

WORLD WIDE MINISTRIES

The Principles of Leadership

PEOPLE REACHING PEOPLE

Don Krider, Director
World Wide Ministries

"...SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE..." EPH.4:11-16

LEADERSHIP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	Page 3
INTRODUCTION	Pages 4-22
CHAPTER 1 - MATURING IN THE MINISTRY	Pages 23-36
CHAPTER 2 - CALLED & COMMISSIONED 1	Pages 37-66
CHAPTER 3 - CALLED & COMMISSIONED 2	Pages 67-92
CHAPTER 4 - VISION	Pages 93-117
CHAPTER 5 - KNOWLEDGE	Pages 118-155
CHAPTER 6 - SPEAKING THE TRUTH	Pages 156-191
CHAPTER 7 - FAITH	Pages 192-258

LEADERSHIP

FOREWORD

In this foreword, we are going to be covering the introduction and explanation of the Five-Fold Ministry. It is a profound truth. The thing that we are wanting to learn is the established truth when a thing is spoken or written, the manifested truth when it is brought forth. Instead of just talking about what we want to be, we need to start being what God wants us to be. Instead of talking about what God is going to make us, begin to manifest what God has already made us. The only way we can do that is by knowing what our calling is; knowing what God has called us to do, knowing what God has equipped us to do, and knowing what God has called us to really come into and bring others into. We know that they who are the sons of God are they who are led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:14).

This study is for those who are already leaders, or who desire to be a leader. God is saying to us that if we are going to be leaders, first of all we have to be led by the Spirit so we can be sure that those we are leading are led by the same Spirit working through us. For a great revival to ever happen, it first of all has to start with leadership. God establishes leadership through the entire Bible. The first thing God does is get a leader before He ever builds anything, whether it is a Pastor or an Evangelist or any of the other Five-Fold Ministry. God's corporate idea of how it should work is for the body to have many leaders, working together in unity to bring forth the move of God.

We are going to ask the Holy Spirit of God to be our teacher. Our desire is to have the ear to hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church; to be challenged in our heart; to be motivated by the Spirit of God and begin to press into the areas of leadership that will bring revival in the mighty house and body of God. In Jesus Name! Amen!

LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

2 Cor 6:1-10 explains a little bit what a ministry or a minister is really like. People think a minister is somebody that just drives around in a big, nice car and doesn't do anything, except lay hands on people and say a few nice words. We need to realize that ministry is a work. It is a vocation. The calling of God is a job that we have to give an account for at the end of that ministry. So Paul here begins to explain his ministry. Paul was able to say, "Follow me as I follow the Lord" (1 Cor 11:1).

2 Cor 6:1 *We then, as workers together with him,*(Christ)

If you are called of God, He doesn't call you to be a lone ranger. He doesn't call you to go out and do your own thing. You are a worker together with Christ.

2 Cor 6:1 *We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.*

In other words what he is saying here is: "We are representing Christ as though Christ is here, and what we are going to tell you is what Christ was going to tell you if He was here with us." That is what you have to remember as a leader. If you speak, you need to speak as an oracle of God, which means cutting down much of your conversation. Empty words, words of vanity, words of foolishness need to be eliminated from the vocabulary of a leader.

Solomon wrote that we are taken snare by the words of our own mouths (Prov 6:2). If a leader is taken snare, the real problem is that he leads others into that snare with him. Being a leader is a great responsibility.

2 Cor 6:2 *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

2 Cor 6:3 *Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:*

It is important for leaders to examine themselves, to see whether they be in the faith. Is our life, are the words we are speaking, the actions we are taking, bringing offense to the gospel of Christ? I think the one thing that broke David's heart more than anything else when he committed

the act of adultery with Bathsheba, was when Nathan came to him and told David he had given the enemies of God the right to blaspheme.

So God is saying through Paul that he as a minister was not to give an offense in anything, that the ministry should not be blamed. We don't have to be in a situation where we bring offense.

2 Cor 6:4 But in all things approving ourselves

How do I approve myself? How can you approve yourself? Are you going to be bragging on your ministry or boasting about yourself? Is that how you approve yourself? NO! It is not being approved of men; it is being approved of God. The only way you can be approved of God is that you become a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2). You study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). In other words, God is saying, "If you are going to be a minister for Me, I don't want you giving offense, or an occasion for there to be blaspheme against that ministry. I want it to be pure, holy and righteous." And then He says, "I want you to be approved." The only way you can approve yourself is to be approved of God.

2 Cor 6:4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

2 Cor 6:5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

This was not just for Paul. God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). You are going to have to be approved in patience and long-suffering. You may not have to be approved in stripes and imprisonment, but it takes fasting to be a good leader. It takes prayer to be a good leader. It takes dying to self to be a good leader. It takes the Holy Spirit of God to make you a good leader.

2 Cor 6:6 By pureness,...

It is amazing that He would use that word, because Jesus says in Matt 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." So as a leader, you have to see God for other people. As a leader it is important that your motives are right. It is so important that your heart is pure, because you are interceding for people you are counseling with or advising, so you want pure motives. In 1 Cor 13:2 Paul says that if he has not charity, then he is nothing.

You can quote all the scripture that you want to, but if your motive is not pure, you are not approved of God. Man may say you are the greatest minister in the world, you may have the greatest crowds, but if your heart is not pure when you are doing whatever you are doing, it is going to avail you nothing. Amen!

I would rather have a pure heart with God and a right motive with God, so when I presented the gospel even to just a few people it would glorify the Lord and help strengthen the body of Christ. Whatever reputation God wants you to have, you will have it.

2 Cor 6:6 By pureness, by knowledge, ...

Leaders today repeat so much of what other people say, when they need to have God knowledge working in their hearts so they can impart God knowledge to other people. If you want to be approved of God you have to have a pure heart and be approved by knowledge. What is He saying here? As a man thinketh in his heart, (the things you have meditated on, have put into your heart) are going to come out of your mouth (Matt 12:34-37), and they are going to be words of God knowledge or words of carnality. God wants you to be approved.

I want to be approved of God. It means a lot of things to me. It means I have peace with God. It means that I can speak whatever God gives me and know that is what God gave me. So it is important if you want to be approved of God to have a pure heart and work in God's knowledge, not just get up and preach what you want to preach.

God may give you a message and you preach it and God blesses it; but later you want to add to it, and God isn't giving it to you. You are just doing it, so it is no longer pure and it is no longer God knowledge, so God doesn't approve it. It is better if you just get up and read the scripture if that is all you know, because that is pure. That is God knowledge, and God will take care of the rest of it.

2 Cor 6:6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering,...

We want immediate results as leaders. God is not looking for overnight success, or overnight spiritual giants. You don't get children out of kindergarden and get them graduated in one week out of high-school. It takes a process, so with the process you have longsuffering. A leader who doesn't have the longsuffering in his heart is not a mature leader. One who wants to kill everybody and get rid of them is not mature. Even Moses had relapses, didn't he, but he had enough longsuffering to finally wake up and say "God, if you take them, you might as well take my name out of the book also" (Exo 32:30-35).

2 Cor 6:6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness.

We need kind leaders today, leaders who are working in kindness, not abrupt, not sharp, not chopping people to pieces, but realizing that they came out of the same place. We need to be longsuffering with them, we need to be gentle with them, we need to be kind with them. That develops something in their hearts toward you. They believe they can tell you anything and you won't jump on them.

They believe they will have a kind response from you just like Jesus responded to the woman caught in the act of adultery. He didn't criticize her. He was kind to her, wasn't He. He taught her something of great value though. "Woman, where are your accusers?" She said, "I have none." "Neither do I accuse you. Go and sin no more" (John 8:1-11). Don't you think she learned something out of that. It wasn't a great speech or sermon that He preached, but there was kindness in it. There was no condemnation in it. Leaders cannot become a people of condemnation. One of the quickest ways to keep condemnation out of your heart is to fill it with kindness and longsuffering.

2 Cor 6:6 ... by the Holy Ghost, ...

You are not going to be approved by your speech, your words of men's wisdom. You are only going to be approved by the Holy Ghost of God. If the Holy Ghost doesn't approve you, there is no approval that is going to work. Men may give you all kinds of plaudits and tell you how wonderful you are, but that won't approve you with God. You can be slow of speech, you may not be able to pronounce words right, you may not be able to recall where a scripture is found, but if your heart is pure and you are speaking under the anointing of the Holy Spirit of God, you are approved of God. Amen! I want God's approval, not mans.

2 Cor 6:6 by love unfeigned,

2 Cor 6:7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,

In other words, every area of our life is covered by God's armour, isn't it. It is not us; it is the Holy Ghost that does the job. If you want to be approved by God as a leader, if you want to grow up in God, the same requirements are listed right in these scriptures for you as they were for Paul.

2 Cor 6:8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true;

People are going to speak evil about you, but what is your reaction to that evil? It should be kindness because Matt 5:44 says we are to love our enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you. You may think that being a leader is something big and charismatic, like getting one thousand people together, but they don't do anything. If you have two people together who have a pure heart, they can do anything.

You have to quit thinking of the number syndrome, and get into the one to one and realize how important that one individual is, because if we produce in that one individual the things of God, they will reproduce. Then it won't be long until it multiplies, and soon it will be more than we can handle. In fact, Jesus drew a crowd with His miracles and then when He preached the word of God, most of them left Him. They just wanted the miracles. Only 120 met in the upper room, but out of the 120, and out of the sincerity and the pureness of the Spirit of God, there were 3000 added to the church (Acts 2:15,41).

These scriptures show that you will be evil spoken of, but it is the approval of God when they speak evil of you for righteousness sake (Matt 5:10; 1 Peter 3:14). Many people don't want to be called fanatics. They want to be loved by the world, and loved by God, but you can't do it. The world is going to hate you. They may respect your stand, but they are going to hate the light that is in you, because it makes manifest the works of darkness in their lives.

So if you want to be approved it is going to be:

2 Cor 6:8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers and yet true;

If your heart is pure, people can call you a liar, and it won't bother you. It only bothers you when there may be a bit of truth in there.

2 Cor 6:9 As unknown, and yet well known; ...

I like that, don't you. Not trying to build my own reputation. It should be important to you that you are known by God. If you are known by God, you are well known, even though you may not be known by many people. Paul was known by many people and loved by many people, but there were a lot of people who didn't like Paul. There are a lot of people who don't like you. That may be a shock, but as soon as you realize that, the sooner you can go on to become a leader, and quit waiting for men's approval.

2 Cor 6:9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live;

The world looks at a true Christian and says, "Man, those guys are dead. They don't ever have any fun. They are all a bunch of squares. They don't even know what living is all about. Let me tell you something friend: the more you grow in Christ, the deader you become to the world, and the less attractive you become to the world, and the less attractive the world becomes to you.

Finally you can say with Paul: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me "(Gal 2:20).

2 Cor 6:9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed;

2 Cor 6:10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Paul is simply saying that a real leader knows where his riches are. A real leader knows who he is. No matter what the conditions around him are, he is rich in Christ Jesus. He possesses all things; he doesn't have to beg people to help him out. He doesn't have to cry and moan and groan about how bad it is being in the ministry. He doesn't say, "If you just help me out, I can do something for God."

If you need man's help, you are in real trouble. When God sends you out, He will raise up the help. He will support you. If you send yourself out, you are going to spend 90% of your time compromising, trying to get somebody to see the vision you don't have. You spend all your time trying to get people to believe in something you don't even believe in, so you can go out and do your thing.

So Paul is saying that it is important that he is approved, and this is the way it worked for him. I personally would rather not go to prison or have stripes. I'd rather bypass those, but I know I cannot bypass longsuffering, kindness, pureness, and Holy Ghost, and no leader can. But believe me, you will be misunderstood. This is truth that God wants us to realize, and I believe that we are going to be encouraged as we go along and see what God is doing.

Let's go to Exodus 18:13. Moses was trying to handle everything by himself. That is a big error that most of us make. "If I don't do it, it won't get done." If you try to do everything by yourself, it won't get done, because

God never called a one man ministry. He always called ministries to work together, all helps in the body of Christ. So Jethro, his father-in-law, had come, and begins to explain to Moses what he needs to do.

Exo 18:13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

That is what we call burn-out, because you try to do everything yourself. We feel we are the only one who can handle it. I thank God that He raises up Jethros. They come along and correct us and say "You are not the only apple in the barrel. There are all kinds of people around you. Start being a good leader; start developing them, start using them."

Exo 18:14 And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

Exo 18:15 And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:

Exo 18:16 When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

Look what he is saying here. "I am the big cheese. No one has any answers but me." What happened to Aaron? What happened to those who helped him lead the people out of Egypt? All of a sudden they got consigned to another realm, didn't they. It is easy to do that as a leader if you are not careful.

If you don't have confidence in the individual you are working with, you have to learn to have confidence in the Christ in that individual. If they make a few mistakes, don't worry about it. If their heart is right, God will take care of it. But if you are going to try to do everything yourself, you are going to throw your hands up one day, and say: "I QUIT! Nobody wants to help me."

That is the Elijah syndrome, "There isn't anybody left but me, God" (1 Kings 19:14, 18). You get caught up in that when you have been actively used of God, and blessed of God, and you see God moving in your life. You get to thinking "Man, if I don't do it, it just isn't going to get done. I can't take a vacation; I can't get away for a week or two. It's just going to all come apart on me." God says, "Let it come apart and I'll put it together right. You

have been holding it together yourself, and it is all messed up. Now, if you will back off, and let it come apart, I can build it right."

Have you ever had an Elijah syndrome? "Bless God, if I don't do it, who is going to do it?" I don't know who you think was doing it before you got there. Do you think God's plan was in a chaotic condition before you arrived, and you are going to put it all together?

Moses had begun to narrow in on himself, hadn't he. "I judge; they come to ME. Don't you see MY sign on the door, on top of that rock over there. That says: Moses, the leader, the judge. I am the only one hearing from God, you know." I can see myself in here, but thank God, He delivered me.

Exo 18:17 And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

"Oh wait a minute. I am working day and night for God. I am doing the job of judging them, and I am not doing right?" Whenever you take the ministry away from other people, and you do it all yourself, you are not giving them an opportunity to grow, it won't be long until you burn out, you give up, you fall apart, and you want to quit. If there is so much to be done, don't even do it. If you quit trying to do it all, God might raise somebody else to help you.

Exo 18:18 Thou wilt surely wear away,...

"But I've got the anointing of God on me. I can go forever." Oh yeah? When you get a little older, you get a little smarter too. Moses was only 80 years old. He wasn't ready yet. God never expected Moses to do it by himself. Moses assumed that he was the only one that could do it. He had already denied being able to do it once, when God first called him. He said, "Lord, why can't you raise somebody else up; I'm slow of speech" (Exo 4:10-16). It is amazing how humble we are until we get into office, into a place of authority, then all of a sudden we forget how we got there.

Exo 18:18 Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

Here is Moses, thinking "I am doing okay, even though I am really tired and worn out, but hey, I am the only one who can hear from God, so I had better get on with the job." But here he is getting humbled, being told he is not able to perform it alone. What happens when a leader goes down? People go down with him.

Jethro had a little more knowledge and understanding than Moses did. We know that he was already a priest of Midian (Exo 18:1). Here God is showing wisdom through an outside source. When we get to the place that we can't receive from other people, regardless of their position, we have a problem. But in this culture of Moses day, they respected their elders. When an elder said something, it carried weight, so he was not making fun of Moses. He was loving Moses, and he was showing Moses that he was wearing himself out, and he was going to wear the other people out. When he fell, the entire company would fall too, because they had their eyes only on Moses.

That is the danger of one man ministries. You never want to become that. When God calls you to a ministry, be sure you are submitted to an umbrella of covering that loves you and will pray for you and be honest with you.

Exo 18:19 Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

He said, "Let that be your job. You intercede for this people. You bring the causes to God, and spend more time with God than you do with this people." We seem to think that people will forget us if we are not always in the limelight. That is not true. If you are a real leader, God will put in their heart to love you. You won't have to worry about it.

Exo 18:20 And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

In other words, he is setting up a chain of command, isn't he. He said, "You are going to receive from God, and then you are going to disperse it." Now watch how he does it.

Exo 18:21 Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God,

Notice he is to provide able men, such as fear God. You don't just call everybody and anybody to the ministry. You don't go on personalities. You don't go on their ability to do something for you in return. First of all you find out if they are able to do this. This is something that God told Paul also: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2).

He said, "You commit this gospel unto faithful men who are able to teach." If you are not able, then ask God to help you become able. Don't volunteer overnight and have no foundational structure, no wisdom or knowledge in the things of God. It is better for you to take your time to learn, to become rooted and grounded, to become settled in the things of God, so you will be able to do what God wants you to do.

Exo 18:21 ...provide able men, such as fear God, men of truth,...

Men of truth having righteousness. In other words their lives are proven. How was it when they chose the deacons? They were men that had good report within and without. They were men who were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they were men of wisdom (1 Tim 3:8-13).

Exo 18:21 ...men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

Everybody does not have the same ability. You should know your ability. You should know where you can operate. 1 Pet 4:10-11 says: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

I cannot operate in the scope that Billy Graham operates in. I don't have that ability. God has given him the ability to do what he is doing. Thank God for that man. But I am just as happy doing what I am doing, because it is the ability that God has given to me. If I am faithful over ten, I will receive just as much reward as the man who is faithful over ten thousand, because God looks at the faithfulness, not the number that I have under me.

Exo 18:22 And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

Can you see old Moses saying, "Whew!" Maybe it doesn't mean much to you, but when you have two and one-half million people grumbling and griping day and night, and you look at the line you are going to have to judge and it strings out five miles, and you are starting out at five in the morning and working until midnight, and you have to take care of every one of the complaints, wouldn't you say "Whew" if you were relieved of that.

Jethro told him to let the others take care of all of that, but when it was a big matter concerning the entire group, Moses was to take care of that.

Exo 18:23 If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

There is nothing worse than having a minister who is in turmoil, is there. When you come to see him, he says, "I don't have time. Here is an appointment on my calendar for six weeks from today," instead of asking you to call one of the leaders in the church who would be able to help you. If you are in leadership and you think people only want to see you, it is because you have built yourself to a place where they don't think anybody else can do anything for them.

Have you ever tended cattle? They don't care who they get food from as long as they get fed. They don't care what color it is as long as they get the hay. That's what we have to do in the body of Christ. We have to quit building personalities and begin to build Christ in the body.

We need to begin to see the leadership taking part of the load, and if it is something big, bringing it to the pastors. Sometimes there are things that God doesn't show you, so you can stay humble. A lady came to me one time and said, "Brother Krider, I want a word from the Lord." I didn't even know her, and she expected me to pop a word out just like a toaster. I said, "Sister, stay around for the message and you might get something from God."

We want people to think they can come to us like a slot-machine, and get something out of it automatically. Sometimes it is good to say, "I'll tell you the truth; I don't know." That doesn't put you in a corner, does it. Then people will begin to look at you and say, "You are about like I am, aren't you. We are the same kind of folks. Maybe I can listen to the leadership after all. I thought you had all the answers, but you don't." None of us has all the answers. Amen! So it is wise to begin to do what God wants us to.

Exo 18:24 So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

Exo 18:25 And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

Exo 18:26 And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

Exo 18:27 And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

In other words, here is a perfect plan that God has set in order for the New Testament Church. God never changed the plan when He instituted what we call The New Covenant Church. The Church was in the wilderness and God gives us types and shadows, and principals which He never changes. These are not only established truths, but they have become manifested truths in our day and time.

God is saying something here that we need to get hold of. If you want the Church to prosper and grow, you will have to share the work. If you don't have anybody to help you, then let the work go. As long as you try to do it all yourself, God won't send any help.

Moses sat out there and judged from morning until night and wore himself out, and God was letting him do it, because he was the one who was judging; he was doing all of it. God said to Jethro, "The real plan I want for Moses is this: I want him to talk to ME more. I want him to be able to teach those leaders, to instill in those leaders so they can filter down to the people. I DO NOT WANT ONE MAN TO BE GLORIFIED IN THIS SITUATION."

The Church has to come to that awakening and that awareness. We can pray for revival all we want to but if there are only one or two people trying to handle that revival and the influx of all the people, they are going to burn out. So if we want revival we start asking God to raise up leaders. Then we start teaching the leaders what God requires of them, and we instill in them that they don't know it all, any more than we know it all. We spend more time with God, bringing the causes of the people to the Lord.

Now let us look at Exodus 24.1 God put this in the early part of the Bible so we could understand His plan.

Exo 24:1 And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.

The number seventy is a very significant number. It is used in judgment and it is also used in projection of time, like Daniel's seventy years. We also see in Luke 10:1 how seventy were commissioned to go out and preach the gospel, and in vs.17 how the seventy came back, and they were rejoicing that the devils were subject to them.

Number 7 is the great number of spiritual perfection. It is a number which, therefore, occupies so large a place in the works, and especially in

the Word of God as being inspired by the Holy Spirit. Number 10 is one of the perfect numbers and signifies the perfection of divine order. The number 70 (7x10) signifies perfect spiritual order carried out with all spiritual power and significance. Both spirit and order are greatly emphasized. (From the book 'Number in Scripture by Ethelbert W. Bullingerr, D.D'.)

Exo 24:2 And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.

So we see a separation, don't we. We see the elders coming out with Moses to a certain place, and then Moses is to go on into the presence of God. We know that all of us can come into the presence of the Lord today through the blood of Jesus Christ, but most of the people in the congregations don't know how to come into the presence of God. When they go away they are more confused than they were before. They need to have leaders who can separate themselves and begin to worship God, and let that trickle down into the body of Christ and bring the praise into the house of God.

We have praisers in the Churches, and that is ordained of God. David set praisers 24 hours a day in Jerusalem; you could open your window any time of day or night, and you heard the praises of God (1 Chron 9:33;15:16-28). So here he is setting up an example for us. A leader must always be able to separate himself even from other leaders to get alone with God. If you don't spend quality time with God, friend, you are never going to amount to much in the Kingdom.

Exo 24:3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.

Exo 24:4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Exo 24:5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

Exo 24:6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

Exo 24:7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.

Here we see the first real picture of the ministry: reading the word of God, reading the word of the Lord. The primary job in the congregation is that the ministry is able to teach the word of God and bring understanding. After the blood is applied to peoples lives, the very next thing they need is the word. They do not need a lot of prophecies over them; they don't need a lot of cold chills running up and down their backbone. They need the word.

So the very first thing that Moses does is write it down, and then he sprinkles blood on the altar as he brings the word. It is of primary importance in a minister's life to know and understand the word. You can't bring something that you don't know to people. Moses got this from the Lord, and then he delivered it to the people.

Sounds a lot like Paul on the communion. He said "that which I give unto you I first of all received from the Lord" (1 Cor 11:23-26). You can't receive it from the Lord unless you spend time with the Lord. The Bible is ink and paper until the Holy Spirit breathes on it. When the Holy Spirit breathes on it, it becomes life and spirit.

Exo 24:8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

Exo 24:9 Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel:

Exo 24:10 And they saw the God of Israel:

Do you know why we don't see God more often? We don't go up to meet the Lord in praise and thanksgiving. There is a group of them here, and they are all leaders. *Exo 24:10 ...and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.*

Exo 24:11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.

If you leaders are going to bring something good back to the body of Christ, you have to get it from God. You have to spend time eating and drinking of the word and the Spirit of God, and when you get filled up enough, you are going to come back with something to give to the people. So it is important as a leader to separate yourself unto God at times. I spend time hearing from God so that what I give you, I got first of all from Him. I didn't have to read somebody else's textbook to get it. I got it from God.

Whenever I go to preach for somebody, I am submitted to that ministry. If I plan to preach two weeks, and they say "No," I can go fishing and relax. My part was to come and submit to them. I'm not worried what God may think about it, because God told me to do it. We think that unless

we are preaching or ministering twenty-four hours a day God is not going to take care of us.

I got caught up in that trap, working myself to death, because I figured that was the way it was. You had to be preaching or ministering all the time or God wouldn't meet your needs. One day God shut the door on any more meetings, and He finally spoke to me and got through to my heart and mind, and said, "If you never preach another sermon, I'll take care of you because I promised."

