Dr. W.A. Criswell pointed out that about 200 years ago a group of French scholars listed 82 alleged “errors” in the Bible that would eventually destroy Christianity. Since then, however, archeology and the increased understanding of the ancient languages and cultural contexts have resolved each item. The Bible is now more validated than ever, and those scholars are, needless to say, dead, keeping their appointment with their Maker, the Bible’s Author.

Proof from prophecy

Prophecy, or the prediction of future events, gives the Bible an internal authenticity. This is one of the great marvels of the Bible, one that distinguishes it from all other writings.

God’s prophets spoke and wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit about future events, about nations, especially concerning God’s covenant people, Israel, and most importantly, about the coming of the Messiah. The events have occurred without fail, in detail, just as prophesied. Unlike modern-day psychics whose track record is at best no better than chance would provide, these prophets were 100 percent accurate. They could not make a mistake, the only such group in the history of the world. This confirmed the divine origin of their information.

For example, about 600 years before Christ, the prophet Ezekiel wrote about the destruction of the city of Tyre. Its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar came just a few years later. History has shown the prophecy’s amazing details to have happened; Tyre became a “bare rock” where fishermen spread their nets, and the city was never rebuilt.

There are many other such prophecies and fulfillments concerning various locations and people, such as Sidon, Edom, and Nineveh.

Many prophecies foretold the historic plight of the Hebrew people, such as their first dispersion in 586 B.C. and return under Ezra, and the later second dispersion and worldwide persecution, which was also foretold by Christ (Luke 21:24). The Bible also prophesies that they would someday return to the land from all over the earth, which many thought was impossible. Now, almost 2,000 years later, the nation of Israel was “born in a day,” May 14 1948, by an unprecedented United Nations decree. This was a fulfillment of Isaiah, who some 2,500 years earlier had written:

Who has ever heard of such a thing?... Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? (Isaiah 66:8).

The greatest and most important prophecies concern the coming of Messiah. There are some 300 detailed prophecies of both His first coming and His second coming. These include the timing of His first coming (Daniel 9:25), His deity (Isaiah 9:6), His place of birth (Micah 5:2), His suffering and crucifixion for our sins (Isaiah 53), His resurrection

(Psalm 16:10), His second coming (Zechariah 14:4), plus many other details. He first came on schedule some 2,000 years ago, and His return will be on schedule, and there are many reasons from the prophecies and signs given to believe that this event will be soon. One major sign is the miraculous reestablishment of Israel in just our generation, rendering futile all such speculation about the timing of Christ's return before May 14, 1948.

Proof from the Bible's claims about itself

Unlike any other book, the Bible consistently claims itself to be divinely inspired and to be the Word of God. For example:

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16).

Your word is truth (Psalm 119:160; John 17:17).

Every word of God proves true (Proverbs 30:5, RSV).

Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:35).

Forever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven (Psalm 119:89, KJV).

Especially relevant to the purpose of this book, the Bible says of itself:

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).

Not only does the Bible claim to be divinely inspired, in its pages the Creator even speaks in the first person! Expressions such as, "And God said..." followed by a quote appear about 3,800 times in the Old Testament alone, someone has counted.

These claims and characteristics are in a book that espouses truth, morality, and all that is good. It is illogical that such a book would be a hoax, and a conspiracy is impossible because of the vast differences in time and place of the writers and events. Also, of the large number of people involved, someone would have surely spoken up.

Proof from Jesus Christ

Previous reasons given are compelling, but this one is the most persuasive of all: The Son of God Himself believed and taught the Bible's complete inspiration and reliability. The One who is considered by even non-Christians as the wisest and most saintly person who ever lived taught the infallibility of the Bible, saying such things as, "It is written... Search the Scriptures... Have you read... Scripture cannot be broken."

He spoke of the total accuracy of even the “jot” and “tittle,” the smallest characters of the Hebrew alphabet.

He spoke confidently about past events and people, such as Noah and the ark, Jonah and the whale, Abraham and Moses. The holy Son of God could not deceive, nor was He ignorant, having all knowledge.

Even after His resurrection, in His glorified body, Christ taught the infallibility of the Scriptures. On one occasion, He rebuked His disciples for being “slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets have spoken.” (He said *all*, not some!)