Here is what the Lord is trying to explain to us. He had a principle already set in motion, didn't He. There has to be leaders, because without leaders they could not go on into the promised land. You are not going to go anywhere without leaders. No Church is going to go anywhere without leaders. So we need to concentrate not on filling the Church, but in filling our life; getting so filled with the presence of God, so knowledgeable in His word, that when we get up, we have something to say. When we counsel people, we will have something to say, and it won't be something second-hand. God is wanting us to do that, because that is how revival is going to come. When God gets His leaders set up, they can handle the influx. God doesn't change His principles. He got twelve apostles first, didn't He, before He sent the Holy Spirit. He set everything in motion. He sent the Holy Spirit after the 120 were there to receive the 3000. The 120 had received something from God.

When Peter got up, it wasn't him preaching, because he was always getting in trouble, but he stood up and the Holy Ghost preached through him and the living water came out of him and drenched 3000 men until they got so thirsty they wanted to know what they must do to be saved. They got saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, and then they started going house to house, inviting their friends and bringing people in, hearing the gospel of Christ, but they had leaders in Jerusalem. They studied the doctrine of the apostles.

I'm excited because revival is just at the doorstep, and if we don't get in place and do what God wants to do through us, He will put someone else in our place. He is still going to have a great revival before His return, and I want to be part of it, don't you.

Let's go to Numbers 11:16. This is God speaking now, not Jethro this time.

Num 11:16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, ...

Moses was to pick the elders, not God. When they picked deacons, God didn't pick them out. Paul set the Pastors in order. If the Pastor or one

of the leaders of the Church comes to you with something from God, don't take it lightly. If you know that person is a true leader of God, don't shrug it off and say, "Well, when I hear from God..." You just heard from God. I don't want to work with a leader unless he can pick some people out. He has a right to tell you that he knows your life, and knows what you are doing and what manner of person you are, and that God wants to use you. If he is true leader, you won't need to pray about it, because he has heard from God. If you have submitted yourself to the authority in that Church, you had better believe that he hears from God.

Num 11:16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee.

Num 11:17 And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone.

So this is the confirmation of what Jethro, the father-in-law, has already told Moses. God always confirms His word. When you submit yourself to the authority in the body of Christ, whoever it is, you had better totally surrender yourself. If what they say lines up with God's word, go ahead and submit.

What we have in the body is rebellion. Everybody wants to do their own thing, and go their own way; and yet they belong to God, they don't belong to themselves. They can't go where they want to, when they want to, and how they want to. They must go at the reckoning and the beckoning of the Lord. The sooner you submit yourself to that authority, God will start sending you.

Isaiah said, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isa 6:8). Isaiah didn't say he could go right then. He said in verse 5, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts." He knew he needed help before he could go. When you submit yourself to the ministries above you, God is starting to teach and input into you what He couldn't input into you while you were running around doing your own thing. If He had established you while you were doing that, you would have gone on and done your own thing, and raise havoc in the body of Christ.

Let's turn to Numbers 11:24-30. I want you to notice that He takes the spirit that is upon Moses and puts that same spirit upon these seventy elders. That is important. If we don't have the same spirit, we can't work together. God didn't say He was going to take the spirit from Moses, but He was going to multiply it.

That is what God wants to do in the leadership. He wants to take the same spirit that our Pastors have, and multiply that spirit, until we see the same vision, have the same heart, and work in the same mind, so we can all work in the same direction. It is like any good corporate worker. He has to have the mind of the corporation to do any good. You can't work for one corporation and have the mind of another.

A lot of us are trying to do the things of the Spirit of God in our own knowledge or intellect. We have to ask God to give us the same vision, the same heart, and the same mind, so we can work together in unity.

Num 11:24 And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.

Num 11:25 And the LORD came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease.

They became teachers, ministers, didn't they, but not before the Spirit of the Lord, the same Spirit that Moses had, came upon them. When that Spirit came upon them, it was no longer that seventy doing that work. It was the Spirit that came upon them that imparted knowledge to them. If you are going to get anything from God, you are going to have to do it by the Spirit. You can not do it by the intellect of men's wisdom. They began to prophesy, didn't they, and they did not cease.

Num 11:26 But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the spirit rested upon them; and they were of them that were written, but went not out unto the tabernacle: and they prophesied in the camp.

It doesn't make any difference where you are, when God calls you and wants you to do something, you can't hide anywhere. You can't get away from Him. Eldad and Medad thought they didn't have to go out to the tabernacle, but all of a sudden the Spirit of God came upon them because it was written there that they should be included in that number.

You don't become a minister of the gospel of Christ unless God ordains it to be so, but if He ordains it to be so, you can't escape it. You can either be a joyful, profitable ministry, or you can be a lousy minister completely unprofitable to the Kingdom of God, but you are still going to have to give an account in the day of the Lord with what you did with the call that God put in your life. So when the Spirit came, they started prophesying.

Num 11:27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.

Num 11:28 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Moses, one of his young men, answered and said, My lord Moses, forbid them.

Isn't that what the disciples of Jesus did when they found a guy casting our devils in the name of Jesus (Mark 9:38-40).

Mark 9:38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.

Mark 9:39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

Mark 9:40 For he that is not against us is on our part.

There is always going to be somebody who is going to tell on you.

Num 11:29 And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!

Num 11:30 And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

You can't outrun the call of God. When it comes, you might as well start lifting up your hands, and go on all the way with God, 100%, because there is going to be somebody telling on you. Here are these two guys prophesying like crazy down in the camp. You would have thought this other guy would have been happy. Here is the presence of the Lord, and these fellows are sharing the things of God, and was this young man happy about it? No! He was envious, wasn't he. Moses said, "Were you envious for me, or were you envious because you weren't doing it. I would that all the Lord's people were prophets." You can stay out of a lot of trouble when the Spirit of God is upon you and you listen to what the Spirit of God is telling you.

Leadership is not only necessary but it is demanded by the Lord. Who told Moses to chose seventy men? The Lord did, didn't He. He sent Jethro to him to wake him up, and then the Lord spoke to him to get seventy men. He said, "You bring them up here, and I demand this, because there is a work to be done, and you are not big enough to do it." Not one of us is big enough to do the work that needs to be done. We wear out and complain about the work load. Don't do anything; just love the Lord. God will raise up some help.

Father, we thank you again. Lord, I believe that we are learning because You are teaching, Our desire is to learn and to grow and to become strong in the truth and the word of God, in the Spirit of the Lord, so that truly the life that we live in the flesh, we now live it by the faith of the Son of God. Even that life that can be manifest while we live in this mortal body, according to 2 Cor 4:10-11. Praise you, Lord! Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 1

MATURING IN THE MINISTRY

This chapter is about maturing in the ministry. The body must not only have apostles, prophets, and evangelists, pastors, teachers; it must have elders, fathers of the faith, those who can in truth and love, counsel and give guidance to others. The five-fold ministry is to bring us into the unity of the faith, for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry. But there are a lot of things going on besides the five-fold ministry.

There is counseling that is needed in the body of Christ. There is exhortation, there is encouragement. All of these things are needed. Those who are in the five-fold ministry are usually busy spending a lot of time with God, getting the word so they can bring it to you and break it open to you. God is wanting to raise up the entire body, not just a select group of little people.

In your own lifetime you are going to be a leader, either good or bad. You will either lead your family or a neighbor, someone that you have influence with and you will either lead them right or wrong. So it behooves us as a Christian to realize that people are watching and listening to what we say, and we need to be very sure that we don't bring an offense against the gospel or an occasion for offense.

Leaders must walk in the Spirit, imparting knowledge, not walking without sight but walking with the vision that the Lord imparts. Romans 8:14 tells us that they that are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. We want to be known as the children of God, don't we. We must know and acknowledge that we are called. God cannot use a person who will not stand up and be counted for God.

Paul said, "I am called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God (1 Cor. 1:1).

Peter said, "I am an apostle and a servant of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1).

If you acknowledge yourself to be a Christian, in the same fashion you must acknowledge the call of God in your life, because you will have to

answer for it anyway. *The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:29)*, and there is no Christian in the body of Christ who doesn't have a gift, doesn't have a calling of some type. So thank God for calling you, even though you may not understand it, but be consciously aware that the calling is there. It doesn't mean that you have to go to Africa or some foreign land; it means He called you to serve Him.

(Mat 22:14 KJV) For many are called, but few are chosen.

We all had to have some calling from the Holy Spirit to come to Jesus. So He gave us a gift and He gave us a calling, and we can go any direction we want to, but we are still going to have to give an account for the calling and the gift that God gave to us. The sooner I become aware of that and acknowledge that I am called, then the more aware I become daily, and I need to be sure that calling is being taken care of in my life, and that gift is being stirred up in my heart.

Do you want to be a faithful leader? You are going to have to give an account for your leadership, whether good or bad. I would rather give a good report, wouldn't you. We must acknowledge that we are called and that we have a vision and are desiring the knowledge of God so that others may walk in a way that is right with God. Isn't that exactly what He told Moses. He said, "You teach them, and there will be these other elders to help you. They will judge." When you judge a matter you teach people something. You either teach them the right way or the wrong way. If you let them get away with sin, you are teaching them the wrong way, aren't you; but if they come to you and you tell them the truth, then you have taught them the right way. You are not responsible what they do with that truth, but it is your responsibility to be sure that truth is imparted into their lives.

How can we tell the truth if we do not have knowledge. We will be telling our own opinion, won't we. We will be telling our emotions and our feelings and that is not going to help anybody. We must speak the truth, because the truth alone is what sets men absolutely into the liberty that God has made them free through the blood of Jesus.

We must also count the cost. Jesus never went out and called people unless He told them to count the cost. The rich young ruler came to Jesus and wanted to be saved; he wanted eternal life. He asked Jesus "What good thing must I do?" Jesus said, "Keep the commandments," and he replied that he had done that from his youth up; then Jesus said, "One thing you do lack." Most of us would have quit there at "keep the commandments. Be sure you pay your tithes." But there was one thing that was hindering him, and that was that he had great wealth. So Jesus said, "Go and sell what you have and give it to the poor, and come and follow me." He went away grieved because he had great possessions (Matt 19:16-22; Luke 18:18-23). It

wasn't Jesus responsibility to turn him around; it was His responsibility to give him the opportunity to turn around.

If you are a good leader men and women will follow you because they want to follow you, not because you are making them follow you. So it is important that we live in such a godly presence with the Lord that the Spirit of God draws them. Are we not told to go and make disciples? He didn't mean to make a disciple after your carnality; He meant to make a disciple after the Christ who lives in you. It will cost you something to serve God.

If you study Jesus' life, He always asked people why they wanted to follow Him. He said, "The birds have nests, the foxes have holes in the ground, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." Jesus said to another man, "Follow Me," and the man asked Him to be allowed first to go and bury his father. Jesus said something that may sound hard to us; He said, "Let the dead bury the dead, but you go and preach the Kingdom of God" (Matt 8:19-22; Luke 9: 57-62).

It is going to cost you something daily to follow Jesus. You are going to have to make decisions for or against the flesh. Every day of your life, your flesh is always going to want to be entertained. It will always want to have preeminence, and you will have to mortify it. You will be in Church when you would like to be watching TV. You are going to be reading the word of God when you would rather be reading the comics.

You might be thinking you will get real narrow, but unless you get real narrow you won't make it. This way is straight and narrow (Matt 7:13-14; Luke 13:23-24). It is a strait gate You don't get into this with your flesh; you get into it in the Spirit of God. That's why Paul said, "I die daily" (1 Cor 15:31). You can't save it up one month at a time; you have to do it one day at a time.

Leaders will bear the brunt of misunderstanding, foolishness and other things that would destroy the body. When something goes wrong, everyone will talk about you. It is how you react to that, that approves you. If you act right by the Holy Spirit, you are approved of God. We must be able to stand against the wiles of the devil for the sheep many times. There are a lot more little lambs in the body of Christ than there are mature sheep. A good leader has an investment in the people under him. A good leader has his whole life invested in the sheep, and the very ones that you invest your life in, are the ones who are going to turn on you. You don't throw them away, you don't quit feeding them, you don't give them up, you don't kill them. You have an investment in them. They are going to be your crown of rejoicing one day (1 Thess 2: 17-20).

So what you have to do is bear the brunt of misunderstanding, that foolishness, and how you do that is just to take it to the Lord and say, "Lord, this is the end of all of this gossip; this is the end of all of this foolishness. I am not going to spread it back into the body, but I am going to be like Moses. I am going to take the cause of this people to You, God." What do you think would happen if leaders would begin to go to God with the problems, instead of turning around and saying, "Do you know what I heard?" God is not interested in that. God wants us to be the ones between the flock and God until they are able to grow up and hear His voice.

You have to realize something: you are in a position like Moses. You have the power to intercede with God while they are caught up in all of their foolishness. You have a sound mind to be able to go to God and say, "God, help them." Isn't that what Moses did? God said, "Moses, get out of the way. Let my anger wax hot against these people. I will destroy them, and I will take you and I will raise up another people." Moses had the Pastor's heart, didn't he. He interceded for the people, and the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do. Then Moses came back to camp, and found that the people had made a golden calf, and were worshipping it, and he had to go to the Lord again and he asked the Lord to forgive them, and if not, to blot him also out of the book (Exo 32:9-35).

When we come to that point we are going to see healing in the body, but what we do now is put a band-aid on it, and when they are not acting right, we pull the band-aid off and show everybody their weakness and their failure.

Much responsibility, much hard work, prayer and self-denial is required of a leader even in what seems to be the smallest of jobs. We call it small, but the Lord doesn't call anything small. Despise not the day of small beginnings. "How important can it be if I just go and make peace between two people in the body of Christ? I want the BIG JOB." What is the BIG JOB? It is to glorify God in our body and in our spirit.

The sheep need to be ministered to and healed. They need to be injected with the Holy Spirit, and with love, and kindness, and goodness, and mercy, so they can be healed and recover from their sickness, but nobody wants the small job. Everybody wants the limelight and a big name. Jesus said, "Don't you realize there is an infection in the body, and here is the medicine. Go out in the middle of the night, go out in the dead of winter whenever it is required, and it will be work, but the reward will be great. Faint not, and grow not weary in well-doing, because you will receive your reward in due season, if you faint not" (Gal 6:9). The reward for just taking care of that little job is going to be as great if you are faithful in it, as the person who has traveled the entire world and preached to ten million people.

We have to look at this through the eyes of Jesus. He taught the parable of the sheep, where a man left the ninety-nine sheep and went after the one that was lost (Matt 18:11-14; Luke 15:3-7). Ninety-nine out of a hundred is a pretty good percentage, but Jesus was not interested in ninety-nine percent; He wanted one-hundred percent. He was willing to leave the ninety-nine safe and go out and find the one lost sheep.

The reason we are not seeing revival and the move of God is because we are all neglecting the little job, what we call 'small job'. The job nobody wants. We need to understand there are those who are hurting in the body of Christ, who need one kind word and an arm put around them. They have had the fingers of accusation and judgment pressed against them and have had evil thoughts spoken to them. What they need is somebody willing to inject them with a little kindness and a little love. It takes time, of course, and you might even have to miss lunch one day, or get home late for supper, but won't you be glad that you ministered to those who might be lost. It means going out and taking a job that nobody knows you are doing. When that person is restored and made whole, guess who will be the happiest of all.

Nobody wants the fasting in secret, the praying in secret, the giving in secret, and yet Jesus said these are things that should be done. It is through that prayer that you can inject that individual with that love. It is through that fasting that will break that bondage and that yoke. It is through that giving when nobody knows you are giving. Only God sees it.

I remember praying in secret for people to be saved, and then seeing them go forward in a Church service, and guess who was the happiest person in that service. It was me! God used me to inject them. A little job, but a great reward.

Much responsibility, much hard work, prayer, fasting, and self-denial is required of a leader even in what seems to be the smallest of jobs. The leaders are to attain fatherhood in order that others may be able to draw from their experience and knowledge.

Paul would write in 1 Cor. 4:15 that you have ten-thousand instructors (everybody can tell you how to do it), but very few fathers. The guy who will get up in the middle of the night and pray for you. The man or woman who will go into a fast for you, without somebody calling it. The one who will go the extra mile without anybody knowing it. That is a Father, that is the one who really cares. That is the one who has the heart for the sheep. That is the one who will never give up, no matter how far that individual goes away. They are there waiting for them to come back. They are there praying, they are believing, they are caring.

It is a big impossible task for man, but with God all things are possible (Matt 19:26; Mark 10:27; Luke 18:27). You cannot be a leader in the body of Christ on your own ability, your own charisma, your own personality. Your own wisdom will never make you a leader; men may make you leaders but God won't. I would rather be approved of God than of men.

One of the greatest injustices we do to people is to put them in leadership positions before they are qualified. Then they fail, and when they do they take others with them. We blame them, and many times it is because they were never instructed and brought into the fulness and maturity of fatherhood, so they could have that heart and see that job as a ministry, and not just a work they had to do. Until it becomes a ministry to you, it is not of much value in your life.

The reason this course is being taught is that you may know what the Lord requires of you. Many rich blessings await you as you study and apply what you learn Timothy and Titus are called sons in the Lord by Paul. The study of the letters that Paul wrote to them reveals their personal instruction in their nature. These are letters of correction and instruction from a father in the faith to his sons. They were never written to the entire Church. They were personal letters or instruction, but we can learn from them, especially if we are going to be leaders.

To come into leadership and really be effective, we need to know what it cost Timothy and Titus. We need to know what it cost other men and women to do these things. This instruction was in regard to the ministry; therefore each individual called by God to serve in a leadership capacity must diligently study these epistles as a guide for their lives. I would say to any person going into the ministry, "study these diligently." It will keep you from making a lot of mistakes. It will keep you from going in error in your life and in the service that God called you to. Let's look at 2 Tim 2:15.

2 Tim 2:15 Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Study doesn't mean only to crack the books. It means you have to study to be quiet. We don't need to study to be loud or noisy; it comes natural to be talking, but we need to study to be quiet. Here he is talking about studying for another reason. Study to show thyself approved unto God. We talked about this earlier, being approved unto God. We listed the things that Paul said it took for him to be approved of God.

If we would make a list through the word of God of the things that are happening in our lives compared to the word of God, maybe those things

that are working contrary to us, are working for our approval. Maybe when we are backslidden, maybe when we are blasphemed against, maybe when we are spoken evil of, these are working to approve us. So we need to study to be quiet, to hold our peace when somebody says something about us or is not complimentary. We don't need to jump up and say, "Now listen, let me tell you the truth." That looks like I am guilty.

I need to study to hold my peace. I need to study to let God justify me. If I am right with God, God will take care of it, and if I am not right with God, all of my words will not change a thing except get me in deeper. So there has to be study.

"...a workman," not a retiree. God doesn't have any retirees in the Kingdom. All of this is working toward the rewards that God has for you, so you can have a place in the Kingdom of God, to really rule and work with Jesus Christ. He has enough people filling up space, waiting to go to heaven. He is looking for some people to go to work. He wants some workmen. He is waiting for some people to say, "Here am I, Lord. Send me! I am willing to sit and wait and study and learn. I am willing to suffer whatever it takes, but Lord, I want to work for You."

2 Tim 2:15 ...a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Let's look at 2 Tim 4:5:

2 Tim 4: 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Are we making full proof of our ministry. How many of us are watching in all things, or moving in the realm of enduring afflictions. Many are the afflictions of the righteous but the Lord delivereth him out of them all (Psalm 34:19). A lot of time we are too busy trying to deliver ourself out of the affliction, rather than finding the truth in that affliction. The affliction of the fiery furnace brought the revelation of Jesus Christ, didn't it. The affliction of Paul on the ship that was about to go down, and the salvation of that ship came while he was down in the hold of that ship and the angel of the Lord came and talked to him (Acts 27:13-44).

God will talk to you in your afflictions many times when He can't talk to you in your abundance. You are too busy taking care of your abundance. When you have a lot of afflictions, you aren't busy doing much of anything except crying out, "Oh God, help me. Oh God, have mercy on me." All of a sudden the Lord appears to you.

2 Tim 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2 Tim 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

God wants us to be perfect, doesn't He. He wants us to be complete in Christ. He wants us to be in such a way that all the good works that need to be done are available to let the Holy Spirit do them through us.

1 Thess 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, ...

You may say, "Well, I never say much; I think a lot." That is another way you need to be quiet. You let your imagination run away with you. You need to study to quiet your mind, bring peace into your mind and your spirit. This isn't just talking about your mouth all the time. Your mind can be so busy imagining things or doing things that you never are any profit to the Kingdom of God.

So we need to quiet our mind down. We need to bring down the strong holds; we need to cast down the imaginations (2 Cor 10:4-5). We need to get a quiet and peaceful mind. Then no matter what anybody tries to throw in there, it will just go in and out. It won't make any difference. You won't listen because you have a quiet and a peaceful mind.

That takes studying, because we have imagined and let our minds go in every direction in the world, haven't we. We let them float off into all kinds of situations, imagining 'what if, what if, what if' and pretty soon that 'what if' becomes a reality, and we are starting to think that way. We are troubled, we are in turmoil, we are constantly tossed to and fro (Eph 4:14).

I need a peaceful mind, friends. When I read the word of God I need a mind that isn't going in five-hundred directions and all I've done is an exercise in reading. We are to study this, not to just read it. We are to digest it, to meditate on it. I can't meditate on this if my mind is not at peace. When that mind starts getting out of control, bring it under subjection to the Holy Spirit. Bring every thought captive to the mind of Christ (2 Cor 10:5). A lot of times we think that all we have to do is read the Bible and go to Church, and we are in and are going to be used of God. No! Leaders don't get there that way. When Joshua was commanded to take the people across Jordan, one of the things God told him to do was to meditate, day and night (Joshua 1:8).

Have a quiet mind, a peaceful mind, so you won't be afraid when the enemy comes against you. Keep your mind stayed upon the Lord (Isaiah

26:3). That takes practice. That takes studying in every situation that comes along. Instead of letting it bring fear, we keep our mind stayed upon the Lord. Then we can really look at that situation that looks as if it is going to destroy us, and say, "This is working together for my good. Thank you, Lord Jesus." But if our mind is not quiet, the report of fear can come, we meditate on it and we blow it all out of proportion and we react to the fear. A good leader has to have a quiet mind.

A person who is tossed to and fro, doubleminded, is unstable in all his ways (James 1:8). How can you lead people if today you say one thing, and tomorrow you say something else. How can you lead people into the war against the enemy if today you have victory, and tomorrow you say you don't know if you can do it. The mind of Christ has to be there (Phil 2:5).

You have to study. You have to bring all of this under subjection to the Holy Spirit. Instead of saying, "Oh my! Look at what is going on around me. How can I serve God? I'm in real trouble," you need to say, "Lord, let me think like You think. Let me look at the lions den and say: that is where I am going to find the presence of the Lord. Let me look at the fiery furnace, and say: that is where I am going to find the presence of the Lord. Let me look at the shipwreck in my life and say: here is where I find the presence of the Lord." You need to say, "My God shall supply all my needs" (Phil 4:19), instead of looking at your troubles.

1 Thess 4:11 ...and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

You have to study to be quiet and do your own business. Get out of everybody else's business. My business and your business is to do the will of my Father. That is exactly our business, not getting in each other's business. And we are to work with our own hands. Praise God! He said "Be busy; don't be idle, and just laying around and gossiping. I didn't give you two hands just to have them feeding your face all the time. Work with your own hands."

Somebody said to me one time, "Brother Krider, now that I have become a minister, everybody is going to take care of me." Boy, was he in for a shock. I have built more tents since I have been a minister than I did before I got in the ministry, but God gave me two hands and some intellect and knowledge on how to do things. I don't mind doing things. It gives me an opportunity to witness to people on jobs. It gives me an opportunity to share Christ.

I get into homes on wiring jobs that I never would have gotten into before if I had knocked on the door and said, "I am a preacher." I've gotten into homes where a child was sick, and I would ask if they minded if I prayed

for that child. They never told me 'no'. Or maybe they are having trouble of some kind, and all of a sudden they are telling me all their troubles. I was there because I went as an electrician, but we are never off the job as leaders for God. He will always make a door open for you to pray for someone, to witness to someone, to share Christ with someone.

A friend said, "Well, in construction you have to be careful." I was in construction. I found my best chances to witness was to those guys who thought they were so tough, then something came into their life that they couldn't handle, and I wasn't a preacher; I was a friend. I was somebody that had peace of mind that they didn't have. So God is saying don't worry about it; just go ahead and do what ever you have to do. Get the job done.