Of course, in Jesus’ day, there was no New Testament, which was written later under His direction. But He placed His stamp of authority on it by anticipation when He told the disciples,

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you (John 14:26).

Proof from science

The Bible does not claim to be a science book, yet it contains scientific truth, revealed supernaturally to its writers centuries before humans discovered those truths.

For example, only in relative recent years has science understood the cycles of water, how it evaporates, then collects in the clouds, then comes back to earth as rain or snow. However, God revealed this in Job 36:27-28:

He draws up the drops of water, which distill as rain to the streams.

Job lived over 3,500 years ago. Another example is the biblical revelation that the earth is round, and not flat, as believed until recent history:

He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth (Isaiah 40:22).

And that the actual life of our flesh is in our blood:

For the life of a creature is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11).

When the Bible does address a scientific matter that may seem contrary to today’s understanding, it would be wise to believe it. A contemporary example is the theory of evolution—that man evolved from some prehistoric, random collision of molecules, then apes—which even contradicts known scientific principles and the fossil record, but yet is foolishly taught as truth in our educational systems by those who do not want to acknowledge a moral God to whom they will be accountable.

Proof from mathematics

Could God have actually left his signature on the book He authored? The evidence suggests so.

More work needs to be done on this subject, and at the current time it is controversial. Nevertheless, many brilliant and credible Bible scholars, mathematicians, and computer scientists believe it is true.

Beginning at least as early as the 1800s and through today, gifted people have made exhaustive studies in the original Hebrew and Greek languages of the ancient Bible manuscripts. These researchers claim their results prove that the writings had to have come from an infinite and omniscient Mind.

One person who studied this phenomenon was a Russian immigrant and Harvard graduate, Dr. Ivan Panin, who spent 50 years and accumulated 43,000 pages of notes on the subject before he died in 1942. A more recently published work is *Theomatics*, by Jerry Lucas and Del Washburn.

Unlike English, in both Hebrew and Greek, the main languages in which God chose to give us the Bible, numbers are not separate characters but are represented by letters of the alphabet. For example, in Greek, the first letter “alpha” (for the English A) is also the number 1. Panin and others have gone to the manuscripts and have assigned the appropriate numerical value for each letter, then they looked for patterns.

The results are mind-boggling—patterns of numbers that could not have been placed there by humans and probability theory analysis shows that such an elaborate “accident” is impossible. For example, in the first verse of the Bible, Panin found 30 different patterns of the number seven, a number the Bible gives special significance. In English, the verse has ten words, but in Hebrew, only seven. The seven words have exactly 28 (4×7) letters. The nouns in the sentence give a combined 777 (111×7). The two objects of the verb have seven letters, and so on. The chance of 30 combinations of seven in a seven-word sentence happening accidentally is described as 1 in 33,000,000,000,000.

According to an Associated Press report a few years ago, after subjecting the first five books of the Bible to exhaustive computer analysis, researchers in Israel came to an amazing conclusion. The Torah, or the five books of Moses, had long been assumed by skeptics to be the work of mere men and multiple authors. But Scripture scholar Moshe Katz and computer expert Menachem Wiener of the Israel Institute of Technology analyzed the book's material through sophisticated computer analysis. They discovered an intricate pattern of meaningful words hidden in those books, spelled by letters separated at fixed intervals, the phenomenon called “equidistant letter spacing (ELS).” For example, in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Jewish Torah, the word “Torah” is found repeated at 50-character intervals and “Elohim” (God) at 26-character intervals. It would have been impossible for a mere mortal to have done this, and statistically it could not have happened by chance. Mr. Wiener said, “We need a non-

rational explanation. And ours is that the (Torah) was written by God through the hand of Moses."

In all of this, it appears that the omniscient Creator left a persuasive signature on his Word, making the apostle Paul's statement even more graphic and understandable: "*All Scripture is God-breathed.*"

Proof from impact

No other book has had the impact for good as has the Bible.

No other book answers the basic questions of life, such as: Where did the world come from? Where did I come from? What is the meaning of life? What happens after I die?

No other book has caused more construction of hospitals, schools, and orphanages as has the Bible.

No other book champions freedom as does the Bible. Western civilization and concepts of political freedom came from the Bible. For that reason, political and religious despots hate it and try to stamp it out.

No other book has brought comfort, peace, purpose, and joy to billions, and radically changed lives, as has the Bible.

No other book proclaims moral law as does the Bible, promises eternal justice for those who disregard it, yet offers a merciful method, if accepted, of acquittal – the provision being the substitutionary sacrifice of God's only Son. Former Cambridge University professor of philosophy Derek Prince calls the Bible "the most logical book in the world."

If a major attribute of God is love, as the Bible declares, the positive fruits of love that have come forth from the Bible are major evidences that God is the author. People who have committed violence falsely in the name of Christianity were not followers of Jesus Christ, who said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35).

"Factor X"

Collectively, the above empirical reasons are overwhelming proof that the Bible was written by God through the hands of men. But there is one factor, or reason—what I call Factor X—that transcends the empirical. It is "revelational." It is evidence directly given to an individual's spirit and mind by the Holy Spirit. God speaks directly to that person and confirms to them that His Word is true and reliable.

In fact, the previous eight reasons will not work by themselves. They help, but one cannot believe unless the Holy Spirit confirms and places His truth within us.

For example, the Bible says:

No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3).

No one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Luke 10:22).

Blessed art thou... for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 16:17, KJV).

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:44).

Christianity is unique among religions in that it is the only one where faith comes only by “revelation” from the Creator. Other religions are based on false legends and the traditions of men, often culturally driven.

In an article titled, “How do you know the Bible is true?” David Kupelian, vice-president and managing editor of *WorldNetDaily* wrote:

In every truly sincere person ("sincere" as in humble-before-your-Creator, not as in so-deluded-you-can't-see-your-delusions) there is an inner witness, a wordless knowing, a quiet confirmation of all truth, including the Bible. Indeed, when all is said and done, you know the Bible is true because *you just know deep down that it is true*. It's a matter of quiet inner revelation, direct to your heart and mind from the source of all true revelation.

If you do not believe the Bible, it is not because you do not have enough supporting facts. There are more than you need. It is because you have chosen to block out that revelation from God.

What will cause a person to block out this revelation from God? There are several, such as: wrong motives, looking for an argument, not really seeking Him, holding on to some sin, seeking justification for a sin, pride, and many others.

The late A.W. Tozer says it very bluntly:

I do not believe anyone has ever rejected Jesus Christ on philosophical grounds. Israel did not reject the Lord because of philosophical reasons. Israel's rejection was for moral reasons. The man who continues in his rejection of Christ has a pet sin somewhere—he's in love with iniquity. He rejects Jesus on moral grounds, and then hides behind false philosophy—philosophical grounds.... When we fall in love with our sin, we can imagine and manufacture 10,000 syllogisms to keep

us away from the cross. A blind man can argue that there is no sunshine, but when he gets his sight, the sunshine floods in! How wonderful it is that when a person gives up his sin and puts his pride under his feet and looks at the light, the whole body and mind are flooded with light. I have talked with people who have come out of rationalism and atheism and all the rest—and they smile at you with clear eyes and say, "Oh, it is wonderful now; the light has flooded in."

If you want to believe and know the truth about God, His Son Jesus Christ, and God's plan for history, simply go to God with a humble and repentant heart and ask. Jesus said:

So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened (Luke 11:9-10).

God also said:

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Conclusion

Each of the various philosophical arguments for God's existence, such as the argument from design (the complex design proves an intelligent Designer), and the argument for first cause (that all effects must be ultimately traced to an intelligence that was the first cause of all effects), is conclusive enough, but collectively, all the arguments are absolutely overwhelming.

The same logic applies to the Bible. Each of the above individual arguments is enough, but collectively they overwhelmingly reveal that the Bible is clearly the authoritative Word of God, totally reliable and true.

The information presented in this book is so revolutionary and radical, it is absolutely necessary that its authoritative basis, the Bible, be constantly clear in the mind of the reader. Otherwise, you could not believe it and receive God's promises.

Believe it.

Suggested reading:

Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999) (also, *New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, 1999).