1 Thess 4:11 ...as we commanded you.

1 Thess 4:12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

God doesn't want you to go around in lack all of the time.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Anybody who is in the five-fold ministry has to spend a lot of time with God. Not a lot of time in college, but a lot of time with God. They have a purpose, don't they. The reason is for (#1) the perfecting of the saints, (#2) the work of the ministry, (#3) for the edifying of the body of Christ, (#4) till we all come in the unity of the faith, (#5) and of the knowledge of the Son of God, (#6) unto a perfect man, (#7) unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

That has not happened yet, so we need some real men and women that say, "Yes Lord, here am I. I want to be what you want me to be. I am willing to study, I am willing to labor with my own hands. I am willing to do anything you want me to do, Father, and I don't care what it costs me, I want to enter into that ministry so I can see the body of Christ come into the unity." If your heart is not that way, then please don't go into the ministry. Do not go into the ministry for a living. That is wrong. You go into the ministry because you realize it is a calling from God. It is an opportunity to serve God and the body of Christ.

The apostle according to the Greek Conc. 652 from G649; a delegate; spec. an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ (with miraculous powers):--apostle, messenger, he that is sent.

A prophet according to the Greek Conc.= G4396. from a comp. of G4253 and G5346; a foreteller ("prophet"); by anal. an inspired speaker; by extens. a poet:--prophet. Heb. Conc. = 5030 = an inspired man; prophecy.

An evangelist = Greek 2099. from G2097; a preacher of the gospel: one who announces good tidings.

A pastor = Greek 4166 = a shepherd: to feed or a feeder. Heb 7462 = to tend a flock; to rule; shepherd.

A teacher = Greek 1320 from G1321; an instructor, master, teacher. Heb 3384 and 3925 = to teach: direct, inform, instruct, show.

These five-fold ministries are sent to the body of Christ, not to the world. All of us can do the work of an evangelist, because that is to win people to Christ, but there is the work of an evangelist to the body of Christ, to bring the good tidings to the body. We need some who will lift us up with the good news, ones who are in the ministry because they want to edify the body. They want to strengthen the body, and they have good news.

If you feel God wants you to be a teacher in the body of Christ, it falls under the five-fold ministries. Whether you are a Sunday School teacher, or a teacher in a Christian School, or whatever you are, you fall under that teaching ministry. As you grow, you find that the Lord is having an influence in your life, on children, on men and women, because it is not you doing it. It is the Holy Spirit of God in that gift.

The five-fold ministries are gifts to the body of Christ. They are not just personalities. Paul passed on to be with the Lord a long time ago, but the apostleship is still here. Silas went to be with the Lord, but the prophet is still here. Those offices will be here until the body finally comes to maturity in Christ, where every member is working in his own calling. Let's look at 1 Cor 12:28. I want to show you some other things that are ministries.

1 Cor 12:28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Look at the word 'helps'. This is a ministry; it is a gift. The Dict. reference for the word 'helps' means safety, secure, aid, assistance, strengthen, make strong, to save, to lift up. All of us can get in that ministry, can't we.

"I never heard of a ministry of helps. I want to be a big evangelist. Everybody would know me then when I came in the Church." How about the one who just helps that widow; goes over and visits with her. Strengthens her. Edifies her. Is that important? I believe it is, because the word of God says:

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

So in God's sight, the 'helps' ministry is a great ministry. It aids, it succors, it strengthens. The person who does that faithfully will receive the same reward as the one who faithfully preaches to thousands. Anything you do for God is a ministry.

Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do it heartily as unto the Lord (Col 3:23).

In Romans 16:10 Paul says, *"Salute Apelles approved in Christ."* The Amplified Bible says, "Greet Apelles, that one tried and approved in Christ, the Messiah." This is the only time Apelles is mentioned in the Bible, and nothing is said about what he did, but he was approved in Christ. He must not have had some big-name ministry, but the Lord was pleased with whatever he did.

If I minister to a sister in the name of the Lord, I do it because I love her and I am doing it unto the Lord. If she needed a refrigerator moved, would it be a ministry if I got another brother to help, and we would go over and move it for her. Would that be as important to God as getting up and preaching. Yes, it would.

I remember a member in our Church who was always on time, but this one Sunday morning he was really late. He almost missed Church. My mind started thinking wrong things; I didn't study to show myself quiet. I thought, "What is this guy doing." It ruined my whole morning. When he came in, his shirt was dishevelled and he had his coat off, and his hands were a little dirty. After Church I said to him, "You missed Church." He said, "No, Brother Krider, I had Church out there with a woman who had a flat tire, and didn't have a spare. I had to take her into town to get her tire fixed." I felt very, very small.

See how we get concepts in Church. He was in Church; he was representing the Church. He was taking the Church to a lady who needed help in her desperate hour. He was being the Church to that lady. I pray that when you are not IN a Church building on Sunday mornings, that you are in Church somewhere helping somebody, not entertaining flesh.

Then there is the gift of governments, which means 'to rule, princely power, steering, directing, lordship, and power.' You are in that realm of governments if you are working in directorship in the Church. This is an important ministry. If you have ever dealt with the IRS, you know how important that ministry is. It means someone also who can go to the Lord without anyone knowing what is going on, and to receive the power of God to change situations. It means giving direction through prayer to the body of Christ, or giving counseling to the body of Christ. It means the ability to steer others through the Spirit of God into a right direction.

These may not seem important because they don't get offerings or money but what is important about getting money for doing God's work?

When I was told that I was too old to go into the ministry at thirty-three years old, I took every opportunity I could to minister anywhere I could - street corners, wherever. One opportunity that opened up to me, was that I could go preach in the Mission, and I went there.

I didn't get to preach however, because we had some wild character who was filled with the Holy Ghost who preached that night. People got healed, and miracles happened, and a young man came to give his life to Jesus. My group and I took him in the back room and were praying for him, and he received the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He started speaking in tongues, and about that time the manager of the Mission came around the corner. I got a call from him the next day. He said, "Brother Krider, don't bring your group down here anymore. We don't do that stuff here. If you want to do that, you go under the bridge next door."

Every Sunday afternoon for a year after that, a restaurant in town gave my group all the chicken we needed, gave us his own hot truck, put the food in hot, and we would take it out under the bridge. We would sing and praise the Lord, and we would get a crowd of people together, and we would help them and steer them in the right direction to Jesus. That ministry down there was as exciting as any portion of ministry that I have been in, in all the world, because they had nowhere to go, they had no hope, and the Church was there for them.

That man at the mission gave me the best advice I had ever received even though he didn't know he was doing it. It inspired me. I went under the bridge next door, and for one year we led people to Christ and steered them in the right direction. That is helps and governments, and every day

of our life we can be a helper, and every day we can work in the governments of God, some way and some place in some opportunity.

Father, we thank You. It is not by might nor power, but it is by Your Spirit. Lord, we are looking at the word of God, and we are excited, because we know that during this study, we are going to find our place. Lord, you are going to direct us into that area of ministry in our lives, whether it be helps, governments, or the five-fold ministry. Whatever it might be, Father, if it is the janitor, with gladness and joy of heart, we will keep the door in the house of the Lord, because we know that if we do it faithfully, the same reward is reckoned to us as it is reckoned to those who preach to the multitudes.

Father, our desire it to find, first of all, a faithfulness in our heart, to enter into that portion of ministry, small though it may seem, because as we take that place of smallness in the body of Christ, we find it to be a door into the largeness of God.

Our desire, Father, is to take the established truth, hook our faith on that truth, until the manifestation of that truth comes forth in our life. We thank You for all the wonderful examples that You have given us, for the truth that You have revealed through the ages. Help us to hear. Help us to understand Your principles. Teach us, guide us, direct us, and help us to be a help. In Jesus Name. Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 2

CALLED AND COMMISSIONED 1

Father, we thank you for this opportunity to share Christ together. Lord, we know that the teacher is the Holy Ghost. We know that man is not able in his natural wisdom to understand nor teach the word of God. We ask that the Spirit of the Lord will give us hearing, will give us understanding, give us desires and hearts to receive, and build into our hearts new faith. Build upon that faith, strength, life, wisdom, and understanding. In Jesus wonderful name, Amen!

This chapter is on "The Called." The first chapter we are going to study on is out of the Old Testament. We are going to talk about some leaders that we find ourselves in various relationships with: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Gideon, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. I'm sure that in these men we are going to find a place that we can relate to in the call of God.

If you don't have a call of God, there is nothing you can do. You are just going to run around in circles. You need to find out what you are called to do, not just the call of God. Find out what God has given you the ability, the gift, to operate in. Paul said in 1 Peter 4:11 that we are ministers of the New Testament according to the ability given to us of God. All of us do not have the same ability. We have the same Holy Spirit, we have the same working of God through our life, but we have different areas of development in our lives for the body of Christ.

We are going to start with Gen. 1:27.

Gen 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

So we see then that Adam's call was actually to replenish and to rule. Those are two important things we are going to look at in his life. REPLENISH AND RULE. Every Christian has the call to rule over the powers of darkness. We are called to rule with Christ in the Kingdom of

God, but Adam was called in a perfect state. None of us has ever been called in a perfect state. Only Adam and then later Jesus have ever been called being in a perfect state. That is the important thing we need to realize here. God gave him a kingdom, God gave him a world, and said, "Now I want you to subdue it, replenish it, take care of it. I want you to have dominion and rule over it."

So the first call of God that we see in the Bible is not defeat, but victory. The first call of God in your life is victory. God will never call you to defeat. When you get defeated, it is because you have caused yourself to be defeated, or you have acted unwisely. You have acted without wisdom, you have acted without understanding.

We understand this, that even though he was called to rule and replenish, subdue, and have dominion, he lost that, because part of him listened to the wrong counsel. The first problem you are going to have in your life, if you are going to be in leadership, is that you give an ear to the wrong counsel. It can even come from your own mind and your own heart. That is why it is so important to know the word of God.

Adam lost that dominion or that ruling authority, that call of God. He was never called again to do that. Because he had compromised his call, he fell from the very presence of God, and then he had to go out and labor on his own and make a living. It is very important to understand that. Let the fear of God come into your heart. When you start taking wrong counsel and acting upon it, even though it may seem Godly, even though it may sound right, if God's word is contrary to that, you had better take God's word. Once you fall from that call, it is hard to get back into it. Wilful sin will get you in big trouble (Heb 10:26-27).

God never changes His mind. If you are called to be a leader, God will do something about making you the kind of leader He wants you to be.

Let's look at Gen 6:8-14:

Gen 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Before anything else happens in your life, you have to find favor or grace in the sight of the Lord. God is not calling the sinner or the heathen or ungodly to the ministry. He is calling the sinner to salvation. He is calling the ungodly to repentance, but the only ones He is calling to leadership are those who have tasted of the grace of God. So the first thing you want to be sure of is that your salvation is solid with God, that you are working in a place with God where you know your relationship with Christ.

Then God goes on to tell Noah some things:

Gen 6:9 These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

Gen 6:10 And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Gen 6:11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

Gen 6:12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Gen 6:13 And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Gen 6:14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

In other words, Noah's call comes to be a DELIVERER. Read and understand what I am going to say next. Right now the earth is filled with violence, there is corruptness everywhere. Jesus himself says these words (Matt 24:37-42).

Mat 24:37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Mat 24:38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

Mat 24:39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Mat 24:40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Mat 24:41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Mat 24:42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

God is calling a people to be deliverers because out of Mt. Zion shall come saviours (Obadiah 21), so everyone of us is touched with that call of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, of bringing people into the ark of safety.

I want you to notice something here: Noah first of all found grace. You cannot preach what you have not tasted of. You cannot witness the baptism of the Holy Spirit unless you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. You cannot witness salvation unless you have been saved. Noah had found grace in the sight of God, but God had passed judgment on an ungodly world, and He said, "I am going to destroy it, but you, Noah, are going to be a deliverer."

God is going to destroy this world and there had better be some deliverers coming out of Zion. Don't just shrug it off and say, "Well, that was okay for Noah." It is going to happen again just like it did in the day of Noah, but it will not be with water this time. The word of God tells us that out of Zion shall come saviours, plural, Redeemers that would bring the gospel of Christ to a nation about ready to be overcome and judged by the power of God. Next let us look at Gen 9:1. We are talking here about some types that really work. You will find some of these things in areas of your own life.

Gen 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

We find that Noah was a DELIVERER AND A RESTORER. The call of God in your life works this way also. You are to restore people to God through Jesus Christ, but first of all you have to learn to be a deliverer. You have to learn that God has called you; that in a hopeless situation the world doesn't have any answers. Their answers are more programs, more money, more taxes to take care of what they can't take care of.

God is saying that He is going to raise up some leaders out of Mt. Zion: "Those will be the ones whom I will call, a remnant if you please. I will call them to bring forth the ark of God, which is Jesus Christ. Those who hear the message of God shall be brought into that ark of safety." All of us are called to restore people to Christ. We are to restore them from the fallen condition they are in today and bring them into the ark of safety.

So we find out that the first man that God formed was Adam, and God gave him a job: a restorer and a ruler. He lost that dominion, but God hasn't changed His mind. That original call is still in every believer's life. Especially in leadership there has to be the ability to rule, the ability to replenish with the knowledge of the Kingdom of God in the hearts and lives of men and women.

There also has to be a delivering call in our lives. If you don't believe that God is giving you the power to deliver men from demonic darkness, then stay out of ministry. Stay out of anything to do with that kind of work, because it doesn't really belong to you. It belongs to those who know they are called. I am tired of hearing people get up in the pulpits and apologize for what they can't do. It is time that you realize that God called you to do all things through Him.

Noah could have looked at the impossible situation and said, "Wait. It is just me and these three kids of mine, and we are going to build this ark the way You want it?" God said, "You are going to build it according to the plan which I have given you." God is going to build but He is going to build according to His plan, not yours or mine. We cannot add to or take away from it and expect it to work.

Our jobs are to understand that God's original call is still at work today on the earth. He is going to have a people who will rule with Him, not only in the world to come, not only in the millennial reign, but people right now who will rule with Him, seated with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:6).

Next we are going to look at Abraham. He was through the lineage of Terah (Gen 11:26). Whatever your background is, that is not going to equip you for the ministry of God. It is not going to be by power or might, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord (Zech 4:6). You can use experiences in your life to help show others that they don't need to get in those areas, but when you start ministering the word of God, it had better be by the Spirit, and it had better be by the Holy Ghost of God, and it had better not be the letter of the law any longer. In Gen 12:1 God began to speak to Abram (his name at that time).

Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

Gen 12:2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

Gen 12:3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

You may think that He is talking here about Israel, but every prophecy is double sided. He is talking not only about a natural Israel, but He is talking about the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, a holy nation (1 Peter 2:9). Abraham is called, and the first thing he has to do is separate himself. You cannot minister unless you separate yourself unto God. You cannot minister being conformed to this world (Romans 12:1-2).

The Church has not been the blessing to the world that it should have been. It has been a blessing in part, in portions; but the time is coming when the Church is going to rise and shine. It is going to finally rise into it's place of authority upon this physical earth. It will be the ark that Noah was told to build. It will be the safe hiding place for the righteous. It will be a strong tower.

We are going to see things happening that we just dreamed were going to happen, or hoped would happen. God will send forth out of that Church saviours into all the world to bring forth the knowledge of the glory of the Lord to cover the

earth as the waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14), but you are not going to do it unless you get rid of all this worldly wisdom. You should do what Paul did with his. He counted it all dung that he might win Christ (Phil 3:8).

Abraham then was brought forth to be one that would receive the promise by faith, because he believed and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Romans 4:3, 20-24). Every minister should be brought forth to receive something from God by faith to give to the body of Christ. If you haven't received anything from God, you have nothing to give. If you are just going to give what you have given day after day, year after year, month after month, it is going to be worm eaten. It will bring forth a people that are tired and have no vision; a people who stumble every time they walk.

Abraham was called to RECEIVE BY FAITH THE PROMISE OF GOD. He didn't get it for himself only. He also got it for us that we might be a partaker of that New Covenant, but not to sit down somewhere and go to sleep and wait for the Lord to return. No! We got that New Covenant so we could go to work in Christ, and Christ could work in us, and we could be people who could reach out with the call of God.

Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

The call has never changed all the way through the word of God, clear through to Revelation. It never changes. We have a message, we have the power to do it in, we have the authority to do it in, and by faith we have received every good and precious promise from God to do it with.

I look at these men and I see that Adam, created perfect, had a great commission from God and lost it. Noah, who had the opportunity to re-establish it but messed up a little bit himself. Abraham came with something brand new. Everything about God is new every day even though it is eternal. When it gets old serving God, it is not God that is getting old. It is not the things of God that get old; it is us who get old. I am not talking about our age; I am talking about our enthusiasm, our desire, our reaching out and caring, and in our fellowship with Christ. That is when you begin to get to a place where it no longer thrills you to serve God. What we need in the pulpits and what we need in the body of Christ are leaders who are filled with enthusiasm for the things of God.

I can see Abraham with all the excitement that is going on in his life, and the first thing he has to do is separate himself. That is one reason we don't get excited about the call of God; we are still holding on to the world. We are still reaching out here and have hold of a little of this and a little of that, and we are not willing to let it all go for Jesus. You have to be crucified to the world, and the world must be crucified to you before you can ever become effective in the call to the work of the Holy Spirit (Gal 2:20; 6:14)

Adam, Noah, and Abraham were before there were any Jews, so we know the Covenant wasn't made then. The Covenant was made to Isaac, then through Christ Jesus to us, as well as to the Jews (Heb 9:14-15;12:24). Israel does not have it all. God made a double promise to Israel that He would restore their land, and He would bring them back. They would build their homes. They would build the waste places and inhabit them, and they would never be moved again (Isaiah 58:12; 61:4).

We are seeing that today, but at the same time that is happening, the other part of that prophetic utterance is coming forth. The Church is rising up; it is tired of it's lethargy. It is tired of it's lukewarmness. It is tired of it's foolishness. It is finally shaking itself and coming alive like a mighty giant. We are seeing a tremendous call of God in our lives. We are a part of God's government and there is no end to that, only increase. Abraham might have looked at this and said, "Wow! God has called me to receive the promise."

Now let us look at Moses in Exodus chapter 3:

Exo 3:1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.

Exo 3:2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. Exo 3:3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

Exo 3:4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

This is the first time that God really talked to Moses, and Moses didn't say: "Who are you?" When God calls you, you will know it is God. Many times the reason we don't hear God's voice is we are caught up in so much activity and crowds of people, and such groups of fellowship that we never get alone with God anywhere to hear His voice speak. It is that simple.

Moses had to be thrown out of Egypt; he had to be thrown out of Israel. He ended up in the backside of the desert, and this was all God's plan. God could not talk to him in Egypt. God could not talk to him in Israel. God got him alone on the backside of the desert and humbled him from rulership in the natural to be a tender of the sheep. Then God spoke:

Exo 3:5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

Exo 3:6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

Exo 3:7 And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

Exo 3:8 And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

Exo 3:9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Exo 3:10 Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

God said He had come down to deliver the children of Israel (vs. 8) and that He would send Moses unto Pharaoh (vs. 10). He is going to use Moses, but God is going to do the delivering. God will use you, but God is going to do the work. Keep your hands off it. Walk in the fear of God. Walk in such a place with God that there is an awesome reverence of God.

Exo 3:11 And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

Moses had tried to deliver Israel once in his own strength (Exo 2:11-16). Anytime you try to do the work of God in your strength, you are going to fail. God will make it happen. God will never let you succeed in the ministry in your own strength because you rely on that strength, and when you get older and you don't have that strength, you will be like David. You will start numbering the camp of Israel to see how many are with you. You will bring a plague into the congregation rather than the blessing of God.

It is not by might nor power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord. So God said to Moses: "I have come down to deliver My people out of Egypt, and I am going to send you to do it." When you are sent out to do something, don't go out there

and brag on what you are going to do, or what authority you have just earned. It is going to be done by the Spirit of the Lord.

Exo 3:12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

Exo 3:13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

Exo 3:14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Exo 3:15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Exo 3:16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:

Exo 3:17 And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

Exo 3:18 And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

Exo 3:19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

A lot of times when we are going out to minister, we think we are going to see victory to victory; that there is not going to be any opposition in our life. We think, "I'm saved, and I can run through a troop and leap over a wall, praise God." What happened? You fell down, bumped your head on the wall, and they had to carry you away in a basket, because when you start thinking, that is when you get in trouble.

There is another man in the Bible named Naaman who said, "I thought" (2 Kings 5:11). What happened? He didn't get his healing until he was talked into doing what the man of God told him to do. You are not to debate the word of God. You are to do what God says and let Him bring forth the results. If it looks like failure, God has something greater happening than you can see.

We know what happened with Moses. We know that time after time after time Moses and Aaron went into this king, and time after time God hardened the king's heart, so He could bring forth glory to Himself. Sometimes you get into a situation and it seems like you work at it all the time, and nothing is working. Everything seems like failure, but friend, that is where faith comes in. Just say: "God called me, God sent me. It doesn't make any difference how many times I have to come against this thing, one day it is going to fall down and God is going to be glorified. I am not going to change what God has told me to do. "

Exo 3:19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand.

Exo 3:20 And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

Exo 3:21 And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty:

Exo 3:22 But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.

Since that time, Egypt has never been a world power again. They have been a debtor nation; God bankrupted them. God is saying to us that Moses was called to be a person TO BRING THEM OUT. We need to be a people to bring people out of bondage, not to pacify them in their bondage. We should not be afraid of the one who has bound them, the darkness and the powers of darkness that have bound them. We are not to come against the people who are bound, but the authorities that bind them. As a leader you need to understand that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds (2 Cor 10:4).

Psa 149:6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;

Psa 149:7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;

Psa 149:8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

Psa 149:9 To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

You are to set people free. You are to be a deliverer. You are to bring people out of their darkness. If you have a call from God, it is not to sit down and do nothing. If you have a call from God, it is to enter into that ministry God has given you and begin to stand against the wiles of the devil. Begin to wrestle against these authorities, and you don't do it through carnal weapons. **You do it through the power of praise. You do it through worship.**

No devil can stand for long when you begin to praise the Lord. He can't stand that. When you begin to worship God in the beauty of His Holiness, the devil cannot handle that, and his captives are loosed, because he is turned around and he is bound. If we want to learn how to be preachers, we have to learn how to be praisers. The disciples never asked Jesus to teach them how to preach. They wanted to know how to pray.

One of the greatest forms of praise and worship is prayer. Jesus had power that they didn't have. They saw His life; they lived with Him, walked with Him, and talked with Him. That power didn't come through great preaching; it came through great prayer, and then He could preach great. The first thing Jesus did early in the morning was to go out and seek the Father. He went out and prayed.

God wants us to be like Moses, be a deliverer, but not to be discouraged when it doesn't work the first time. Many people I know started out with great hopes, great anticipation, great excitement, but were not rooted and grounded and settled in the word of God, and the first defeat that came, which wasn't a defeat but was just a test of their faith, caused them to give up.

It is amazing how we can say we believe in established truth, and cannot wait for the manifestation of that truth. Established truth was that God said to Moses, "I will get My people out. How I do it is not your business; just believe that. And how many times it takes is none of your business either. You just get hold of the established truth that I have spoken it, and if you will be faithful, you will see the manifested truth of that come to pass in your life."

Many of us say, "Yes, I believe, Lord," but we can't wait for it to be manifested in our lives, so we either give up or try to do it in our own strength. Moses tried to make excuses not to do it. He kept saying, "I can't do it, Lord. I

just can't do it." God said, "You can do it, and you are going to do it. I will just give you some help. If you don't think you can handle it alone, I will get somebody to help you. I will make Aaron a partner with you in this situation." God has help. God has those to work with you. God never called you to be a lone ranger in this situation. God called you to be faithful. That is all He called you to do.

Let's go to Joshua chapter 1.

Josh 1:1 Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,

Josh 1:2 Moses my servant is dead; ..

This is the Lord speaking: "Moses is dead." We keep thinking how wonderful it would be if we could have revival like they had it back then in the good old days; if we could just do it again like they did it back there. God has something new for us, and we can't get into it because we still want back there. God has something that is going to shake this world like it has never been shaken before, but God is going to have to get through to us that the past is dead. Moses did his work; he is dead.