The Case for Christ and *The case for Faith*, Lee Stroebel (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998, 2000 respectively).

What If The Bible Had Never Been Written? D. James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998).

Why I Preach the Bible is Literally True, W.A. Criswell (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1969).

Appendix 3

How this power can instantly give you a new life!

(How to be born again)

Introduction. Jesus said, “You must be born again.” Absolutely nothing is more important in life than being born again of the Spirit of God, knowing Him personally, being saved from eternal death and judgement, and knowing for sure that you are going to heaven, experiencing God's pardon, purpose, peace, power. These are all a blessing of grace (unmerited favor) provided by the sacrifice of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (Hebrew: Yeshua haMeschiah).

This is the "gospel," which literally means "good news." It truly is "the most joyful news ever announced," as the angels proclaimed at His birth some 2,000 years ago.

Some say that this free gift of grace offered by God is too good to be true. Well, it is good, and it is true. Only an infinitely loving and all-powerful God could have conceived of this! Others say that all this surely cannot be free, and we have to add something to it. Cults and non-Christian religions always try to add to it, an offense to God and what His Son did. There is nothing we can add to His great sacrifice.

Why did God do it? Because He loves you, and He wants you to spend eternity with Him in heaven. Don't miss out!

Steps to salvation

1. **God's love.** The Bible reveals that God loves you very much. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full” (John 10:10).
2. **Man's separation from God.** God is holy, perfect, and pure. Humans are sinful and imperfect. We are separated from God; thus, we cannot know Him without His intervention. “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). In this state we would be separated from Him forever, in spiritual darkness, in a place or state of existence the Bible calls hell.
3. **God's solution.** God is perfect justice. He cannot violate His own attributes, one of which is perfect justice. But He is also perfect love, and He longs to bless us and fellowship with us. Did God have a dilemma? No, because His perfect wisdom combined with His perfect love to provide a perfect solution. He would send His Son Jesus Christ to pay the penalty for our sins. “God demonstrates his own love for us in

this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time” (1 Corinthians 15:3-6). Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

4. **Our decision!** It is not enough to just know the above, we must individually receive Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord before we can experience the blessings and benefits of what He did for us, including forgiveness and eternal life. “To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12). “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).
5. **Jesus is speaking to you today.** He says, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

You can receive Him right now by a simple but sincere prayer. He is mainly interested in your heart. Here is a suggested prayer:

“Dear Lord Jesus, I believe that you are the Son of God, that you died on the cross for my sins, and that you rose from the grave. I ask you to forgive my sins, and I ask you into my heart to be my Lord and Savior. Take control of my life and help me to be what you want me to be. By faith, I now thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Amen.”

See Appendix 4 for further information and what to do now.

Appendix 4

Eight incomparable benefits of trusting Christ

From history's beginning, through prophets and events, the Creator revealed His loving plan to rescue the human race from its self-imposed curse of sin and death. He would do this by sending His Son, who would become a sacrificial Lamb, taking the judgment upon Himself for all who would put their trust in Him. This profound event happened almost 2,000 years ago when Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, came, was crucified, rose from the grave, seen by more than 500 people, and 40 days later visibly ascended into heaven. When you put your trust in Christ, you become a recipient of the greatest gifts in the universe, fully paid for by the blood of God's own Son.

1. **You have total forgiveness.** All your sins—past, present, and future—were forgiven because Jesus bore them for you on the cross. You are accepted by God, not at all because of what you have done, but because of what He did! “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. **You have peace with God.** “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.... God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.... Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!” (Romans 5:1,5,9). For Jewish readers, this first appearance of Yeshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ in English), as a sacrifice, was predicted throughout Jewish Scriptures. For example, see Isaiah, chapter 53.
3. **You have been “born again” into God's own family.** You are a new creature! “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17). “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26).
4. **You have eternal life.** You will live with God in His paradise kingdom forever! “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son” (1 John 5:11).
5. **God lives in you.** You have become a temple, or dwelling place, of God's Spirit. He lives inside of you! “Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16). “I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20).

6. **Nothing can separate you from the love of Christ!** “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

7. **God has chosen to share His kingdom with you!** “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). “Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory” (Romans 8:17).