Josh 1:2 ...now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

Moses was used to bring them out; he was the deliverer. Now God raises up Joshua TO BRING THEM IN. Hallelujah! You are not going to do all the work for God. You are only going to have a portion of it. I only have a portion of the work to do. I can only do part of it, but if I am faithful to do mine, and you are faithful to do yours, and we work together, we won't fight one another or be envious of one another. We are going to be excited about working shoulder to shoulder, moving rank upon rank, moving forward in the army of God, in the power of the Holy Spirit, trampling down every power of darkness.

The Church is not going to be defeated. The Church is designed to be triumphant. Christ isn't coming back to a Church that is whipped and He has to sneak it out in the middle of the night. He is coming back to set up a Kingdom with a Church that is victorious.

Josh 1:2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

Josh 1:3 Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

Josh 1:4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, ...

They haven't possessed that land yet.

Josh 1:4 ...all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

Josh 1:5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Notice how God admonishes Joshua to carry this calling.

Josh 1:6 Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land...

God said, "You are going to do it, Joshua. You are going down but I will do the work." Just like He said to Moses.

Joshua 1:6 ...unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.

Josh 1:7 Only be thou strong and very courageous, ...

We need to get that into our hearts. We have a hard time overcoming ourselves, let alone binding nobles and kings with fetters of iron to loose those who are oppressed in this world (Psa 149:4-9). We are laying around waiting for Moses to resurrect so we can go on. God says he is dead, so rise up, stand up, be strong, be of a good courage.

Josh 1:7 ...that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

Josh 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Josh 1:9 Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

Think about this for a minute. For forty years Moses put up with those people in the wilderness. When it came time to bring them in, God didn't let Moses bring them in. His ministry was finished. Joshua was the man He was preparing to bring them in. We should quit being dismayed, and quit looking at the enemy and the things that are coming upon the earth, and at the corruptness in the government and the corruptness in the system. What do you expect out of people who are in darkness? Dark decisions are all they can make.

Don't be mad at the government. They can't make any better decisions. They are people who are in darkness and they only make laws that darkness understands. If there is going to be any change, it will come not from the darkness, but from the light, for there is no power in darkness. In darkness there is an absolute loss of power. In light there is all power. We are the Church. Quit being dismayed at the darkness. Begin to do something about the darkness. Begin to march forward in prayer and fasting, and be strong and courageous in God.

People say, "What is the use. I guess the best thing we can do now is to hold on and hope that Jesus comes in time." In time for what? I don't have a hard time with the thinking of the world, because they are in darkness, but I have a hard time with the thinking of the Church. The Church is in light. They have all power. They have all authority given to them, and they are told to go forward. They are told that the gates of hell can't stop them, can't prevail against them (Matt 16:18).

What are we waiting for? God is waiting for us. We are not waiting for Him. The principles never change. There has to be a strong and courageous people. There has to be a people who are not dismayed by the darkness; not dismayed by what they hear in the evil report, but say, "Our God is with us; who can be against us. If God be for us, who can be against us. There are more with us than there are against us."

God designed the Church to always triumph in Christ. All He had to do was find somebody to believe Him; somebody that would leave the dead and get into the living, and quit remembering the past and start moving forward in the power of God.

Paul wrote in Phil 3:13-14:

(Phil 3:13 KJV) Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

(Phil 3:14 KJV) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

God is saying that it is not the world that we have to look at and be dismayed at. The Church should be pressing into those places of darkness and moving against them and binding them with the fetters of iron, making their leaders totally hopeless and helpless, setting the captives free.

So we see that Joshua's call was to bring them in, but if you don't know where you are going, how are you going to bring anybody in. If you haven't read the road map, how do you know where you are going. The Spirit works with the Bible. When Jesus Christ defeated Satan in Matt chapter 4, He used the written word of God, and it came alive when the Holy Spirit spoke it through Him. He knew what was in there, because He studied it. He was in the synagogue daily, studying, wasn't He.

You may say you don't have time, but you will never be strong or courageous and do exploits, because you won't know what you can do if you haven't read the road map. You haven't studied the book of principles that tell you exactly what your authority is. The enemy tries to keep us out of the word of God, because the word is a lamp and a light (Psa 119:105). If I am going to come against darkness, I had better know how to walk.

He told Joshua that if he was going to bring these people in, he had better understand what he was doing. Before you get up and try to lead somebody, it had better not be the blind leading the blind. It had better be somebody with eyesight in the Holy Spirit, somebody who has hearing of the Holy Spirit, who can call and shout, "Come, let us rise up together."

I am not going to follow somebody who is stumbling around and bouncing off the walls, and saying they hope this works, thinking if they get enough people together it will work. I am looking for the people who stand up and say, "If God be for us, who can be against us." You can go ahead and read the rest of Joshua chapter 1. It is an exciting chapter.

I love Joshua. He gets me excited about the things of God. He goes along all these years working, and learning, and watching, and never tries to get rid of Moses. He never tries to dispose of the leadership that God raises up. We need to pray for our leaders, not get rid of them. If one of them is not doing what you think they should, don't criticize them; pray for them. Strengthen them, gird them up with the truth of God's holy word.

Next there is another person brought on the scene. Let's look at Gideon in the book of Judges 6th chapter.

Judg 6:11 And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

Judg 6:12 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

All he was doing was threshing out a little wheat down by the winepress, trying to get bread for the family, because he knew that the Midianites would come and take everything. What made him a man of valour? He was doing what he could do. That is what makes you a mighty man of valour. It is not doing something you cannot do, but doing what you can do. ***Judg 6:13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.***

The reason things were falling apart was because they were not on God's side. If you want God on your side, you have to get on His side. You have to go where God is. He does not take sides. He is the Lord, and He stands in one position and you come to Him. They had forsaken their God; God had not forsaken them. He was there, ready and willing and able to deliver when He could find somebody He could deliver through. Where did He go to find the one who can deliver? Out there at the winepress, threshing out a little wheat. He doesn't go and get a great man of the army, or a great prophet. He just goes and gets Gideon.

You might think you don't have enough education for God to call you. How much education did Gideon have? How much did he know about war? According to the word of God, he didn't know anything. What made him a man of valour? He was doing what he could do, and he was faithful doing it, but he wanted to know what was going on, didn't he. God doesn't mind you asking questions.

Judg 6:14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

Judg 6:15 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? ...

It isn't enough to just get the call of God, is it. Isn't that what we think? We just think God sends us out there, no equipment or anything, but He told Gideon to go in his might, and he was going to deliver Israel. We want God to be reasonable, don't we. If God wants to use us to prophesy or speak in tongues, or to do something that seems impossible, we start saying, "Lord, how can we do it?"

Judges 6:15 ...behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

He said, "I don't have any money. I can't buy a ransom here for Israel." It isn't by power or might, but it is by My Spirit, saith the Lord. When we quit trying to do it in our own strength, we are going to see God do miraculous things.

Judg 6:16 And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

Judg 6:17 And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me.

Judg 6:18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

Judg 6:19 And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it.

Judg 6:20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so.

Judg 6:21 Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

Judg 6:22 And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.

He began to realize then that he was dealing with God, didn't he. Isn't that the way we are. God says He wants to use us, and we say, "God, you can't. I am just a poor little man or woman. I don't have an education. Look at all the mistakes I have made. Look at all the failures that I have made. You can't use me."

God shows him a miracle here, and it still isn't enough. Gideon puts a fleece before God, not once but twice, and he finally becomes convinced that God wants to use him. How many of us have tested and tried God one hundred times already. "God, if you really want me to do that..." God says, "Wait a minute. I'm speaking to you and that should be enough."

Gideon didn't have what we have today. He did not have the Holy Spirit. Gideon did not have that presence of God. We have the Holy Spirit, so why are we not able to hear what He is saying to us. Again it goes back a lot to this, our hearing. God speaks and when He speaks the words are Spirit and they are life.

We can't fault Gideon for this. He had seen disaster after disaster. They had raised their crops and the Midianites had come down and wiped the crop out. So finally he got smart and decided to hide some of it before they could come and take it. God saw him being faithful to do what he could do, and that is what God looked at. Then He called him a mighty man of valour, and he proved himself.

Gideon has to have himself approved again twice. Gideon with a small band of three hundred men went out, didn't fire one shot, didn't rattle one sword. All they took were pitchers of clay with a candle and a trumpet (Judges chap 7). That is all they took to war. How can you be a mighty man of valour without artillery. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Cor 10:4).

So the call came to Gideon, and his calling is to be a DELIVERER AND A JUDGE. It is getting better all the time, because those who are full age, having their senses exercised to discern between both good and evil (Heb 5:14), are to judge between good and evil. They are those who are able to eat the meat. Gideon is going to go to war, not with one hundred thousand men, not with ten thousand men, but with three hundred men. The power was not going to be in three hundred men. The power was going to be in God.

We need to go out in the name of the Lord like David did against the giant Goliath, and he said, "I come against you in the name of the Lord of hosts, and this day shall the Lord deliver thee into my hands" (1 Sam 17:46-47). If we really want to be leaders, we are going to have to begin to study what leadership costs; what it takes, what God looks at in leaders. He doesn't look at man's looks, but He looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7). He looks inward, and He saw Gideon doing what Gideon could do, and He began to reveal His power and His glory to Gideon. God doesn't get mad about the fleece, does He. He honors Gideon.

Gideon is like Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat, surrounded by Mt. Seir, Ammon, and Moab, began to wonder how they could defeat such a great army coming against them, and then the word of the Lord came. Jehoshaphat and all the others who were with him cried to the Lord, and the Lord didn't say to go out and fight them. He said to send out the praisers. He said "I know exactly where your enemy is, so all I want you to do is set yourselves and stand still, and see that the salvation of the Lord is with you" (2 Chron 20:17-18).

When they began to go out and praise God, what happened? Exactly what Psalm 149 declares. The enemy became so confused, they killed one another, and it took them three days to carry away the booty. Not one shot was fired; not

one sword was rattled. The praise of God confused and bound the enemy, and they could do nothing but destroy themselves (2 Chron 20:1-30).

That is what is going to happen before your face if you will walk in the power of the Holy Spirit of God. If you say, "Lord, here am I. Lord, You call me a man of valour. I am just doing what I can do, but I will do, with Your help and strength and power, whatever You want me to do." Both Gideon and Jehoshaphat were real men, and Gideon was called to be a deliverer and then called to be a judge of Israel.

Now we are going to look at David's life in 1 Samuel 16:6-13. We know that Saul had been rejected as the King by the Lord. Now God is looking for another to anoint, so He talks to Samuel and tells him to get the horn and go down to Jesse's house. He is going to find the next King there, and he is to anoint him. Let's begin with the 6th verse. Jesse has called his sons who are passing before Samuel.

1 Sam 16:6 And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on Eliab, and said, Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.

1 Sam 16:7 But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

God is not just using men that are tall, dark, and handsome. He is not just using women who are slim and trim. He is looking at our hearts, and He is saying to us that He doesn't care if we are old, or young, or fat, or skinny, or short, or tall. He is going to look on our hearts.

One of the greatest Kings Israel ever had was David. David did not want the office. He never looked for the office. He was busy doing what he could do.

1 Sam 16:8 Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

1 Sam 16:9 Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

1 Sam 16:10 Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

1 Sam 16:11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the

sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

1 Sam 16:12 And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

1 Sam 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

This is the account of a man coming out of a menial task of taking care of the sheep, but he is not the first, is he. Moses is called out of the sheep-herding business. But David doesn't leave right away. David doesn't just run out and say, "Praise God, I'm anointed King. Let's go kill old Saul." He goes back and starts tending the sheep again. Just because God calls you, and because God anoints you, He doesn't mean that at that moment you are going to step on the scene. He wants you to prepare yourself to be ready when the call comes.

The anointing of God was upon David. He was anointed to be the King over Israel, but he didn't go to the throne immediately. He went back to the sheep, and from the sheep he went to deliver Israel from the giant, and from there he went on until he finally became King.

David was a great King because he was called to praise, and David was called the man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). In spite of all of his mix-ups and mess-ups, God said, "This man is a man after My own heart." He was called to PRAISE AND UNITE. His son, Solomon, ruled over a united kingdom of Israel; the last time it would ever be united until the Lord restores it again upon His return. God chose him because He looked on his heart. God is not going to choose you because of what you look like outward. God is going to choose you because of what He sees in your heart.

There is a tremendous anointing that is moving in the body of Christ today. We need to prepare our hearts. We need to be ready. We need to quit looking for opportunities to preach; we need to just do what we can do. Be busy taking care of whatever it is that God calls us to do, regardless of where it is or what it is.

One of these days, if God so desires, He will touch you and raise you up. There is no limit with God. We are only limited by our own reasoning and thinking. God doesn't want us to limit ourselves by looking in the mirror, and saying, "Well, if I just had another ten years back." No! God knew exactly how old you would be when He called you. He knew how young you would be when He called you. Moses was eighty years old before he got in action, one hundred years old before he got the promise. Abraham was seventy-five years, and he was one hundred years old before he got that promised child.

God is saying something that we need to get hold of today, that just because God seemingly has set you aside and you are not doing much, doesn't mean that the next day God may not touch you and say, "Here it is. Let's go for it."

God called me to the ministry just like that. He called me to the ministry when men said I was washed up. Thirty-three years old; too old according to them to go to Bible College, and then to get into the ministry and still have time enough left to be of service to the organization. I became a Sunday School teacher, got filled with the Holy Ghost and then lost that job because I had to move out of that Church. I became the janitor of another Church, then the Sunday School teacher there, and the lawn keeper. Whatever was open, I took it. I got appointed to everything they had. Five years later God made me the Pastor of that Church.

Too many of us look at the shape we are in, and think that is where our lot is; that God is limited by the shape we are in. No! He called David because He looked on his heart, and He saw someone there who desired God. David was called to praise. He was called to unite the kingdom. He was called to take Jerusalem and to make it what it was to be. He was called of God from the sheep-pen to become a great man of God. He became the greatest King that Israel ever had.

I don't care what your job is right now, or what you are doing in the body of Christ. If you are faithful in that, God can take you from that and exalt you into the greatest position that has ever been in the body of Christ. That is the way it works. He found Gideon at the winepress, and He exalted him to be a deliverer and a judge. He found David in the sheep-pen, and called him to praise and unite. He found Moses working with sheep, and brought him out to be the great deliverer of Israel.

It doesn't matter what your position in the body of Christ is right now. Do it faithfully. Do whatever you can do and be faithful with it, because you never know when God is going to touch you and exalt you. He never will if all you do is look for some other job and will not settle with what you have and what is open at the time.

The world looks at us and doesn't think much about us, but that is not important, is it. It isn't what the world thinks; it is what God thinks. Even religious people can be wrong about you. Samuel was wrong, and he was a man of God. I don't care what people say about you. They may look at you and say you will never be of any value. Don't worry about it. Do what you can do because it is God that calls. It is God that justifies. It is God that makes it all work.

Let's look at Isaiah's calling. Isaiah chapter 6.

Isa 6:1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

Isa 6:2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Isa 6:4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Isa 6:5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Isa 6:6 Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

Isa 6:7 And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

The first requirement for any of us to be used of God is to understand that before Christ came into our life, we were ungodly and worthless. We were dead in our sins and trespasses, but when we acknowledge that, God touches us. He washes us with His blood, and puts the fire, which signifies the Holy Ghost, into our life. That fire purges us and cleanses us.

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

We know Isaiah to be THE REVEALER. He reveals more about the Lord Jesus Christ than any other prophet in the word of God. He reveals His Kingdom, he reveals His omnipresence, he reveals everything about the Lord. He reveals His Son, he reveals His throne, but he doesn't do it until after he senses and sees the presence of God working in his own life. Then he doesn't tell God to send some one else.

Too many of us are trying to raise somebody else up that we can send. That isn't what God wants. God wants us to go. God wants us to become involved. God wants us to be individuals working in the harvest field of Christ together. You might say, "Well, we have this Bishop board, and we are looking for somebody to send some place." Maybe God is talking to you about doing it.

If He can't send you next door though, there is no need to think He can send you to Europe.

I have had people come to me and say, "Brother Krider, I want to be a missionary to Hawaii." I say, "How many people have you won in your neighborhood?" "Oh they don't even know I am a Christian." "Do you think you will be effective in Hawaii?" Or they come and say they have been called to Africa, and I ask them what they are doing about it. They say, "I have to find somebody to send me." That is their first mistake. If God doesn't send you, you had better stay home. If God doesn't open the door, you will come back with your tail dragging between your feet. You are not going to win victories that way.

Isaiah saw the presence of God, and realized his condition and admitted where he was. He cried out to the Lord and God gave him the revelation that God was calling for laborers in the harvest field. Then he said, "Here am I Lord, send me." Put your name in there. The place that He is liable to send you may not be where you want to go. It may be in your neighborhood.

We think that being a missionary in this world means that we have to go to some other country. All it really means is that we have to go next door. We are already strangers here. We are already sojourners. This world is not your home. You are a missionary, sent from God, to this world. I thank God if you have the ability to go to Africa or Mexico or any other country. That is great and wonderful. That is also a call of God. But don't start there, start here. Get around people that love you and will take care of you, so when you get cursed at, yelled at, and spit upon, you have somewhere to go and let people pray for you.

You may think that can never happen to you, but it definitely can. If you knock on enough doors, all kinds of things will happen to you. I have had dogs turned loose on me, and a man break a bottle one night on a street corner and threaten to cut my throat. God wouldn't let him. I have had people spit on me, but I had enough sense to be with a group of people who loved Jesus.

I had a friend in San Francisco and I preached for him many times. They had a street corner ministry, and one of the young men was preaching and a man hit him so hard he broke a tooth off and it cut his mouth and went right through his jaw. They took him to the hospital and had the wound sewed up, and two hours later he was back on the street corner, preaching the gospel of Christ. This man who hit him came back again and saw him, and fell on his knees, repented, and got saved. All the heathen are not in Africa. All the ungodly and sinners are not over in Europe. We have a bunch of them all over the United States.

I have gone to a lot of different places in the world, but it is the same gospel for them as it is for us. We have to wake up that America needs to be evangelized also. We need to wake up and realize that our neighbors need to be evangelized. I am teaching this study here because God put me here. This is

where I start. This is where I prove faithful. If I prove faithful in this spot, then God can move me on to other things. If I do not prove faithful here, I will not prove faithful in Africa or Mexico, or anywhere else. This is not a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde thing. You don't change and become somebody else. Whatever you are here, you will be the same there.

God is saying through Isaiah, who became the revealer of Christ in all of His glory, that first of all we have to see Him in all of His glory. I am not talking about physical sight. I am talking about your heart seeing His greatness and His goodness, then you have to be ready to make yourself available to do whatever God wants you to do.

I see Isaiah as a great man of God. God gave him the revelation of God's Kingdom and the complete work of Jesus Christ in Isaiah 9:1-7. In Isaiah chapter 60, He gives him the revelation of the greatness of the Church that would rise and shine, and it would begin to draw sinners and the heathen, and even the Kings and the authorities of this world would be drawn to the light of the Church.

Don't sell the Church short. Don't sell yourself short. Line up with God's word. See His glory and His majesty, and realize that you are not going in your power. You are not going in your calling and your anointing. You are going in God's calling. You are going in God's anointing and in His might and His power and His glory.

I want to be a person who reveals Christ to other men and women, but for me to reveal Christ, I have to first of all see Him in all of His glory. He is described throughout the word of God; His glory, His majesty, His beauty, His holiness. I want to get this into my heart and my life in such a way that I can be a revealer through the power of the Holy Spirit of God, the goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Next let us look at Jeremiah. There is probably a lot of Jeremiah in all of us.

Jer 1:1 The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:

Jer 1:2 To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

Jer 1:3 It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

Jer 1:4 Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Jer 1:5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee;...

Look at that scripture carefully. Your call was not after you got saved. Your call was upon your life before you were ever born into this world. The call of God was always on your life. That is why you were so miserable when you tried to be any thing except a Christian. That is why you are not going to be happy until you answer that call. *Jer 1:5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

God has ordained you. God didn't just change His mind at the last minute and say, "I think I will make that man a preacher." No! When you were born into this world, God had a plan for your life, and when He put the Holy Spirit into your life, He had everything that you are going to need in the Holy Spirit. Your call was in the Holy Spirit. Everything is in the Holy Spirit; your gifts are in the Holy Spirit. Whatever you need, to do the work of God that is called upon in your life to be done, the Holy Spirit of God will perform it through you. He will not perform in my life what He has called anyone else to do. He will not perform in your life what He has called me to do. God will perform in me what He has called me to do. He said to Jeremiah, "I knew you before you were formed in your mother's belly.

Jer 1:6 Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.

What is our reaction when God says He wants us to do something? "Oh, God, you can't use me. Who am I, Lord?" When God begins to speak to our hearts, is it "Let somebody else do it. I'm slow of speech." Here Jeremiah said, "Lord, I am just a child." God had already told him that He had ordained him, just like He told Moses, "I will work through you; I will be with you."

Jeremiah was one of the greatest and most powerful prophets in the word of God, and much of his prophetic utterance is coming to pass today.

Jer 1:7 But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

God said, "Jeremiah, you need to change your confession."

We also need to quit trying to get out of what God is telling us to do, and begin to say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me"(Phil 4:13). I believe that! If God calls me to Africa, I know I can go to Africa, because He will make a way for me to go and He will take care of me while I am there. We have to start changing our confession. We confess negative all of the time, and we still operate in the carnal realm of reasoning.

God wants to do some great and exciting thing and all we can see is the anti-christ moving throughout the powers of darkness around us. Instead of doing anything about it, we just let it keep rolling in. We say things like, "Lord, hurry up please, and get me out of this mess." God says, "I put you in this mess so you could do something about it." "But, Lord, send somebody" and the Lord says, "I did. I sent you." Don't we find ourselves in that situation? "Look how big this job is, Lord." The Lord says, "It is no bigger than I can handle if you let Me work through you."

Jer 1:7 But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child:

Underline that in your Bible, and read it once or twice a day. Don't say you are a child anymore. Begin to grow up in Christ. Quit trying to do it by your age or your strength or your ability. Start doing it by the Spirit of the Lord.

Jer 1:7 ...Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I send thee.....

Quit letting people send you. We have people calling people all the time. "Thou art a mighty man of God. Thou shalt go into the darkest parts of Africa." If somebody tells you that, make sure that God has told you first. If that comes as a surprise and a shock, check it out. Don't go pack your suitcases and get your passport. Just stand still and God will confirm it. If God can't talk to you, you don't have any business going.

Jer 1:7 ...and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

We need to learn to speak HIS WORDS, not to just say anything that we want to say, or imagine anything that we want to imagine. We need to have that quiet mind, that peaceable mind, so no matter what is going on, God can still talk to us and show us what He wants us to do, but first we have to change our confession. You can sit all your life and say, "I can't do it, Lord" and God will honor it, or you can get tired of that and stand up and say, "I can do anything that you want me to do, Lord, because You will give me to strength to do it. Like Isaiah, Lord, I am available. I am only going to go where you send me, and I am only going to say what you tell me."

Some of the things that God tells you may be things that people don't want to hear. That is the beautiful liberty and safety in being sent by the Spirit of God, because there is a boldness to tell it like it is. If you send yourself, you sometimes won't do that because you are jeopardizing your return trip. You have to buy round-trip tickets. But if you go in the Spirit of the Lord, I guarantee you, God has prepared hearts to receive you, and you can say whatever God puts into your heart and in your mind, and the Spirit will bring that forth and it will touch people's lives and lives will be changed. I need to believe that God is sending me, and that God will give me words to speak.

Jer 1:8 Be not afraid of their faces:

"... be not afraid... I think this is one thing that stops many from going on with their call. Fear enters in. The thing that stops most people from conquering in Christ is that they are afraid they are going to fail. It keeps them from getting their rewards because they are afraid, and they hide their gift.

Jer 1:8 ...for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

I am not going anywhere without Him, but if I go with Him, He has the job to deliver me. I want to be a Minister for Christ. I don't want to be a Minister for self. I don't want to promote anything but Jesus, and I know that if we go and do what God tells us to do, and know that we can do it, and quit making excuses for not doing it, we are going to find Jesus moving in our lives in dimensions that we never thought were going to happen.

We are going to see revival come forth and we will be ready for the revival. We have to prepare ourself for this great revival. We have to become the leaders that God can trust in this great revival, not to subvert it or use it for our own glory but to give all of the glory back to the Lord Jesus.

Jer 1:9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

In the case of Isaiah, it was a coal of fire that He touched his mouth with, wasn't it. The Holy Spirit purging. If God hasn't put His words in your mouth, you are not going to get them there.