8. **All of God’s promises are for you!** You have access to all of God’s many promises as contained in His Word. They are all for you, free and paid for by the blood of Jesus. “For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him the ‘Amen’ is spoken by us to the glory of God” (2 Corinthians 1:20). They are “yes” in Christ and are all available to you, but you must say the “amen,” that is, believe them, confess them, and claim them as your own.

Have you prayed yet and expressed your faith and trust in Jesus Christ? If not, see Appendix 3.

“But what does God want from me now?”

If you have prayed that prayer, that is probably your question, and a natural one. But remember, God is all-powerful and owns the universe. He really does not need anything we have. But He does *want* something. He desires our love and fellowship. He created us for fellowship with Himself and to enjoy Him forever. Christianity is really not a “religion” as many people think, but a “relationship.”

Of course, God also wants our obedience and submission to His superior wisdom, but mainly for our own good and so that He can use us to be a blessing to others. His ways are never arbitrary and are always for a loving purpose. Below are some principles from God's Word that will strengthen your relationship with Him, help you to be a more effective servant, and help you to receive all the blessings that our loving God has for you.

- **Talk with God continually.** That is what prayer is—talking with God. It also means listening, always in tune to His Spirit, at home, at work, at school, or wherever. In Jesus' name, we have the incredible privilege of communicating directly with the Creator of the universe anytime, day or night! No appointment necessary. “Pray continually” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- **Read His Word, the Bible.** God will speak to you through His Word. You will learn more about His nature, His ways, and His will, purposes and promises for your life. It will help understand His book if you better know the Author. The Gospel of John is a good place to start. A modern translation and a good commentary will help

understanding. “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105). “The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life” (John 6:63).

- **Obey Him.** Our obedience demonstrates our love for God and recognition of who He is. “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him” (John 14:21).

God's Word tells us not to sin, which grieves God, hinders our fellowship with Him, and harms ourselves and others. God wants us to live holy lives, becoming more like Jesus (Romans 8:29). If you do sin, confess it immediately, then (by faith) receive God's forgiveness and cleansing according to 1 John 1:9. One of your first acts of obedience should be to be baptized in water, a demonstration that your old nature has been buried with Christ and that, coming out of the water, you have risen with Him in His resurrection. Baptism is usually done in the local church.

- **Find fellowship with other believers.** Our relationship and fellowship with other believers (the Body of Christ) are important to God. That is why He established the church, where we can not only worship together but find fellowship, teaching, counseling, ministry to our special needs, and where God can use each of us to impart these same blessings to others. “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25). Find a Christ-centered, Bible-believing church where the power of the Holy Spirit is recognized. But beware of cults, which typically deny the deity of Christ; insist that works, not just grace, are required for salvation; are often centered around one founder whose writings take precedence over the Bible; and sometimes will have their own book, claimed to be sacred, in addition to the Bible. Remember, God says in Revelation 22:18-19: “I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.”
- **“Be filled with the Spirit,”** God exhorts us in Ephesians 5:18. This means to be continually empowered for God's use and a victorious life by His Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). We receive this empowering *by faith*. See Chapter 4 of this book.

You have now entered the most exciting and fulfilling life imaginable! Learn to trust God with every detail of your life (1 Peter 5:7); tell others about God's great love and “good news” (John 15:8); walk in the Spirit and do not give in to your old carnal desires (Galatians 5:16,17); and be aware of spiritual warfare and God's prescription for continuous victory over Satan (Ephesians 6:10-18).

Postscript

A secret of the kingdom!

Jesus Christ told His disciples a parable, which He said was “a secret of the kingdom.”

This parable also holds the secret of whether or not and how the truths in this book will impact your life for the kingdom. Jesus said:

“Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times.” Then Jesus said, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

He then explained:

“Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable? The farmer sows the word. Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown” (Mark 4:3-9; 13-20).

Dear friends, I have sown the word. I pray that I have sown the seed in good soil—you. You have heard the word, and I pray that you will “accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown.”

Do not let Satan, trouble, persecution, worries of this life, deceitfulness of wealth, or the desire for other things (whatever they may be), choke this word in your life and make you unfruitful.

It is your decision. I pray it will be the right one. God bless you.