Jer 1:10 See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

A lot of times you have to be honest with people, and say, "Look, this is what is hindering your life." A good Minister has to preach both sides of the gospel. There are fortresses that people built up in their hearts of bitterness, envy, strife, jealousy, etc. and they keep the move of God from happening. When the word of God comes in and reveals those areas, you are being truthful, aren't you, and that word of God will come in and destroy and root out every thing that is not of God so you can build in that person's life.

I don't want to be just a person who comes along and destroys people. I want to be a person who destroys the ungodliness and wickedness in their life, and start planting something in their life; start building something in their heart. I want to be a Minister like Paul. Paul said, "I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:26-27).

Adam was called to be a replenisher and to rule. Noah was called to be a deliverer and to restore. Abraham was called to receive the promise by faith. Moses was called to be a deliverer. Joshua was called to bring in. Gideon was a deliverer and a judge. David was called to praise and unite. Isaiah was called to reveal. Jeremiah was called to correct and exhort.

At least one of these commissions should be working in all of our lives as Ministers. Every one of us who is a Minister, needs to study the lives of these men. Study the call of their lives, and see where they came up short, or see where they came into victory. We need to see what God was doing through their lives to make them the mighty men of victory and faith that He had called them to be.

Right now God is calling some of you to a ministry to do a work. Put it in your heart to do something for the Lord. Find out exactly what God is calling you to do. We can be like Samuel who heard the voice of the Lord and confused it with the voice of Eli. Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." He did that again, and Eli said, "I didn't call you, but if you hear the voice again, say, Speak Lord, for Thy servant heareth" (1 Samuel 3: 1-10).

While you are growing up, you are going to hear what the voice of God is developing in you in ability, and sometimes you are going to confuse it. You should have good leaders around you, who can say, "That is God talking to you. That is the Lord speaking to your heart."

Samuel had this said about him as a leader that not one word that he spoke fell to the ground because God honored him (1 Sam 3:19). I would like to think that is still possible if we speak only the words that God puts in our mouth, and we go where God sends us. If we are obedient to do that, I believe that God can say about us that not one word that we speak falls to the ground or is unprofitable.

As we look at these leaders we might say, "Yes, but those are people that lived a long time ago." In the eternal now of God there is no "long time ago." These are examples for us to understand, and if I want to be like Joshua and be a great man of God and a great leader, I am going to have to meditate on the word of God. I am going to have to study and show myself strong and be of a good courage. If I want to be like David, I have to learn to praise in spite of all the adversities that are going on in my life. I am going to have to learn how to bring unity in the body of Christ. If I want to be like Gideon, the mighty deliverer, I have to learn how to go to war against seemingly impossible odds. I can go in the Lord as David did.

If I want to be like Abraham and receive the promises of God, I am going to have to separate myself unto God, and follow after the Lord into the promise that He will show me. I want to be like that. I don't want to be some wimp who is

always working on his personality or somebody else's cash flow. I want to be like God wants me to be.

Adam was still called a son of God even though he fell. He had a commission and later God gave it to Noah. The commission never changed. If you want to know what God wants you to do, go back and read the original commission. You find it in Gen 1:28 and you find it again in Gen 9:1 where He spoke to Noah. The same thing is there: multiply, replenish, subdue. We have something greater than they had. We have the Holy Spirit inside of us, we have the cross behind us, and the blood of Jesus that has cleansed us. We can hear what the voice of God is saying. We can hear what the word of the Lord is speaking. We can hear what the Spirit of God is saying to the Church today, because He gave us an ear to hear. He is not sending us out to do something that He hasn't equipped us to do.

What we need to do as leaders then, is to be sure that our call lines up with God's word. If you feel you have a new call but you can't find it in the Bible, you have the wrong call. God's call always lines up with the word of God. As soon as you get saved, He doesn't send you back into the bar or anywhere else that is not godly. It is time to separate yourself for a season and get strong in the Lord, so you can return and go wherever God sends you.

God delivered me and possibly some of you out of the bars. Hallelujah! He delivered me out of sin, not to go back in it. The only time I went into the bar after I got saved, was one night five of us were ministering on the streets in skid row. My friend and I were walking along and singing and praising the Lord and handing out tracts, and all of a sudden I looked around and my friend was gone. I looked back around me and the only door that was open was the bar, and loud music was coming out of there. I went back and looked in and there was my friend. He was by a fellow on a barstool and had his arms around him, and both were crying. I walked up and my friend said to me, "I know this man. He is a back-slidden pentacostal preacher."

We started praying right in that bar, and nobody stopped us. No one came close to us. In fact, we had lots of room. Everybody started moving. We went out of that bar singing and rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ and that man was sober. When God wants you to go in a bar, He will move on you to do it. That man is still preaching the gospel, and my friend has gone home to be with the Lord.

We need to get some boldness in our lives to be ready to go wherever God tells us to go. We need to have filled our life with the word of God. We need to have filled our life with the Spirit. We need to be walking in the Spirit, and moving in the Spirit with our ears open to the Lord, seeing all of His glory and His majesty, and saying "Here am I, Lord. Send me."

Most of our lives we have such a shallow experience with Christ. We do a few things for the Lord, and then we go for days when nothing really exciting happens in our life. There is a place to walk in Jesus that is exciting every day, every moment of your life. I believe that Paul's life was exciting because of the call of God that came into it. We need to get to a place where we want to do something for the Lord.

Please pray this with me:

"Here am I, Lord, send me. God, I acknowledge to You that without You, I am nothing. Lord, here I am; I am available. I am not a child anymore. I will go where you send me, Lord, and I will speak what you give me. If that is next door, that is okay by me. If that is to Mexico, or Brazil, or Haiti, it doesn't make any difference, because I know that You said You would go with Jeremiah, and You will go with me to deliver me, and You will put your words in my mouth. I will be able to speak anything that You want, and I won't have to be afraid of their faces. I want to be a valuable instrument in Your hand." Praise God. Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 3

CALLED AND COMMISSIONED 2

In this chapter we are going to continue with the CALL. Many are called but few are chosen (Matt 20:16), but every Christian that is saved has a call of God on their life. You need to know that it is a ministry of the New Covenant, or the New Testament. We are going to study about preparing to commit, learning to follow, to be able to lead. You are not going to be much of a leader if you are not a follower, and you will never be a good follower until you are committed to the work of the Lord. If you are committed to self, you will follow after self. If you are committed to God, you will follow after God. God is looking for people who are committed to follow that they may be able to lead.

First we are going to use the example of 1 Kings 19: 19-21 and study about Elijah and Elisha.

(1 Ki 19:19 KJV) So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

(1 Ki 19:20 KJV) And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

(1 Ki 19:21 KJV) And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

Notice that Elisha ministered unto Elijah. We need to look at certain things: first, the call of God has to come from God. Elijah was the one who represented God. He was the prophet of the times; he was the one anointed of God to bring forth the word of God.

Let's look at the 17th verse:

(1 Ki 19:17 KJV) And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazeel shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

God already has a plan for your life before you begin to realize it. Elijah is sent forth to let the anointing of God begin to touch Elisha's life. Elisha could have refused. He could have said, "My Dad needs help on the farm. It's a big farm, and I have to stay here. I cannot go." That was not his heart. His heart was to tell his Mother and Dad goodbye. He runs after Elijah, doesn't he. This is an opportunity that he doesn't want to miss. He doesn't understand what is happening but he knows that the man of God has touched him.

When God touches you, don't take it like a small thing. Begin to run after the Lord. Begin to pant after God. Begin to desire God with all of your heart. Whatever it costs you, separate yourself unto the Lord. You have to learn to prepare yourself to commit, to learn to follow, to be able to lead. Elisha knows that the oxen can't teach him anything, nor his Dad who he has been working on the farm with. If you are going to learn something spiritual, you will have to learn from spiritual people. You can't pick and choose who you want to teach you. God will send into your life men and women who are able to teach you and willing to teach you, but you must be willing to submit and follow after that teaching.

Now let's look at 2 Kings 2:1-10. We know that Elisha has been following Elijah and he has been ministering to him. He hasn't been working any miracles, he hasn't been healing any sick, or doing any great works of the gospel. He has just been carrying Elijah's cloak, fixing his food, getting him water to drink, but he is watching and observing and preparing himself. He knows that he is not just there to follow Elijah all the time, but that something is going to happen. What if he had quit three days before Elijah was taken away. A lot of people give up just before God opens the door for ministry.

(2 Ki 2:1 KJV) And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.

(2 Ki 2:2 KJV) And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel. And Elisha said unto him, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel.

The man of God was saying "stay here." Elisha was being tried; his faith was being tested. Just about the time that God gets ready to really give you a breakthrough, you are tested. You think that nothing has happened so you might as well give up. But Elisha said, "No! I am making a commitment to you. I am learning something while I am with you. I am learning to follow that I might be able to lead." Then he is tested again.

(2 Ki 2:3 KJV) And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

(2 Ki 2:4 KJV) And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

(2 Ki 2:5 KJV) And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.

(2 Ki 2:6 KJV) And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

He is tested three times, but he is committed. If your commitment is not strong enough, you may survive the first and second tests, but you will never survive the third test. Many people say to me that they have had bad experiences in their lives in the ministry when they are dealing with people. How do they know that wasn't a test to see if they would quit. That may have been a place where the enemy really tried to get them to stop.

This is where you should become more determined. When you find that things are falling apart all around you and the temptation to quit is very strong, that is the time to commit. As a leader you need to say, "I don't care what happens here, I am going to follow the Lord. I am going to learn something so I can be able to lead. I am committed to follow the Lord." When you say that, it isn't going to be an automatic easy thing to do. It isn't always going to be full of miracles and excitement. Sometimes it will be hard work to stay in there; not to grow weary in well-doing, but to stand in there and commit yourself to the call of God.

(2 Ki 2:7 KJV) And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan.

(2 Ki 2:8 KJV) And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

(2 Ki 2:9 KJV) And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

"Ask what I shall do for thee.." Elijah never asked this of Elisha before; not after any of the trials. It was when they had crossed over Jordan and Elisha had proven his commitment that Elijah turned to Elisha and asked this. Many times we come about one trial short of receiving what God has prepared for us.

Circumstances come, and we turn and go another direction. People let us down, and we turn and go another way.

(2 Ki 2:9 KJV)...Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

(2 Ki 2:10 KJV) And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.

So there is a commitment all the way through, isn't there. Elijah was saying, "Not because you came with me through this place and that place, but you are going to have to keep your attention and your heart and your focus on me, and when you have done that, then God is going to begin to move in your life."
"

How do you receive a reward from God? You diligently seek Him, don't you. That doesn't mean that one time you are following God, committed to God, and the next week you are committed to something else. Your commitment does not change. You believe in the established truth, and your faith is hooked to that and it is going to see the manifested truth. Here Elijah was promising a hard thing to Elisha, and the condition was that he must be steadfast unto the end. He couldn't go hide some place or go to sleep. He had to be diligent.

I think that sometimes we read the Bible and don't see these things in the word of God, but he wasn't going to get that even though he had crossed Jordan. Even though he had gone through Gilgal, even though he travelled through these different places, and denied the ease of joining up with the prophets, he still wasn't going to get the promise unless he continued steadfast to the end.

A good minister is one who has been tried and tested and proven. He may fall, and the Bible says the just (or righteous) may fall seven times yet will he rise again (Prov 24:16), and the thing is not that a person doesn't fall, but if he does fall, get up and go on again. Elisha might have wondered at times what he was doing out there with Elijah. He may have thought, "I could be back on the farm instead of carrying this guy's cloak. I am just doing everything for this guy, and I think I will quit and go home. "

We are always tempted to quit, aren't we. We are tempted to quit pressing into God, but that time when you quit may have been the last one you have to press into. It may have been the moment when God was ready to open everything to you and pour out His Spirit in great and mighty ways into your life. You can't get a double portion any longer. We all receive now the measure of faith (Romans 12:3). We all receive the Spirit of God, and we grow up into that Spirit, don't we, but because of this man's faithfulness, twice as many miracles

are recorded for him as for Elijah. Elijah escapes in a whirlwind. Elisha dies, but his bones had so much of the anointing of God in them, that when a dead soldier was thrown in on top of the bones, the soldier was resurrected.

To be a leader, you have to commit yourself to learn to follow. This is a very important truth. If you are not a good follower, you will never be a good leader. You have to be diligent about following Jesus Christ. You had better walk in the light and be led by the Spirit of God. You have to prepare yourself for that. You have to learn how to do that. You have to come to a place of total commitment. That is why lone ranger ministries always get in trouble. As soon as something gets too hot to handle, they turn and run the other way. They never commit to anything. The first hard trial that comes, they move away from it.

God is preparing some leaders today so that great revival can hit this world. Not only in America but in every nation under the sun, the gospel of God is going to be brought forth in great power. I want to be a leader in that great army, following after the Lord Jesus Christ, but I know that it takes a diligent preparing of my heart to follow so I can be able to lead.

If you were ever in military service, you saw that the best officers you had came up through the ranks, didn't they. They weren't those who went to universities, even to the academy. They came up through the ranks, and knew what they were talking about. They had fought the good fight. They had followed their commanding officer until they knew how to command and react to the people in need under them.

For us, there is a battle that waxes hot, and too many of the soldiers of Christ are in retirement, or giving up, or are lukewarm, or compromised. God wants a people who will stand up and say, "Here am I, Lord. Send me." So #1 we have to prepare to commit, to learn to follow that we might be able to lead.

Now we are going to study about the call of Paul's life. As we study the Bible, we see that Timothy worked with Paul for years before he was ever given the assignment of going out to minister. Titus worked with Paul. Other men of God worked with Paul and other leaders before they ever got an assignment to lead a group out.

It is very important to learn to follow diligently, because then when the opportunity comes to lead, you won't have nearly as many problems. You are going to have trials and testings, and you will have to go through situations where you would like to quit; but you have to have a knowledge of something greater than the test or the trial. I want to be faithful to the end, because God is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him (Heb 11:6). If I want to be a leader for Christ, I had better diligently seek the Lord.

Let's look at Romans 1:1.

(Rom 1:1 KJV) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Paul had the heart of a servant. God cannot use you until you have the heart of a servant, because when you are a master, you are always telling people what you want to do. You are always telling the Lord where you want to go and what you would like to be. God is not looking for masters. He is looking for servants, so Paul was identified as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Master.

It is important to tell people who you are serving. When people ask you why you are so happy, you should tell them it is because Jesus lives in you. When people ask me how I am, I tell them I am saved. Sometimes they ask me what I mean by that, and what a door that opens. I am able to share the good news about Jesus.

We need to identify who our authority is. I am not just a servant of this person or that person. I am a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is my joy! He is my peace! He is the One who called me! He called me to be a faithful and a good steward, didn't He (Luke 12:42). He called me to be a faithful servant, didn't He. Why? Because He is going to reward the servants. If you are a servant, the Master has to be responsible for you. You never see a servant making his own way; his Master takes care of him. He gives him a place to sleep and food to eat and clothes to wear. My Father is my Master. The Lord Jesus is my Master, and that makes Him responsible for me, so I can go anywhere He sends me.

We should be a people who are so excited about having somebody care for us, that we are not ashamed to identify our calling with being a servant. You may not think that is a very high calling, yet if you are a servant in the Master's house, that is a great calling.

One day on a street in Memphis, a man saw the license plate on our car which says, "Gospel Seven" and he asked us, "What does that mean?" My wife didn't even give me a chance to answer; she said, "That is the gospel." He said, "Yeah, but which one. You have to ask now." She said, "It is the gospel of Jesus Christ." He said, "I can agree with that gospel." The calling was there. She wasn't ashamed of being a servant of the Master.

You might be an apostle, a pastor, or any other calling, but if you don't have a servant's heart, you will never be much value in any of those ministries. You have to be able to be a servant to be a good minister of Christ.

(Rom 1:1 KJV) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Next Paul defines his calling. He said he was called to be an apostle. He is not ashamed of the office, and he is not boasting in it. He is declaring what God

has made him. If you are a Pastor, or an Evangelist, whatever your office is right now, don't be ashamed of that. When we go into stores, a lot of times people ask what we do for a living. My wife jumps right in and says, "We are preachers." She is a quiet person, so when she says something, it means something.

(Rom 1:1 KJV) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.

Next it says that Paul was separated to the work of the Lord. Remember Abraham and his call to separate himself. You can be of no value in your calling until you are separated to the Lord, because when you are separated to the Lord, it is no longer you speaking just words, but you are speaking what God gives you to speak. It sounds almost like the principle of Elijah and Elisha, doesn't it. God said, "Elijah, Elisha is one I am going to use. Go and get him."

The call came to Paul and he realized that he was to be separated unto this gospel for the work of God. So four things that we see that we need in our hearts, are the heart of a servant, service to the Master, a definite calling, and separated to the work of the Lord. God sanctifies us and sets us apart for the work of the Lord, but we have to desire to die to self, to set ourselves apart for the work of the Lord, to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God (Romans 12:1-2).

We have a lot of people who can preach and people who can teach, but very few can lead. There is a lot of difference. Anyone who has any anointing can teach or preach, but I have found very few real leaders in the body of Christ. Paul said, "We have ten thousand instructors but very few fathers"(1 Cor 4:15). What God wants today is somebody who can not only teach or preach, but can live the life and be dedicated and committed to follow Christ, and learn to lead others.

Now let's look at Peter.

(1 Pet 1:1 KJV) Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, ..." In other words he is saying the same thing that Paul said. "I have an office. I have a calling and an anointing. I have a ministry and I know what my ministry is: I am an apostle. I didn't make myself one; I am an apostle of Jesus Christ."

Notice in (2 Pet 1:1 KJV) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

He realized that to be an effective apostle, he had to be an effective servant. A servant is a follower and a doer. A servant is one who receives from the Master and does what the Master tells him. So when you have that servant heart, coupled together with your calling, great things will happen in your life.

To the world you are not an apostle. To the world you are nothing, so do not try to impress people by your Christianity. If you want to win people to Jesus Christ, show them a servant's heart. Show them someone who is really under control of the Spirit of God; someone who has peace of mind, joy in their heart, and is ready to answer any question they have. The only ones the apostle can ever be an apostle to are those in the body of Christ, over whom God makes that individual an apostle.

Paul never tried to be an apostle to all the body of Christ and neither did Peter. They realized that their apostleship was to different men and women in the body of Christ. Paul came to the heathen or gentiles; Peter came to the Jews. So there are different offices and different ministries, and different localities for those ministries to work in.

You may be a pastor where you are, but if you go somewhere else, they might not even recognize you being a pastor. Don't get upset, because God didn't send you to those to be a pastor. He sent you to be a brother or a sister in the Lord. If God wants you to have the office of pastoral ministry while you are there, He will open that up to you. We get so frustrated because people do not recognize us. Paul had a lot of trouble being recognized as an apostle, and he said, "Even though they don't believe it, to you I am an apostle because I have gotten you in the Lord" (1 Cor 9:1-2).

These men were not magnifying their office; they were boasting what the Lord had done and the calling of God was in their lives, to be able to minister to their needs. If you go to a doctor to have an operation, you don't go to a general practitioner, do you. He is still a doctor, but you want a surgeon. There are surgeons in the body of Christ and there are general practitioners. Some of us are still in med school, trying to be great physicians, so don't try to magnify your office.

(2 Pet 1:1 KJV) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

Just as God had foreknowledge of Elisha, He had foreknowledge of Jeremiah. He has foreknowledge of everyone of us. He has a plan ordained for your life. What we do with that plan is usually wasted because we never find out what it is. Suppose someone said, "I am going to draw you a map to get over to a certain part of the country, and at the end of that map, you are going to find great wealth." You would get on the road tomorrow, wouldn't you. I would probably be

on there tonight, because the map was certified; it was real. It was in the clearing house and waiting there. All I had to do was get there, but I had to follow that map.

If we want to get into our calling we have to follow the map of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have to learn to prepare ourselves, or commit ourselves, to learn to follow. When we are through following, we get to a place where we begin to lead. We pick up that prize. We have too many people wanting the prize before they follow, and then they get turned upside down and get in trouble. They backslide, or give up their ministry and walk away and quit. What happened? They never were committed to learn anything.

You would never get into an airplane with me, not knowing how to fly, and say, "I believe you. Let's go." Nobody in their right mind would do that. Yet we follow people who are not prepared to lead us, just because they can preach or teach. That is not what Paul taught. He said, "Follow me as I follow the Lord." (1 Cor 11:1). A good leader is still being led; he is still following someone else. He is not out there doing his own thing.

In a great army you don't find generals out there doing their own thing. They are under a board of directors. They are under the President of the United States. They do not do what they want to do, unless they first of all commit themselves to hear from the Commander in Chief. So no one in Christ's body should be trying to lead themselves anywhere. We need to be led by the Spirit of God, but if we are not committed and prepared to follow, we should not be put in a place where we can lead somebody, because that is dangerous and God does not do that.

So God said to Jeremiah:

(Jer 1:5 KJV) Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

God knew all about you before you were born, so quit making excuses as to why you can't do what He calls you to do. God called me, God chose me, God ordained me, God made an office for me, and all He asked me to do was to prepare myself, commit myself, and follow the Lord. Then one day the office began to be a reality in my life. There is no such thing with God of ninety-day wonders.

You need to define or make definite your calling. You need to know what God called you to be. God didn't just call Paul, or Peter, or Stephen to be something, but He called each one of us. We need to get that understanding in us, so other people can see it. It is not boasting on what you have done; it is boasting on what Christ has done.

Look at all the years Moses had to practice. Forty years in the wilderness with the sheep before he got anywhere. David had to run and hide and he even feigned madness before he ever got to the throne. Abraham, 75 years old, and through that practicing and through that knowledge of God, he was ready to lead. It is the same with us. We need to get serious with this.

Let's look at 1 Cor 15:9. Paul is looking at himself, and giving a real reason why he is what he is.

(1 Cor 15:9 KJV) For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

He said, (#1) "I am the least of the apostles that am not meet to be called an apostle because I persecuted the Church." The first thing you see about a great leader with God is humility. He realizes, no matter who he or she is, they never got where they are because of their greatness. You did not get saved because of your own greatness. You got there because of God's grace. These offices are given by God's grace. HE is calling you into the ministry. When we find pride in our lives, we need to humble ourselves.

Paul could have said, "Hey, I'm a great apostle. Look at all the miracles. Look at all the Churches that God has used me to start. Look at all the people saved under my ministry." But what does he say? "I am the least of the apostles. I am not number 1 or number 2. I'm not even number 11. I am the least."

Look at Galatians 1:15

(Gal 1:15 KJV) But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,

In this scripture Paul realized what humility was all about. He did not save himself. He realized even his natural birth was by the Lord. You were born on God's time-table. I mean even your natural birth. When it pleased God, HE separated me from my mother's womb. So it is God's faithfulness, isn't it.

(1 Cor 1:9 KJV) God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus said in John 17:21

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

God is looking for a people today who are desiring to be called of God, in the fulness of that calling. Look at Paul's calling again:

(Rom 1:1 KJV) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Paul shows us (#1) that he was a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ; (#2) that he was an apostle called of God; and (#3) he was separated to do the work of the Lord. He was separated for a very definite work, wasn't he.

I am not separated to just go out and have a good time, but I am separated for a very definite work and so are you. Here is the beginning of the defining of your calling: we are all separated unto the gospel of God. God separated us so He could use us. God separated us so there could be some valuable things built up in our lives in the world to come.

If you are sanctified, which means set apart, you are separated. When Christ received you, He set you apart. When He tells you to separate yourself, He wants you to identify with that sanctification. He wants your body to identify with the sanctification. Instead of it being a temple of devils, it becomes a temple of the Holy Ghost. Instead of cursing and swearing coming out of it, blessings come. When God called you, He sanctified you. You need to read the 8th chapter of Romans. He set you apart, and He expected you to follow through by setting yourself apart unto God.

We think that God is only interested in our spirit. No! He is interested in our spirit, our soul, and our body. That is what the calling does. The calling starts on the inside, and eventually works to the outside, until you know what it is and everybody else around you knows what it is. When you are sanctified, God did the work of sanctification by setting you apart. To follow up on our part, is to separate ourself apart unto God for the work of the Lord.

God isn't interested in your body living in sin and your soul living for God. He wants your spirit, soul, and body blameless unto the way of the Lord. He wants our body to be the manifestation or the place where the life of Christ can manifest itself to the world.

So Paul, through his separation to God, was manifesting Christ to these believers. Who do we manifest to people? You are worthless if you think, "Well, I'm saved and going to heaven." You are just sitting around doing nothing. God didn't save you just to take you to heaven. God saved you to fill you with His Spirit, and to use you, and He expected to use every part of you, your spirit, your soul, and your body.

When the Church finally wakes up to that and starts walking in the spirit, and the life of Christ is manifested in our mortal flesh (2 Cor 4:10-11), then the world will know that we are called because we will start walking in unity. We are not saved because we were so good that we were worth saving. God doesn't look

at things that way. He birthed me from my mother's womb, and had a plan for my life. I really didn't know that until Christ, by His grace, saved me.

Paul's attitude toward the ministry was not that he had earned it, or merited it. It was not that he had done some great thing, so God made him an apostle. It was simply because he realized that without God he could do nothing, and God was faithful to bring him forth in the hour that God had planned for his life.

Let's look at 1 Peter 1:15

(1 Pet 1:15 KJV) But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

Conversation = 391. from G390; behavior:--conversation.

The words that you speak, the decisions you make should be holy. If you want to be a good leader, you have to commit to God to begin to let holiness reign in your life. Let your conversation become holy. Let the words of your mouth and the meditation of your heart become acceptable in the sight of God. We have to begin to realize that we must have holy conversation. Do you really want to be a minister for God? You have to make a commitment that means something, because it is tough. You have to make a commitment that you are not backing out but you are going to stay with it. I may fall down, but I am going to keep getting up, because I am going to press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:14).

Romans 8:28 is a very important scripture:

(Rom 8:28 KJV) And we know that ALL things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

This kind of knowing is a certain unshakable knowledge. People ask you if you are saved, and you should be able to say "YES" without any question. "Are you called to the ministry?" "Yes, I am called to the ministry. God called me." I am not boasting on myself. I am boasting on the Lord. Now I have to make proof of that ministry, don't I. It is not enough to just be called; I have to make proof of that ministry. Whatever is going on in my life, even if it seems wrong or backward, I have to have this kind of mind that it is working for my good.

Do you think that Paul and Silas when they were in prison felt it was working for their good? Do you think that when Daniel was in the lion's den, thought it was working for his good? Do you think the three Hebrew men when they were thrown in the fiery furnace, thought it was working for their good? Peter in prison; did it look like it was working for his good? Yet it all worked for good, didn't it.

Paul brought salvation to the jailer and his entire household by being put into prison. That jailer wasn't going to the meeting down town. God loved that jailer so much that He allowed Paul and Silas to be thrown into prison. So Paul said, "This is working for my good. Silas, let's sing. Let's praise the Lord and pray." When they did, God began to move.

You see, God doesn't move in your life when you are in a tragedy or a place that doesn't look good, and all you do is blame God or circumstances. You are blaming this or that and are saying "If I had done something different." No, no! Even if you made the mistake, and you are in the trouble you are in, it is for your good. You are going to learn not to make that mistake again. When you can start praising God in that situation and for that situation, God will move in a good way, and not only are you going to be delivered from that area of mistake, but you are going to be able to teach others.

So we find some things happening here. We have to know that. We have to have a certain unshakable knowledge. We have to know that ALL, not some things, work for good. You cannot pick and choose what good things work for you and what bad things work against you. You are a Christian; you have been called of God. You belong to God. So everything that happens, whether good or evil, is going to work for your good.

Have you ever said something, and then wished you hadn't said that. You learned something though, didn't you. You started to begin to be careful how you talked because conviction began to come to you. Sometimes you had a situation that looked really bad; like you were going to be overcome, and all of a sudden God miraculously ministered in that situation. When you get into a situation that is either good or bad, just say "Praise God. This works together for my good." As soon as you can say that from your heart, you will find things begin to change. You can stay in that situation all of your life if you never start being thankful for it, and start thanking Jesus for it working for your good. Leaders have to have that ability.

(Rom 8:28 KJV) And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

All things work together for my good, not according to my purpose, but according to HIS PURPOSE. God has to get the kinks out of our lives, and He can't just do it by patting us on the head and telling us how sweet and wonderful we are. No, He has to let us go on and get ourselves in a real mess. David said, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray (Psalm 119:67), but when I got afflicted enough I found that wasn't the way to go."

So no matter what is going on in your life, no matter if it seems like it is all working backwards, it is working together for good for you, because you have been called of God according to His purpose. He has a purpose for your life, and it is found in Romans 8:29:

(Rom 8:29 KJV) For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

God's purpose is for us to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. His purpose isn't for you to go to Africa or West Indies. No! God's purpose is to conform you to the image of His Son, and sometimes it takes pressure. It takes things happening in our lives to make us realize that we need to start pressing into the Lord instead of our own desires.

What kind of a Church would we have if everybody got to do their own thing. We would never end up looking like Jesus. But God has already written the script. God has already ordered your steps (Psalm 37:23). You may go wrong and get messed up, but God is going to work through that and conform you. When you make a mistake and blow it and God deals with you, you don't want to do it again.

God is conforming you; that is His purpose for you. That is His purpose for all of us. The call of God is to put purpose in my life, and that is to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. If we had ministers who were going through trials and temptations, and they could still say, "Hey listen, let's go on together. This is working for your good. It has happened to me, it has happened to others. Let's go on with God." What happens though is that we get into trouble and we stay there.

Did the pig-pen work for good for the prodigal son? It made him come to his senses, didn't it. Sometimes we Christians have to go through hog-pens to realize that we are losing our orientation. We need to get directed back toward home again. We need to get up and head for home. Look what Jesus prayed:

(Luke 22:42 KJV) Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.

This is an example for us. We are to be like Jesus, aren't we. We should pray that prayer in our lives. That should be our daily prayer, not just a one moment prayer. "God, not my will but Your will be done in my life. Your purpose for me is to be conformed to the image of Your Son, and if I am going to be conformed to that image, Lord, I know that I am going to have to become like Him. To be able to become like Him, I am going to have to have Your will working in my life."

It is an amazing thing that the Bible is filled with the will of God. We do not need to wonder what the will of God is for our lives. It is right in the Bible. If you want to know what your life is to be like, you just have to read about the life of Jesus Christ. It is simple, isn't it. To be a good leader we should really be moving into that ground where every day we are being changed from glory to glory, and more and more becoming like Jesus Christ in our thoughts and our actions. If I am a real Christian I will want to belong to a Church. I will want to belong to a fellowship. I will want to be in the movement of God's Spirit. Don't pray your way out of every trial. Look what 1 Cor 10:13 says:

(1 Cor 10:13 KJV) There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Nothing comes upon you that surprises God. The word of God is true. If you are going to be a good leader, you have to realize that God is with you through the flood, He is with you through the fire, He is with you in the earthquake. He is with me everywhere I go; whether it is ship-wreck or sunny days or rainy days, the Lord is with me.

(Josh 1:9 KJV) Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

You cannot be affected by your condition or your circumstance. Paul never quit preaching because he went to prison. Peter never stopped preaching because he was in prison. Jesus never quit ministering because He was going to the cross. He kept ministering all the way to the cross, and on the cross. We need to become more aware of God having a purpose for our lives, not just the momentary problem that we are going through. That is working for our good.

How can a leader get up and tell people that they need to be more than conquerors, because God always causes you to triumph (2 Cor 2:14) if they don't have an example of that. Paul could say that he was an example of that. He overcame in prison, he overcame stoning, he overcame being left for dead, he overcame being ship-wrecked, he overcame being whipped and beaten and forsaken. And yet Paul said, "We are more than conquerors through Christ who loves us (Romans 8:37). Take a look at Paul's life and you will say, "That is true. He knows what he is talking about."

Sometimes we wonder why we have to go through trials and tests, and things happen to us. It is to teach us to commit to follow, that we might learn to lead. You can't take your own path. God makes you, conforms you, shapes you to the image of His Son, Jesus Christ, through everything that happens in your life.

(Col 3:15 KJV) And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

We are called, aren't we? If we preach that scripture to the body of Christ, we had better have it in our lives. If I am going to tell you "peace," I had better have peace in my life. I have to let it rule in my heart, don't I. You might just say, "Well I have peace." No, no. It means whatever is going on in your life, there is a peace in your heart.

What the enemy does is plant fear in us, but if that peace is there, it is hard to plant fear. We don't allow peace to rule in our hearts. We allow fear and anxiety and worry and stress and doubt and all kinds of wrong things to rule in our lives. When peace is there you no longer are anxious about anything.

Paul got to the point where there was so much peace ruling in his life that he said, "It is better for me to depart and be with the Lord, but it is needful for you that I remain." There was peace there, wasn't there. Even though he was in a great strain, and his desire was to go and be with the Lord, he found peace to remain (Phil 1:21-24). When he was in the shipwreck, he was the only one who had peace. He was down in the hold, talking to the angel of the Lord.

You don't talk to the angel of the Lord when you are in anxiety; there has to be peace to be able to communicate with God. Otherwise you are not communicating; you are screaming, and hollering, and kicking, and bawling and squalling, and trying to get out of it. It is only when you are at peace that you can allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you and have a communication with God; so we have to let that peace rule in our hearts.

Romans 14:17 says:

(Rom 14:17 KJV) For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

It should be quite evident then that if we are ministers of the Kingdom of God, that there is peace ruling in our lives. If you represent something, you are to be like what you are representing. We should be representing the Kingdom of God to others. If you are going to be a leader for God, you had better start leading for God by learning how to follow. You had better stay on the job and not be on vacation all the time, thinking that God is trying to get your phone number so He can call you to go to work. When you follow, He knows exactly where you are, because you are the one following Him. If you are going to work for God, and you are trying to go someplace else and please yourself, what kind of a leader are you going to be?

We need to recognize the need to stress unity. We are called in one body, aren't we? I believe every true minister of the gospel of Christ, plus every

member of the body of Christ, ought to stress that unity. Why should we stress unity? Let's look again at what Jesus said in John 17:21:

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

There is power in unity. Psalm 133 says: *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* There is no blessing when there is strife. There is no blessing when there is division. There is no blessing when there is jealousy. There is a blessing when we are in unity. A husband and wife have a blessing when they are in unity. They don't have a blessing when they argue with one another.

If I am going to stress unity, I have to be in unity with God. If I am going to be a minister of peace, I have to be at peace with God. If I am going to stress fellowship, I have fellowship with God. We stress so many other things that are not important. You can get rich and not have the blessing of God in your life. You can be famous and not have the blessing of God in your life.

You should get up in the morning and just be thankful that you are called; thankful that God saved you, thankful that the Lord loves you, thankful that God wants to use you. That is what God wants, a thankful heart. Paul says in 2 Timothy 1: 9:

(2 Tim 1:9 KJV) Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

We have been called with a HOLY calling, not an unclean calling or unholy calling. It is the same calling that God sent out to the prophets. They were the holy prophets, so God is calling with a holy calling, not according to our works. You will never arrive anywhere in God because of your works. The works that should be done through us, should be done by the Spirit of the Lord. Notice this: but according to His own purpose and grace. That is how you are saved and that is what God has for your life: a purpose.

Your life is to be a planned life in Christ. God has a plan and a purpose for your life. So many times we are caught up in planning our own way, planning our own life, planning our own ministry; when we will do it and how we will do it. That is not God's plan. I don't care how old you are, I don't care how many times you have failed, if you know you have been called of God, it is time to stop whatever you are doing and say, "Here am I, Lord. You can use me the remainder of my life, whatever it is. I want to fulfil the call of God in my life, and fulfil the purpose of allowing Christ to be formed in me."

(2 Tim 1:9 KJV) Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

When was God's purpose and plan for your life? When was God's calling for you? It was before the foundation of the world. Oh glory! You weren't born to be alive now just by accident. God had a plan, and a purpose, and a reason for you to be alive in this age. Before the foundation of the world, you were chosen in Christ Jesus. (1) You were called with a HOLY CALLING. Underline that in your Bible, and say, "Thank you Lord Jesus. I have been called with a holy calling." (2) Not according to our works. Look at Zech 4:6

(Zec 4:6 KJV) Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

How did you hear the call of God? It was by His Spirit. It wasn't by you working yourself into such a state that you could hear from God. That is what cults do. That is what religious people do. They try to work themselves into a good standing with God, so they can be accepted of God. The only way you can be accepted of God is through the blood of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit of God brought a holy calling and put inside of you a Holy Child (John 17:21-26), and it wasn't by your works but according to His purpose and grace, for whom he did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren (Romans 8:29). That is His purpose for your life, and it is going to take grace to perform it.

You can't do this by will-power. Haven't you had something you needed to stop doing and said, "I am going to quit," and then you did it again. You can't please God by your own will-power. What you have to do is say, "Lord, I admit that I have this weakness and I need help. I want to be delivered from this." I have said a lot of things that I wasn't going to do any longer, and then turned right around and had to repent, because I lied. It wasn't because I did them again, but it was because I lied. God knew I wouldn't be able to do it by myself. I should have given it to Him in the first place.

If you could change yourself into the image of the Son of God, you would do it by your own might and power. But it is not by that! IT IS BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD. Leaders who are called to be leaders of the body of Christ, should be setting examples. They should be sharing the truth. They should be putting that high mark continually before us. It isn't important for you to be famous; it is only important that the image of Christ is formed in you. That is all that is going to matter in the end. You can gain the whole world, but what will it profit you if you

lose your own soul (Mark 8:36). I want God's will done in my life. I want Jesus to be glorified out of me, as well as in me.

(1 Pet 2:9 KJV) But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

"Ye are a chosen generation." You were called when sound was called. It didn't make any difference what day or time you were born into. When you give your life to Jesus Christ, you become an eternal being, and you are into an eternal life that is joined together with God from the beginning. "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," not only a spiritual priesthood, but "a **royal** priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Here comes **the Call**. I have a call to a ministry. That ministry is to show forth the praises of Him. We studied about King David earlier. He was called to praise, and he showed forth the glory of God, didn't he. He showed forth the magnitude of His beauty and His holiness in his praises.

God has called us into the ministry of showing forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness, into his marvelous light. So we have to be an example to the flock. If I am going to ask you to show forth His praises, I have to show forth His praises. If I am going to tell you not to walk in darkness, then you have to see someone walking in light. Ministers cannot tell you to do something that they are not doing.

I am a chosen generation, I am a royal priesthood, I am a holy nation, I am a peculiar (which means precious, special) people, and my job is to show forth His praises. Why? Because He called me out of darkness. Nobody gets saved on their own strength because they are in darkness and they can't see the way. The light has to shine into that darkness. That is what happened when you got saved. The light shined into your darkness. You never got saved by your strength or your own might. You got saved because the light came into your life, and drew you out of darkness. Look at Col 1:12-13:

(Col 1:12 KJV) Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

(Col 1:13 KJV) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

The first job I have is to show forth His praises. That is the first ministry that any of us have. If you are not doing that ministry, do not worry about the rest

of them, because you will never get there. You won't until you first can show forth His praises. 1 Peter 2: 21-22 tells us what we are to do:

(1 Pet 2:21 KJV) For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

Underline "follow His steps." I must prepare to commit to learn to follow, that I might be able to lead. I am not only called to praise the Lord and show forth His praises, but I am also called to follow in His steps. I am not to make my own path, or go my own way and do my own thing, but to walk in the steps that the Lord has ordered for me. As a minister I must follow those steps; as a minister you must follow those steps. As a leader you must follow those steps. Why? Because someone is following you. Believe it or not, someone is following your life.

(1 Pet 2:21 KJV) For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

(1 Pet 2:22 KJV) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

We understand that we are to patiently endure even if we are wrongly accused. Isn't that what Jesus did. Was He rightly accused or wrongly accused? He endured it all, didn't He. What is the first thing we want to do when we are wrongly accused? We want to defend ourselves, or get even. He was leaving us an example to do as Christ did. We should follow His footsteps and revile not again. That is when there is no guile found in your mouth, when you are not in the business of reviling again or trying to get even.

Sometimes we as Christians have a problem in thinking we have to justify ourselves because we are worried about what people are going to think about us. The more you try to justify yourself the more it looks like you are guilty. That is why peace needs to rule in your heart. If somebody brings a railing accusation against you falsely for the Lord's sake, just rejoice in it. Jesus taught that to His disciples in Matt 5:10-12.

(Mat 5:10 KJV) Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Mat 5:11 KJV) Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

(Mat 5:12 KJV) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Usually if we are being persecuted, it is our own fault. We won't hold our peace. We won't let peace rule in our situation. We have to get in at least the last word or the loudest word. Then we wonder why we are so misunderstood, and why people are not wanting to fellowship with me or follow me. Where are you going? If somebody follows you, where are they going to end up. Is there a steadfastness walk in your life? Is there a purpose in your life? Is there a changing in your life where you are being conformed to the image of the Son of God daily?

Being a leader is an important job. If a true leader lays hands on you to set you into some office, you have to realize something: you have been called to the work of the Lord. We studied earlier how in the beginning they set people into offices. They chose their deacons and they set the elders into office. Those elders were people who were to be able to walk in such a way that those who followed them could see Christ in decisions they made.

If you ask people today what the Church is, they will give you all kinds of excuses, and all kinds of reasons, and all kinds of thoughts, won't they. "The Church is that big building down town. The Church is a mystical thing. I don't understand it. The Church is a group of people getting together, and they argue a lot. They rob and they steal from one another. They lie about one another. I don't think I want to join that outfit."

The truth is that the Church is none of those things. The Church is a spiritual body, called out from the world to be like Christ in every instance. If any of those things are happening, it is in the flesh realm where people can see it. It is not happening in the true Church of the living Christ. The true Church of the living Christ is blood-washed, redeemed, without spot, wrinkle, or blemish (Eph 5:27). God is wanting us to get this old man under subjection and present him a living sacrifice, so He can project the true Church to the world.

If people don't know what the Church is like, it is not the people's fault. They knew what the early Church was like. It turned the world upside down. It was an exciting place to be, but nobody wanted to be there if they weren't ready to repent. The true Church is full of power, and majesty, and glory because it is clothed with Christ in all of His glory, beauty, and holiness. God has taken us out of that darkness and into His Kingdom. It is not flesh and blood, but that is what the world sees. What that flesh and blood many times represents is our own doctrine. My this and My that, when we should be representing Jesus Christ in all of His glory and His power. Every one of us who are called to be leaders, in every decision we make, and every transaction that we have, Jesus Christ should be glorified. Amen! 1 Peter 2:23-25 tells us what Jesus did:

(1 Pet 2:23 KJV) *Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:*

These are Jesus' steps. We are not talking about an actual footprint somewhere. We are talking about the life He lived; the actions He took, and the things that He did. That is how you know. It is by the life you live, not by the way you walk with your feet. We know Him because of the steps that He left for us, the life that He lived.

(1 Pet 2:24 KJV) Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

The steps of my life should be righteous, shouldn't they. I shouldn't be living to sin anymore. I should be living not to self, but to Christ.

(1 Pet 2:25 KJV) For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

You have been delivered out of the power of darkness. You have been translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son, and He is our Shepherd and Bishop. We need to begin to represent Him, especially as leaders. We should be leaving steps behind us, a life behind us that people can follow. Would we want our track record openly read for all to see? Would we want to look back and see who is following us and how well they are doing? You might be thinking about getting it straightened up, but you might not have any more time. You can't go back and straighten it out, but you can start walking straight from now on. You can start leaving a path, a trail, steps, a life. Someone will say, "That is what I want to be like. I remember that person. I remember that individual, and even though they seemed to go through all kinds of hell on earth, they had victory. When people spoke evil of them, they just turned around and said, "Let's pray for them. Let's bless them."

Let's look at 2 Cor 4: 8-11. This is the call of God. Am I called to be messed up all of the time, a cry-baby, full of fear all the time? No, I am called to project something, to be conformed to something. I would like you to make this a guideline for your call in this life. Look what happens here when you are called.

(2 Cor 4:8 KJV) We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

Nobody wants trouble. No matter what situation we are in, it is not hopeless, is it.

(2 Cor 4:9 KJV) Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

The Phillips translation says: knocked down but not out. You are still in the fight as long as you get back up. If you are knocked OUT, you are not in the

fight any more. We find in these verses that Paul's life was no bed of roses, and those who walked with him had no easy way either. They ended up in prison with him, or stoned to death, or whipped. They were not a people who had expensive suits on either, yet Paul could say, "I am rich. I have everything, and have need of nothing."

Have you had trouble lately on every side? Don't get distressed. Maybe your trouble is giving you a problem, but a leader is not distressed over that because he knows that it is working together for his good. If you are perplexed, don't be in despair over it. It is working for your good. Persecuted? Don't be worried about it; you are not forsaken. Cast down? Don't worry about it; you are not going to be destroyed. You are in a warfare, but you are going to win every time. It may take ten rounds or more to win it, but be committed to the end of the fight. Be committed to stay in the ring until the victory bell rings.

I love Jesus because He didn't quit. He was persecuted in the garden, and the pressure came on Him to give up, but He didn't quit even when great drops of blood came out of Him. He was troubled on every side. He was taken to the judgment hall where He was beaten with stripes, and blood was running down His back which was torn apart, but He never did give up. They put a crown of thorns on His head, and His skull was punctured and blood came out, but He never quit. He went to the cross, but He never quit. He went to the tomb, but He never quit. He kept fighting until one day He came out of that tomb with the keys of death, and hell. Hallelujah! He was forsaken by all men but God never forsook Him. Even though His back was turned, He still raised Him from the dead.

(2 Cor 4:10 KJV) Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

Every one of us who is really serving God, are bearing the dying of the Lord Jesus in our body. We are dying to self continually. You can't die to self without the life of Christ coming forth. Vice-versa the life of Christ cannot come forth in you unless you do die to self. John the Baptist gave the principle, didn't he. He said, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Paul said, "I die daily" (1 Cor 15:31). Jesus said, "You have to learn how to take up your cross and follow me" (Matt 16:24).

We have to make some decisions against the old nature, and make decisions for Christ so the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. There has to be a dying to self, the same decision that Christ made. It was not to fulfil His own will, not to fulfil His own desires, not to fulfil the lusts of the flesh, but to do the will of the Father. Every time you do the will of the Father, the life of Christ is manifested in your body. You will only manifest one of two natures. If you do your own thing, you are going to manifest your nature. If you do Christ's thing, you are going to manifest His life.

Look how he locks this up:

(2 Cor 4:11 KJV) For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

The world sees what we project, more than what we say. We can say they ought to go to Church, and we go fishing. Leaders have to start lining up where there is some death to self evident in our lives by the decisions we make, that the life of Christ can be made manifest in the life we live. If you do this you are going to get narrower, and narrower, and narrower. Pretty soon it will be the will of God that just comes naturally to you. It will be the will of God that pours out of you. It will be the holy conversation that pours out of you. It will be the righteous life-style that is lived through you. And what will they see? They will see the life of Christ in your mortal flesh, won't they.

People watch you when they find out you are a Christian. What life do you think they see in us? It gets tough to be a leader, because you have to realize that you are in a position where you are leading others, but you will never be able to lead until you learn to follow. You will never learn to follow until you prepare to commit to follow. Just coming to Church doesn't mean that you are following Jesus. Saying the right thing doesn't mean you are following Jesus. It means that when the choice that really counts is put there, what you choose proves who you follow. Let's look at Galatians 2:20-21. This is Paul's knowledge working through Christ to reveal something.

(Gal 2:20 KJV) I am crucified with Christ:

This is past tense. Paul is saying he considers his self to be dead with Christ. If I am dead, what power does a dead man have. If I make choices for the flesh, then I have to give the power to the flesh to fulfil it, don't I. It has no power in itself to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. I must give it that power, because I am crucified with Christ.

(Gal 2:20 KJV) ...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

(Gal 2:21 KJV) I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

I want to prepare my life and commit my life to learn to follow Jesus. When I really learn to follow Jesus I will be able to lead others, because it will not be me they are following, but it will be Christ. It will be the life that is now lived in the flesh. It will be that life that is not my life, but His life. Paul said he was crucified so he didn't have power to live. A crucified man has no power. If I am

crucified to the world, the world is crucified to me. That means I am dead to the world, and the world is dead to me. I need to live in such a way that this is more than just a nice scripture. I should live in such a way that the flesh no longer has the power to dictate to me how and when and where I will serve God.

Leaders have to become consciously aware that the life that is now in them is invested in them by the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ, through the blood that He shed. It isn't my life, but I must give an account for that life. I have been delivered out of the power of darkness. I have been brought into the Kingdom of light. I no longer live in darkness, but I have to give an account for this new life that I have been given. What have I done with it. I have admitted that it is His life that lives in me. It is His faith that lives in me.

Leaders, we have to begin to live what we are preaching. We have to live what we are teaching. We have to make decisions contrary to the flesh, so that the life of Christ can really be seen in us. We have to make decisions that even cost relationships sometimes. Don't you think that it cost Elisha something to burn his Dad's plow and his oxen and have a party with them. That is like burning the bridge behind you. You are not going home anymore. We realize that when we were called out of the world, we needed to burn that bridge and say, "I am crucified. There is no way back there, and there is nothing back there that I want. It is all in darkness from now on. I will walk in light, I will make decisions in light, I will make decisions that honor and glorify the Lord."

It won't be long until you find something happening. People will be wanting to follow you. What you must tell them, and continue to tell them, is that you are following Jesus. Tell them: "Check my life out, and see if it lines up every day with this, because I want you to follow me as I follow the Lord." We need to get into our hearts, that a life has to be lived; one has to be crucified and another lived. I am not going to live to death. I want to live to life.

The Call means: I recognize that I am called, so I must prepare, to commit to follow to be able to lead. You will never be any better leader than you are a follower. A Christian who walks where God wants him to, can say "This works. Do it this way. In everything give thanks, pray without ceasing, rejoice evermore, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus, concerning us. God has a purpose for all of our lives to be conformed to the image of His Son. In that purpose there is a calling for your life.

Father, we thank you. Lord, we need to realize not only the calling in the ministry, but we need to be thankful that we are even called. There are millions of people in this world who are dying and going to hell, and we

thank you Lord, that you have given grace whereby we have been saved. We have heard the call; we have answered the call. Now we desire to let the call to the ministry be developed in our hearts and in our lives. In the name of Jesus teach us, and we give you the glory. Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 4

VISION

In this chapter we are going to be studying on vision. We will be laying ground work for the New Testament vision, but we have to look back at Joel to begin with. Many times through the Old Testament times they had visions. They were spoken to by dreams and visions. Joel prophesied something that later on we see in the book of Acts, but here is a prophetic utterance by Joel that is an established truth. The difference between an established truth and a manifested truth is that when they spoke it, it was established. God is saying here that this truth was just as good as done when Joel prophesied it. It didn't make any difference.

(Joel 2:28 KJV) And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;

Notice that it talks about all flesh, which means the sinner and everybody. Nobody could be saved unless the Spirit of God was poured out upon them. That is the New Testament. That is the New Covenant, and everybody has an opportunity, not just the Jews. The Spirit of God was poured out and drew men to Christ.

(Joel 2:28 KJV) ...and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Visions = Hebrew Conc. #2384 = a revelation

He used two things here. He used dreams and he used visions. It is important to understand that. We will get into that a little deeper. Usually when you see a dream, it is something that establishes something. A vision is something that is yet to come or yet to be brought forth.

All of the ministries of the New Testament work in the vision realm. They saw things that were yet to come, especially Paul and the writer of the book of Revelation, John the beloved. They talked about moving into a spiritual realm with God. If we want to walk in a spiritual realm with God we have to have a visionary heart. You can't do it by the natural man because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor 2:14). Leaders especially have to have a visionary heart. You might say you have

a vision to build a church, but instead you have a dream to build a church. It is a desire to build a church. A vision is something in the spiritual realm of God, to reveal things in the spiritual realm. Notice this in verses 29-32:

(Joel 2:29 KJV) And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

(Joel 2:30 KJV) And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

(Joel 2:31 KJV) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

(Joel 2:32 KJV) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.

Ever since the cross God has been making up a remnant This is a picture, not only of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a picture of salvation becoming real to all men. So the word vision that Joel uses means revelation. We know that Paul's prayer in Eph 1:17-18 was that they would have the eyes of their understanding enlightened (or illuminated) that the spirit of wisdom and revelation would work in their lives.

Enlightened = Greek Conc. #5461 = illuminate; bring to or give light, make to see.

When God shows you something that is going to happen, or something that He is doing in the spirit realm, it is a vision. You may want to have a vision, and you may have had one but didn't realize what you had. You don't have to be in some kind of trance to have a vision. God will speak to your heart and show you things.

In Acts 10:17 and 10:19 we see where Peter was on the roof of Simon, the tanner's house, and he was resting and had a vision. It was something to come, wasn't it. He didn't understand it; all he could see was unclean things on a sheet. That portion was a dream. Something spiritual was going to happen to Cornelius, who also had a vision (Acts 10:3). God began to reveal the meaning of that when he went down to see Cornelius and it happened. He had a vision and God changed the whole thing in the spiritual realm. What God calls clean is clean. What He calls unclean, is unclean and we are not to try to change the difference. We need people with visions. We need people who can talk to God. Let's look at Acts 2:16-21

(Acts 2:16 KJV) But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

(Acts 2:17 KJV) And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

What are the last days? Ever since Jesus Christ came, died, was buried, and rose again, and the Holy Spirit came back, that is the last days.

(Acts 2:18 KJV) And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

(Acts 2:19 KJV) And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

(Acts 2:20 KJV) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

(Acts 2:21 KJV) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This is the manifested truth that Joel saw as an established truth. Joel really had a vision of the future. Joel was prophesying something that he saw in the spirit. When you really preach the word of God under the anointing, many times you are preaching in the visionary realm. That is why it is called prophecy. The Spirit of prophecy. When you teach, many things you teach are something that haven't come to pass yet. I am sure that every one of us has gotten up at some time and said, "The Lord is coming." That is an established truth, because He said He was coming; but the vision of the heart locks onto that truth farther on somewhere and brings the reality in our heart today. It was just as real for Joel when he said that as it was when it happened. The sun was darkened, wasn't it. Jesus blood cleansed the heavens (Heb 9:23-26), so the fulfillment of that came to pass, but it was as good as done on the day when Joel prophesied it.

When a leader begins to move in the visionary heart of God, he begins to call those things that are not, as though they were. He works in established truth, speaking manifested truth. When a Minister ministers the word of God, he builds faith in the heart of an individual that he is ministering to, and that faith builds a picture of what he is talking about. Sometimes we call it imagination, but there is nothing wrong with your imagination if it is controlled by God. That is the only way you can get a picture of what God is doing or is going to do.

When you work in the visionary realm with God, you are talking about Jesus coming and He hasn't come as yet, but could anybody take that away from you? How do you know it is true? The Bible says so, but when you speak it you are not speaking a past tense fact, are you. You are working in a vision. You are working in a realm where in your own heart you can see that. When you say the Lord is coming, it should do something in your heart, like "WOW! HE'S COMING.

IT'S REAL." If you have that visionary heart moving in your life, when you minister the word of God, it builds faith and it builds hope, because it is something that is established on truth.

Some of you may think that we don't really need to have visions, but without a vision, people perish (Prov 29:18). If people all of a sudden began to believe that Jesus wasn't coming back, what would it do to you? It might destroy you. You still have to have that vision of Christ coming.

Too many times we think that preaching and ministering the word of God is just speaking words. It is not. Paul said in 1 Cor 2:4, "I didn't come to you with enticing words of men's wisdom, but I came to you in the power and the demonstration of the Spirit of God." There was a demonstration on Pentecost, wasn't there. What were they waiting for? Do you think they just went up there to drink and eat? Do you think they had a vision of the Holy Spirit coming into their lives? They went up there and had a vision in their hearts that something was going to happen. I would never go anywhere if I didn't believe something was going to happen. There wouldn't be much sense in going, would there.

That is why a lot of us don't really have an abundant walk with Christ, because we have no vision of any great thing ever happening in our life. We say, "Poor little me; that is all that is ever going to happen in my life. I'm just going to be in trouble forever." You are building a vision, and speaking those things that are not like they really are, whether you are speaking negative, or whether you are speaking positive. You are building a vision that you start living in. Faith builds a picture called a vision. John saw things in the spirit. Look at Rev 9:17:

(Rev 9:17 KJV) And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

He saw something in the spirit realm, didn't he. He didn't necessarily see something that was far down the road; he saw something that already existed in the spirit realm. How are you going to bring anything out of the spirit realm, if you in your own heart don't believe it exists. Jesus made speeches that they could picture in their mind, like a vineyard or a sower planting the seed. A really good story teller brings you right into the story with him. You can see what he is speaking. You are working in the vision. People get caught into that vision with you when they begin to see it with you.

The only way you can understand revelation is with a visionary heart and a visionary mind, because you cannot get it from God in the natural. These weren't hallucinations; they were visions. A lot of people have nightmares and hallucinations, but we are talking about visions from God. Leaders today need to be getting something from God, and having it in a visionary heart in such a way

that they can present it to the people and catch the people up in that. How do you think people get caught up in cults. Those people get so sold on what they are doing, they bring an ungodly vision in, don't they. They get people so caught up in their heart and in their vision, that they are gone in no time at all.

I want this kind of vision: the act of seeing into the spiritual realms of God. You are fighting against principalities, spiritual wickedness. You have to see yourself a little higher up than that. You have to begin to see a vision of your own life being seated with Christ in heavenly places, not just some poor little human being getting knocked about and whipped ever time you turn around. Leaders are going to have to get a vision of the truth of God's word. I AM seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:6). I see that in my heart. I see that in my mind. I see that in my spirit. It is real to me, so I can tell you it is real.

(Eph 2:6 KJV) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

We wonder why we are in the shape we are in. It's because you have a vision of being in that shape. You don't vision yourself being healthy and strong. You envision yourself being weak and helpless. We don't envision ourselves having the wealth of the world. We envision everybody else having it. We can say what we want to, but when we look at the picture in our heart, it is the other people who have it, and I don't have any. God says, "All the gold and silver are mine, saith the Lord" (Haggai 2:8). If it is all His, it is all mine too, because the visionary heart tells you that you can look into the spiritual world of God, and whatever God says, it is true. Then you can begin to picture yourself, in the spirit of God, seated with Him and Him taking care of all your need.

We have to wake up, and begin to say, "I know who I am, because I have the act of seeing. I can see in the Spirit of God what I am. What I see in the natural is a lie, but what I see in the word of God is truth." I can see in the spirit just like you can if you want to. Just like John and Paul did, we can see in the spiritual realm of God and begin to call those things that are not as though they were (Romans 4:17).

(Rom 4:17 KJV) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

If you think it will take too much time, then you are going to live down there in grumbling alley, and you will tell people about it, because that is your vision. Sure enough it happens because we locked ourself into that silly thing. The Church leaders have to get a vision, the act of seeing what God is doing.

Daniel lived before the Holy Spirit came to indwell men, and yet he had the ability to see. You could do a lot of research in Daniel's life; he could see many things. He was called a seer. That was not an ungodly name; that was a name

that was given to the prophets. You can be a seer, but not only a seer but a doer. This takes a lot of dying to self, and coming alive to Christ. Look at Daniel 2:19.

Dan 2:19 KJV) Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

So vision is to reveal secrets. I really believe that if we would spend more time in prayer at night with God and with God at all times, there would be secrets made known unto us. There would be things in the unseen world that would be made very real to us, and would take fear away from us. It would take fear away from others, and would give an impartation of knowledge that the Church should be walking in and is not, because we have not unlocked the secrets of God. We are still busy trying to interpret what somebody else is saying. We need to get to a place where we spend time with God so God can make the secret things known to us. That is His desire, the manifold grace of God, that the mysteries of God are made known to the Church.

Joel was talking about the Spirit being poured out that would bring revelation abilities. When He came, it was called the act of seeing. In John 16:13 Jesus talks about the Holy Ghost coming and says He will show you things to come.

(John 16:13 KJV) Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

(John 16:14 KJV) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.

(John 16:15 KJV) All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.

This should stir your heart and get you really excited. "He will show you things to come." That is a vision. The Church is so worried about bombs, or worried about the anti-christ and the mark of the beast, and they don't understand what they are talking about. Here, the vision that God gave to the Church was the ability through the Holy Ghost to see things that are yet in the future. If I know the future, I am going to feel a lot better about living today.

The Holy Ghost is called the Comforter, isn't He (John 16:7). Church leaders, when we start walking where God wants us to walk, we will be comforted because we know what God has in store, and it is just as real as though we were living in it. We can bring that and we can comfort the Church instead of scaring them. When you get soldiers prepared for war, and you tell them what kind of a battle they are in for, they have a lot more chances of coming out victorious. We

don't take the Holy Spirit of God and let Him become really personal to us, and spend time with Him so He can take us through these scriptures and show us things that are to come. Daniel didn't have the Holy Ghost, but he could see things that were in secret.

God is saying that we have the Holy Ghost, but are we really availing ourselves of Him. Leaders have to grow up and begin to walk in the Spirit and begin to talk to the Spirit. In the early Church, when they prayed and had a prayer meeting, the Holy Ghost was there, and more than just in them. He gave them guidance, He told them who to separate. He told them where to go and showed them the way. Paul wanted to go one direction, but the Holy Ghost said, "No, you can't go there, Paul."

He was real to them. He wasn't just someone floating around in the building. He was guiding the Church. He was talking through them. He was showing and revealing things to the Church, and all of a sudden the dark ages came, and the Church hasn't recovered from it yet because the Holy Ghost is still not that real to us. We speak in tongues, we feel a movement now and then of the Spirit of God, but every decision the early Church made was guided and directed and shown to them by the Holy Ghost himself.

Leaders, we have to get to the place where we are talking to the Holy Spirit, and He is talking to us; where He is saying, "Don't go that way; go this way. Don't do that; do this." How many times do we see in the word of God how God warned men not to go a certain way, or not to do something, or to do some other thing and victory would come. It came every time. 1 Kings 17:1; 18:41-46; James 5:17-18 give the account where Elijah prayed and asked God to not let it rain, and God shut up heaven for three and one-half years, and it was not going to rain until Elijah spoke it. Elijah spoke the rain, didn't he, and then told his servant to go and see. Six times he went and nothing was happening, but the seventh time he saw the cloud. Elijah told the servant to go tell Ahab to get in the chariot and get down the hill because there is going to come an abundance of rain.

He girded himself up and he started running before the rain came, because when he spoke it, it was an established truth and he knew that it would be manifested in a few minutes, and he knew it was coming. He could see it by faith, and he outran Ahab and all of his horses and chariot. Who do you think was talking to Elijah? God was talking to him, showing him what would happen when he spoke the word.

(James 5:17 KJV) Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

(James 5:18 KJV) And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

If we had a vision when we prayed for people, it would happen. If we started thinking in the spirit, it would be wonderful. We would also be humbled, because we would realize what great power we are operating in, what authority we are working with here.

The Church wouldn't be bowing down and saying, "I am sorry" or compromising its' walk, or trying to not offend anybody. It would stand up and be bold. It would declare the truth. It would shout the victory because it would have the vision in its' heart of victory. It must see the rain as though we are already there. It would see the victory as though it were already a manifested truth. We have to do something about this. It is not the hearers of the word that are justified, but the doers of the word.

David wanted to build a house for God but God spoke to Nathan the prophet that David was not to do this. Let's look at 1 Chron 17:11-15 and see the word that God gave Nathan to speak to David.

(1 Chr 17:11 KJV) And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.

(1 Chr 17:12 KJV) He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.

(1 Chr 17:13 KJV) I will be his father, and he shall be my son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee:

(1 Chr 17:14 KJV) But I will settle him in mine house and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore.

(1 Chr 17:15 KJV) According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

David was a little worried. He saw how God had dealt with Saul, and he saw the errors of his life, but he wanted to be sure that his seed was blessed of God. So the prophet brought a vision to David. David probably said, "Yes, I can see it. There is God blessing my son. I can see the temple that he is building. I can see the glory of Israel. My seed is blessed."

We need to see these scriptures and understand them. They are not just fantasies, or science fiction. Science fiction works in the realm of the natural imagination. Vision works in the realm of God's mind, imparted to our mind and our heart and our spirit. These truths which are written in the Bible happened to

people just like us who lived in that day and time. God was saying through Nathan to David: "Don't worry, David. You are going to go and be with your fathers, but your seed will be all right." This message is also a two-fold prophetic utterance of the birth of Christ and all those who would live godly in Christ Jesus, His seed.

So God is saying here that we need to begin to walk in that realm where the visionary heart of God works in us. God always called things done, didn't He. When He spoke, it was finished. The problem is that we won't let it be finished in our lives. We won't let that vision become a reality. We are still wrestling, trying to get it done, instead of entering into the rest of God and saying, "It is finished with God. Lord, you work it out the way You want to. You do it the way You want to do it. I am going to praise You, I am going to magnify You, I am going to glorify You. I am going to enter into Your rest. It is finished as far as I am concerned. It is done." If you are not trying to get it done, then you have time to praise Him.

We need to realize that it is already done. It is finished. We are in the finished work of Christ, so God said, "Leader, get the vision." Move into that realm of that visionary heart with God. Let God speak to us with dreams and visions. Let God show us things that are to come. Let God show us truths that are already established in Christ.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to lay down at night, and have the dreams of the Lord in your mind and in your heart. Wouldn't it really be nice to lay down at night and the Lord begin to show you the Holy City, and the wonderful things of God, just like John saw. John wasn't trying to see a vision. When John received the revelation at Patmos, the visions he received, he wasn't trying to receive. He was just there, and he didn't have anything else to do anyway. He was on an island, and according to history, there was nothing on that island. He was put there to die, but he didn't die there. He came alive there. Why? Because he entered into a realm of the visionary heart of God the Father. He said, "I see all of these things that are happening, and all of these things that have happened, and all of these things that will happen." He got so excited that several times he just fell down and tried to worship angels (Rev 19:10; 22:8-9).

We struggle and wrestle so hard to get truth when all we need to do is open our hearts to the Lord and begin to praise Him and love Him and read His word, and the vision of God would be implanted in our hearts. When it is God's visionary heart locked in there, nobody can take it away from you. They can't erase it off, they can't move it away. It is there to stay; it becomes a part of your life. We need to get a vision of the finished work of God. In Isaiah 1:1 Isaiah uses another word called "saw".

(Isa 1:1 KJV) The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

Some of the things Isaiah saw in this vision did not yet exist. When you get in a vision with the Lord, He shows you an eternal realm. He doesn't bring you into today and tomorrow or next week. He brings you into the total realm of eternity, and He shows you a section of that, just like Isaiah saw a section of it. But it was according to the vision that Isaiah wrote his book. If you haven't studied the book of Isaiah, I would recommend that you do so. It is one of the most exciting books that I have read in the Bible.

Ezekiel in Chap 1:1, saw visions of God, and he wrote them down. Everything that is written in the word of God is primarily by vision. If we don't have visionary leaders, the people perish. They don't grow; they don't move on and become strong, because there is nothing to shoot for. I can stand here and tell you that I have a ten-million dollar bank account waiting with your name on it, and it is yours, but you say, "I don't have cab fare to get there so I am not going to go." You don't have to go; you have to get in the same place that I am, and it is yours.

I am speaking just like Jesus did to His disciples, "that you shall be where I am." He wasn't talking about going away somewhere. He was talking about being in the Father, being in the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, thinking in the Spirit, living in the Spirit. They weren't; they were there with Him, but they were not IN HIM. Jesus said, "Though I go away, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, you may be also" (John 14:3). He wasn't talking about going off to heaven, and coming back the second time. He was talking about going to the grave, and becoming the door into heaven again. That is what He said in John 10:9. He became the door, didn't He. He became that door, walked through it, and came back and said, "Now I bring you into My Kingdom. Now you are where I am."

So it isn't a physical location we are talking about. It is a changing of the mind, a taking off of the carnality of our mind, and putting on the spiritual mind of Christ, so the Holy Spirit can show us things to come. It is easy for anybody to tell you about things that have happened. We can read the newspaper and tell you that. But when God shows you something that is going to happen, and it is already as well as done, you can start rejoicing.

The Church has to begin to move in a new realm that we haven't walked in yet. It has looked at all the edges, but we are living in the greatest hour that the Church has ever lived in. We had better begin to get a vision in our heart of the Church being united, walking in unity, walking in faith, walking in power, so that when we speak, it is not negative words, not words of division, not words of schism, but it is words of uniting, it is words of authority, it is words of power. You don't do that until you see it in your own heart. A vision is what has to happen in the Church, along with dreams and all of the prophecy. Every leader

has to have a vision. You can't lead very far unless you are seeing what you are walking toward.

Years ago God gave me a vision in Luke 22:31-32:

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

He said, "When you are converted, strengthen the brethren." I could just see myself strengthening the brethren. Going out to little Churches; going out everywhere. Sending out literature and gospel and tapes and finances, and everything that was needed. Praying for everybody. That is my vision, and I see the body growing through that. You can do the same thing. Get ahold of God, and say, "Lord, I love You. I am going to start resting in You. I am tired of doing it my way. I want to start doing it Your way." When you are honest about that, watch what God starts talking to you about. He will begin to give you a visionary heart when you begin to do what God wants you to do.

Ezekiel had so many visions that people thought he saw flying saucers and all kinds of things. He gets blamed for a lot of stuff. In Ezekiel 1:1 he saw visions of God.

(Ezek 1:1 KJV) Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

If you see a vision of God, that is going to make you do something, isn't it. Let's look at Ezekiel 8:3.

(Ezek 8:3 KJV) And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.

God caught Ezekiel up in this vision, didn't He, and he saw visions of God. He came into Jerusalem, and he didn't see a king sitting there, or a man standing there, but he saw jealousy. Remember, one of the meanings of visions is 'the act of seeing'. When we begin to operate where all we see is either Jesus or God, our entire life is consumed by Him. He is going to bring us into a place where we can begin to work and be valuable in the body of Christ. We are going to know what the problem is with somebody. We call it the discerning of spirits. That is exactly what Ezekiel was doing; he was discerning what was there. He said jealousy was

there and that was what was wrong. Jealousy was there in Jerusalem. He saw that because he had a vision of God, and through that vision God brought him into Jerusalem and showed him what was wrong.

What would happen if we spent time with God until we caught the image of God in our hearts. Do you think that might be what happened to Peter and the apostles when Sapphira and Ananias came before them (Acts 5:1-11). The Holy Ghost showed them their hearts, didn't He. What happened to them? They fell over dead. A great fear fell upon everybody and no man dared join the Church.

We haven't seen anything yet. We have been playing around with revival. We haven't seen revival because we are not willing to pay the price to allow the Holy Spirit to talk to us, to show us what is really wrong, because we really don't want to see what is wrong. We say, "I wish some preacher would come in here and tell us what is wrong." We have the Holy Ghost living in us. We don't need some preacher telling us what is wrong. God says, "I want you to understand and move into Me and rest in Me. Begin to let Me show You things. Let Me do the work." That is what these men of God did. They just began to move into new realms.

Ezekiel 1:1 means a "looking glass; a mirror; something to look through." That is not a reflective mirror, but something like a telescope (Dict. for telescope = an instrument with lenses or mirrors for making distant objects appear nearer and larger). Without the Holy Ghost looking glass, you can't see through. That is why Paul said, "We see through a glass darkly now"(1 Cor 13:12), but the best of what we are doing now, is that we are seeing part of what is going on. I want to see it all one of these days, but I want to bring in the reality of what I partly see now, what is partly revealed. I can do that, and you can do that.

This man of God was able, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to be caught up in God and see what was in Jerusalem. This is not the only place he does this. He is not the only prophet that does this. Ezekiel was told to lay outside the walls of Jerusalem. He is to lay on his left side for 390 days, each day representing a year of judgment on Jerusalem, and lay on the right side for forty days, representing 40 years of judgment. You need to read Ezekiel chap. 4 and 5. These men obeyed God and did what He told them to do.

In Jeremiah 14:14-16 and Ezekiel 13:3 God talks about the men who are prophesying out of their own vision, out of their own heart. He talks about man prophesying vain visions, thinking vain visions, but He also warned those who listen to those people, and heed them and act upon their vain vision. They are going to be in real trouble, aren't they. He said, "Woe unto those prophets who cause this to happen."

We have a lot of vain visions floating around today. We have a lot of vain visions going out in the name of the Lord. People say, "Well, God told me. God

showed me. God said..." If God ever shows us anything it will change us first. It won't be like a telephone call from someone. When God speaks to your heart it gets in there, and when it does, it becomes real. Then when you speak it, people know that you know what you are talking about.

There are a lot of vain visions going on today in the Church. People are getting up in the name of the Lord, calling themselves preachers of the word of God, and what they are doing is absolutely dulling the hearing of the people, blinding their eyes, until they cannot hear nor see what God is doing. God is going to raise up some people with true vision, and it is going to be a bride vision. It is going to be light. When it comes into an individuals heart, it will wash away the darkness, and bring illumination and hearing.
Isaiah 21:2 and Isaiah 29:11

(Isa 21:2 KJV) A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease.

(Isa 29:11 KJV) And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

Isaiah saw some things that were going to happen, and he said it was a grievous vision, so not all of your visions are going to be full of joy and great peace, are they. Sometimes God will show you what is going to happen to an individual, because they will not stop doing what they are going to do. It becomes grievous to you. Sometimes you see a Church that is dead set on going wrong; they have deceived themselves and that is the way they are going to go.

Ariel, the city where David dwelt, was playing around with God, and Isaiah sees a grievous vision (Isa 29:1-2), then he begins to tell them that it is a sealed up vision (chap. 29:11); it is darkness to them. I don't want God to seal His vision up to me. I want to entertain the presence of God, so He can speak to me and minister to my heart, and put into my life a real living vision and the ability to see. The ability to let the Holy Ghost show me things to come.

We should get excited. The vision is here, and it is ours. We can all operate in these areas. When you discern a spirit, you are really a visionary. You don't really see that spirit, unless God gives you a spiritual vision of it, but you sense that it is there and you by faith say something. If you begin to counsel that person, you tell them that Jesus will deliver them. You are planting into their heart a faith and a vision of their deliverance, and they are being set free.

Every time you say that Jesus Christ is coming, you are saying something that has not yet happened. At that moment, if you believe it in your heart, you are a visionary. Visionary means "seeing things that are not, and being able to bring

them into focus." Have you ever heard about visionaries? It is a common word. We say, "That man is a real visionary. He can see a building that is not even built, and he can tell you how it looks, and he draws a picture of it and then they build the building." He is called an architect, isn't he. He has a vision in his mind before he draws it on the paper. We have a vision of Christ in our life. If we would begin to allow Him to operate, we could begin to impart into other people. Being a Christian isn't something just cut and dried, not something just to be put down on ink and paper. Every believer should have some area of visionary reality working in his life.

Jesus said, "I always do the things My Father shows Me to do." Do you think He was surprised when He came across a leper to be healed, or a wild man who was possessed of demons. His Father had already shown Him, hadn't He. So there had to be a visionary heart in Jesus. Another reason that I believe there was, is the fact that when He was about ready to be put to death, He endured the shame and the reproach and the cross, because He remembered the joy that was set before Him (Heb 12:2). He didn't envision all the suffering and the death, and all the horrible things, but He envisioned the joy that awaited Him. A visionary is a person who sees the end of a thing. He is not just wrapped up in the immediate moment of time, and all the problems that it seems to bring with it, but actually sees the total finish of it. They live there instead of here.

(Prov 29:18 KJV) Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

So we understand that the vision is built upon the word of God. You can always check to see if the vision you have is from God, because it will be built upon the word of God. It will make you happy, won't it. What happens if we don't have any word in us? We will not have a vision, will we. If we have a little word, we will have a little vision. Part of our life is in total chaos all the time. But if we are filled with the word of God, we have a large vision. We see the Lord as victor; we see Him as King; we see Him as provider; and we see Him as LORD. We need to see Him as more than just being our healer or deliverer. We need to see Him as the LORD, encompassing all parts of our lives and our beings, living in that truth.

So (1) if there is no vision, (2) the people perish, but (3) the happiness is manifested by the obedient, isn't it. There should be real happiness in an obedient child, a real joy.

This is what Habakkuk said in Hab 2:1-4:

(Hab 2:1 KJV) I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

He was waiting for something, wasn't he. He knew that the Lord was going to talk to him, and he wondered what he would answer when he was reproved.

(Hab 2:2 KJV) And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

(Hab 2:3 KJV) For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

(Hab 2:4 KJV) Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

So the Lord connects the vision with faith. Faith is the only thing you can wait in without becoming anxious. If I have a vision built upon that faith that this thing is already accomplished, that God has given me the vision, then I need to write it down and see what I am thinking. I need to see what the Lord is saying to me so others who come along can read it. If I have a vision from God, it should line up with God's word, and I will have enough faith that it is from God, and then write it down and let anyone who wants to, see it, because this is what God has for me. A vision brings you into eternal thinking.

Let's dissect this a little bit. (#1) We are to stand in the high calling. (#2) We are to be set in determination. (#3) We are to watch for the Spirit's movement. (#4) We are to have an ear to hear what the Spirit says. (#5) Prepare your heart. (#6) Act on God's word. (#7) Give understanding so others can respond. (#8) Others will be able to run correctly. (#9) Be not moved away from what God has shown you; wait for it. (#10) Stand fast in faith. Be an example in steadfastness, (#11) by faith, not by sight. Good leaders have to be able to let people know where they are going, why they are going, and in what capacity they are going.

In the Church in Fresno, if a person wants to begin a vision, and says he or she has a call from God to maybe start a ministry, they make that person write that vision out. Almost every one of them by the time they write it out, never realized the depth of what God was showing them. They understood then what God was saying. We could ask other people to read the vision if they were interested in working with this person. The man who had the vision and is winning, is the winner. He lets nothing stand between him and the prize.

There is a prize to be won and we need to begin to move in toward that, but if I expect people to go with me, I have to tell them what my real hearts' desire is, what I feel God wants me to do. I can't expect people to just jump in and me say to him, "Hey, we are going to build something now." "What are you going to build?" "I am not sure, but we are going to build something, and I want you to come over and join me. Maybe we will build a four-room church." The guy starts to build, and I say, "Wait a minute. Let's pour another foundation over here. I think I want to build a smaller church." "Okay, we'll start working on this one." "No, I want to build a larger church."

How long would you stay with someone like that? Not very long, would you, because he doesn't know what he wants to build. He will never get it done because he will keep changing his mind. You have to get together with somebody who is going in one direction and knows the way they are going.

Leaders have to be steadfast, don't they. They have to be determined, they have to be set, and they have to wait until God says, "Do it." The word of God says that he that ministers, let him wait on his ministry (Romans 12:6-7). There is a time to go, there is a time to move, but you need to have it determined and inscribed in your own heart in such a way that you know where you are going. Any one who is going to go with you is able to go with you, because they know they have read the vision and they can run with it correctly. I love Jesus because He had a vision. He had a ministry, didn't He.

When God told Noah to build the ark, do you think that God told him he could build it the way he liked it, and he could pick the animals he would like to take into it? No! God said, "Here is the blueprint, Noah; build it according to this." God gave him directions about everything, and Noah obeyed God. God has given us the blueprint for our lives, and it should line up with the word of God. It should be written down in such a way that whoever wants to run with us, can run with us. We are not going around in circles. We have set our eyes on the mark for the prize of the high calling.

In High School I ran in races, and everyone takes off in the same direction. You never see anyone in the race take off and run in circles, in and out and off the track, and then back in. No! That is what Christians do; they start running and then get off the track and lay back. Then they get back and say, "Follow me." There isn't anybody to follow you, because they are already down at the end of the track. We need to make it plain, and wait on it.

(Rev 2:7 KJV) He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

God is saying something in this scripture that we need to get ahold of. Can you envision the tree of life? Can you envision sitting with Jesus on His throne? Can you really see it in your heart and your mind? The only ones who can are those who have an ear to hear, because when the Holy Spirit speaks to you, He brings you visionary ability to see what God is talking about.

When I read the word of God, I see it happening. I see it in my spirit. When I talk about the New Jerusalem, it isn't a million miles away. It is like I am walking down the streets of it already, and examining everything in it. Those beautiful walls, those gold streets, and looking at those beautiful gates of pearl. In my mind I am already seeing it all, because that is where I live. Whatever is going on

in this world isn't very interesting, except to see prophecy unfold in front of my eyes. I love it.

Satan isn't ruling over anything. God tells Satan what to do, and Satan whispers in false rulers ears, and they think they had a good idea. Others are under demonic influence themselves, and they think the idea is great. We should be sitting over here laughing at them. We are watching all of the Jews going home, hallelujah! We are looking at Israel and are seeing the Spirit of God just moving and mixing, getting ready to just pour out upon that great nation.

We should get so excited if we could just see what the God of heaven and earth is really doing in this world today. We wouldn't have any fear, because God has prepared for us the tree of life. We have to have that vision. Death is not the final end for me; it is just a door through which I walk into the place where I already live. We live in the spirit, don't we. We live and have our moving and our being in Christ Jesus. Leaders should live in that area. They are not going to heaven; they are living in the heavenly realm already. We are just going to drop this old garment off one day, and put on a new one and then we will be like Him.

No wonder Paul could say it is better to depart and be with the Lord. If we had his body, we might say that too, because he had lumps and bumps and bruises. It was bruised and knotted up something terrible. But he had a vision beyond this mortal man, didn't he. Paul was always encouraging the people to put off the old man; quit thinking of the old man. Start thinking in Christ.

(Rom 8:14 KJV) FOR AS MANY AS ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, THEY ARE THE SONS OF GOD.

I have to see that in my heart. It has to become more than a scripture, and just saying I am a son of God. I have to envision myself in my heart that I am His child. When I see myself being His child, I know that no ungodly or evil thing is going to have any right to me.

(Psa 91:2-8 KJV) I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

I can see that in my heart and feel that in my spirit. I am living in Christ. Look at Galatians 5:16:

(Gal 5:16 KJV) This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

The Church has to envision themselves walking in the Spirit, talking with the Spirit; communicating with the Spirit, being led by the Spirit of God, hearing what the Spirit is saying to the Church, driving the fear away from the Church, driving the spirit of fear away from them. It doesn't belong there; God never put it there. He gave us love, and power, and a sound mind, but we cannot really live there until we start walking there. He is our Comforter. He doesn't just live in me; I live in Him. We just think of us containing the Holy Spirit, and that is a good thought, but He contains us too. He is not only IN us, but we are IN Him. We are sealed in Him, and no unclean or ungodly thing can get at you because you are sealed in Christ.

(2 Cor 1:21 KJV) Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God;

(2 Cor 1:22 KJV) Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

(Eph 1:13 KJV) In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.

Sealed = G4973; to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation (lit. or fig.); by impl. to keep secret, to attest:--(set a, set to) seal up.

When you get tempted to get up and do something in the flesh to fight the devil, just snuggle down a little bit in the Holy Ghost and sit down and enjoy Him. We get so distraught in trying to do something, then we get others involved in trying to do something, and it doesn't work and they want to give up. Every thing God commissions you to do will work. Any thing you commission yourself to do will more than likely fail.

(Heb 12:1 KJV) Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Every Christian should envision himself doing that. When you start to worry about something just shake it off. 1 Peter 5:7 says, "Casting all your cares on Him, for He cares for you." When you try to mend that yoke, you will find out it has been destroyed, not just broken. You can't yoke yourself up; it has been destroyed because of the anointing. Every time something tries to slow you

down, you should just take it and say, "Here, it is Yours, Lord. I am not big enough to handle this."

God didn't call us as leaders to carry a lot of burdens, a lot of weights. He called us to lay those things aside and let the body see how to do it. Instead of wrestling and trying to make everything work out, we should start praising God, because it is already worked out. The minute we start praising God in that situation, that weight is going to go, that sin will flee from us, everything will move away that is not of God, and pretty soon the answer is made clear to us.

(1 Cor 9:26 KJV) I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

In other words, he is determined that he knows how to run this race. What was Habakkuk told to do? "Write it down; wait until I give you the answer. Just wait for the vision; it is going to come. It is as good as come right now. I have told you it is going to come, so just wait on it."

We try to get things to happen. We try to have revival or we try to work things up in the Spirit. We have all been guilty of that, I'm sure. I was guilty until I found out that I was frustrating the grace of God. All I got was just like the scripture above: beating the air. I finally found out that a good place to go is just to pray or to praise the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit do the work, because if I am in the Spirit, and walking in the Spirit, do you think the Spirit doesn't know where He is going. If I am running in the Spirit, do you think He doesn't know where He is going. But if I am running in my own flesh and my own strength, I am going to be tired and worn out and be in a burn-out.

A lot of Christians are in a burn-out because they are trying to serve God in their own ability, their own strength, or trying to get things to happen in their own plans. They are trying to get God to do something. All God is saying is, "If you will just sit down and rest, I'll do it, and I will take you with Me." If I am in the Spirit, whenever the Spirit walks, I will automatically walk, won't I.

(1 Cor 9:27 KJV) But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Castaway =96. adokimos, ad-ok'-ee-mos; from G1 (as a neg. particle) and G1384; unapproved, i.e. rejected; by impl. worthless (lit. or mor.):-- rejected, reprobate.

As a leader we need to bring this old man down, and keep him there. It is easier than you think it is. You make it hard because you begin to see what you are going to give up when you do. You think, "If I do that, I have to quit watching this or that. I don't think I want to do that. I know I will have to give that up, so

why don't I kinda settle for a wishy-washy walk. I'll just kinda flop my way through. Okay?" God says, "That isn't what I want. I want a warrior. I want one that is able to go to war. I want one who has certain steps. I want one who can hear the certain sound of the Spirit of God. I want one that can walk in Me and I can walk in him. I can't do that when you are letting your body do anything it wants to."

You might say, "Well, I don't want to go to Church, because I don't like the preaching. I'll just move on." You haven't got that body under subjection. We are to present that body a living sacrifice, aren't we. God tells it what to do then. We don't tell ourselves anymore what to do. We need leaders that people can look at, and say, "Man, I see them going through some tough places, but no matter what is going on, they are serving God. They had a right to really be mean and nasty, but they blessed that guy. They had a real right to curse them and yell at them, but they just said, The Lord bless you."

We preach with the Bible in one hand, and carry these rocks in the other one. We try to teach the other guy a lesson by our own means. The person who walks in the Spirit and has laid aside the weight and kept his body under subjection, isn't moved because he has the peace of God ruling in his heart. No matter what anybody says about him, he doesn't revile again. He doesn't change the course; doesn't change one thing. He just keeps moving toward the mark.

(1 Cor 2:14 KJV) But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Why does God want you to keep your body under subjection? He is not just talking about your body. He is talking about your natural mind also. Since it can't receive anything of the Spirit of God, it sometimes frustrates your ability to receive from God. If you are full of anger, or malice, or gossip, or backbiting, or murmuring, or complaining, you can't receive anything from God. Who is hindering you from hearing? The devil? No! You are hindering yourself, because you won't bring it under subjection.

You won't cast down those thoughts, those imaginations. You won't bring this old body under subjection to the Holy Spirit to make it be quiet so you can hear from God. You pet the crazy thing. "Poor little me. I didn't get my name mentioned once this Sunday morning, and I'll bet I am the biggest tither in this Church. I know that the Pastor talked about everybody in the Church but they never mentioned me. I think I will quit this Church. I'll show them, because when I move away my tithes will be cut off and the Church will collapse and fall on it's face." Everybody around you is getting so blessed, and you go out of the Church like you have been walking in sand or miry clay all day. You find out after you quit the Church, that the Church is still there.

Leaders, we have to bring this thing under and keep our minds stayed on the Lord. Have a hearing ear always open to the Spirit. When your mind starts to run away with you, bring it back under subjection to the Spirit. When you start looking around in Church and you see things you don't like, quit looking around. Keep your eyes on the Lord. I think we should be honest with people. Paul was a hard man in the sense that what he wrote would crucify the flesh, wouldn't it. God wants us as leaders, so that we can first of all receive something from God and be an example to the flock so they can receive.

(Acts 26:19 KJV) Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:

He made a public acknowledgment. He was obedient to the heavenly, not the earthly vision. There are a lot of Christians who have earthly visions, and they always say that God told them or God showed them. Watch their life. It is in and out, up and down; it is inconsistent, they are never committed to anything. God didn't show them anything. They dreamed it up. They are having those vain visions. When God tells you something, it lines up with the word and is built on faith, isn't it.

Paul said he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Probably many people have a vision for you, such as: "You are better off out of the ministry. Why don't you quit trying to be anything. Give up." You even talk to yourself at times and say: what I ought to do is get a good job, and just settle down. I'll just sit in the back row of the Church." The only problem with that is pretty soon you aren't in the back row; you are out the door. I like to sit in the front row because you can't see what is going on behind you.

(2 Cor 12:1 KJV) It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord.

What a statement! Paul didn't say anything about getting prestige, etc. He said, "I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." That was the most important thing to him. That should be what a leader is looking for, visions and revelations of the Lord. He said, "I don't even have to boast about it. He wanted to have visions and revelations so he could impart them to other people. Romans 1:11 says that he longed to see them so he could impart to them some spiritual gift. You can't impart something that you do not have. Paul knew he had to get something from the Lord to impart to them, and the only way he could get it from the Lord was by God speaking to him in visions and revelations. He knew when that happened, he could come and impart some spiritual gift to them.

Leaders, we need to wait on God and get revelation from God. We need to get a vision from God so we can impart some spiritual gift to the body of Christ. So we can encourage others in the body to begin to participate with their gifts. If the leaders are not involved, then there is no need to think that most of the

people in the body are going to be involved. We can tell people that they need to prophesy, but we never prophesy, so they are not sure it is all right. It is like telling people to pray, and we don't pray. We have to learn to pray so we can move Gods' mighty hand. He moves by prayer and praise.

(Acts 9:10 KJV) And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

(Acts 9:11 KJV) And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

(Acts 9:12 KJV) And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

God spoke to Ananias, didn't he. God spoke to Paul. When God sends you to do something to or for somebody, God has already worked on the other end. You think you want to go out witnessing cold turkey, but you should never go out cold turkey. You should go out on fire for God. Somewhere behind one of those doors, is going to be somebody that God has prepared their heart for you to reach into their life through the power of the Holy Ghost and save them. You have to have that vision of a burning fire, not a cold turkey. We say crazy things, don't we. Who wants a cold turkey knocking on your door. I want to go out as a flaming fire, because His ministers are a flame of fire (Psalm 104:4; Heb. 1:7). When I go out, I expect to burn the devil out of somebody. We should come to Church on fire.

(Acts 10:3 KJV) He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

(Acts 10:4 KJV) And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

(Acts 10:5 KJV) And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

(Acts 10:6 KJV) He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

(Acts 10:17 KJV) Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were

sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

(Acts 10:18 KJV) And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

(Acts 10:19 KJV) While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

(Acts 10:20 KJV) Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

The Spirit of God was telling him in the vision that three men were seeking him. Do you think he was surprised when they showed up. We are always surprised. Have you ever been thinking about somebody and they call, and you said "what a coincidence." It wasn't a coincidence. God was trying to teach you something. He gave you a heart vision to think about that individual, and when they called, it was because God moved on their heart to call. We should start talking right. Holy conversation! Instead of saying something is luck, we should say we are blessed. I don't have to play the lottery, because I am so blessed I don't need it.

God is saying something here. God was working on both ends. How was He working? He was working in visions, wasn't He. Look at Peter giving his account of seeing a vision:

(Acts 11:5 KJV) I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision. A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

The next verse is when Peter was in prison:

(Acts 12:9 KJV) And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.

While Peter was in prison the Church was praying for him; and when he was miraculously delivered out of prison he thought he saw a vision, and didn't know that an angel had delivered him. You need to read chapter 12 of Acts.

Let's look at Acts 16:9-10 and see what happened to Paul.

(Acts 16:9 KJV) And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.

(Acts 16:10 KJV) And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Paul felt that the Lord had given him a vision of his need to be in Macedonia to bring the word of the salvation of Jesus Christ to those in that city. He went there and many in that city were saved, including the keeper of the prison and his family, where Paul and Silas had been thrown in prison (Acts 16:25-35). God knows the end of a thing from the beginning. It is amazing that just after he went over there, this man and his entire household got saved. I truly believe that if God put a vision in our hearts for souls, He would be getting some souls over there with a vision of being saved.

Paul had a real vision because it caused him to act. When God speaks to your heart, it is real and you will act on it. You will know that it is God. Is it a dream or something you have manufactured up because of some television program that you have watched, forget about it. When God speaks it into your heart, it is going to be real, and you are going to know that God is moving in your heart. Notice this in Acts 18:9.

(Acts 18:9 KJV) Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

It is like a television set, isn't it. You might call it a spiritual television set; the Holy Spirit shows you things that He wants you to know and do and say. But you have to spend time before that spiritual television set. The problem is that we have substituted everything else and moved the spiritual one over. When we get in trouble, we want to run in there and turn on the set, and say, "God, speak to me, help me. Let me see, what channel was that?"

Paul was so in tune with the Spirit of God, that the Holy Spirit could speak to him. God could speak to him in visions. Peter was so in tune with God that God could speak to him in visions. He could speak to Cornelius because he was a devout man; not saved but devout, and his alms came up before the Lord. God told him to send for Peter and he would tell him how to get saved. Why didn't God just send an angel and have him begin to preach the gospel to Cornelius? No! Only the redeemed of the Lord have that job of preaching the everlasting gospel.

If we want to preach effectively we have to start lining up as leaders, walking, living, and thinking in the Spirit. We have to keep our heart and mind in the visionary heart of God. See your own town as saved, not lost. Speak it saved. When we pray for people, we say that in the name of Jesus they are healed. Why can't we speak that over our cities, and say, "I see this city saved. I see every ungodly demon broken off this city." You have to start visualizing in your heart; let God put a vision there of victory and glory.

Stay away from people who have the bad report. Stay away from people who tell you that you can live in sin and nothing bad will happen to you. That you are good person, and you don't need to repent; you are all right. That is bad news. When a vision of God, or a man or woman of God, would come to minister the word of God, I want them to pick me out by the preaching of the gospel, and I want it to cut me open, and expose anything that is wrong so that I can get rid of it and not have that weight any more.

David said, "Search me and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me" (Psalm 139:23-24). I believe that as leaders we should want God to open us up and show us anything that is not right; and plant into our heart a vision of the greatness of God. Write down what you really feel God wants you to do. Then look and see what you have written; you might be amazed. Don't premeditate on what you are going to write; just get a piece of paper and start writing. We need a vision that is based on the word of God and held up by faith.

Father, I thank You. Lord, how we need leaders who will simply stand up and declare the word of God, seeing the victory even in the midst of battle. Seeing the end of the thing. Seeing the joy that awaits. Lord, I thank you that you are raising up leaders around the world today, but they are not going to be those who are men and women of vain vision, but they will be men and women who have the vision of the Lord and of His greatness, and His power, and His majesty. Ones who can be led by those visions and spoken to by the visions of God, even as Paul and Peter were spoken to by the visions of God. Lord, You have not stopped showing visions to men; men have just stopped seeing the visions.

Lord, we thank You that You are willing to show us so many great and wonderful things. Help us to develop a desire to move into that realm of resting in you, allowing the vision of God to speak to our hearts. We are not living in a day when the vision is closed, but we have an open vision; the vision has been opened to us. God, we can see and know what You are doing. That is Your desire, not for us to just walk blindly around, but Lord, to be shown by the Spirit through the word of God, things that need to be done. Lord, our desire is to have that vision restored to our lives, having that ability working in our heart, and that willingness to receive it. In Jesus Name. Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 5

KNOWLEDGE

In this chapter we are going to study the benefits of knowledge. Knowledge is not to just make you smart, but also has a great benefit. Remember how we saw that we are to study to show ourselves quiet and let the peace of God rule in our heart. Here we are going to find out how that happens.

(2 Pet 1:2 KJV) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

This is God's knowledge. This isn't man's knowledge about God. This is where the mind of Christ begins to operate. This is where we are not moved by what we see, what we hear, or what we feel, but we are moved by faith. We are led by the Spirit of God. So here in 2 Peter 1:2, he says that the benefits of having God's knowledge are grace and peace, but they are also multiplied grace and peace. If you don't have enough grace or peace to cover every area of your life, it is simply because knowledge is missing, not human knowledge but God's knowledge. So we need to understand that grace and peace can only be multiplied through that knowledge of God.

We see Peter bringing forth a revelation of truth. Whatever area of your life that is not covered with God's knowledge, sooner or later is in havoc; it is in problems. Families that are raised up without God's knowledge will also have real problems. Marriages that are not really working in God's knowledge will have problems. Finances, or anything else, when it is not covered by God's knowledge is going to be in trouble, because we do not know God's principle for that area of our life.

I want to be a person who has grace and peace all the time. I want to have enough grace to cover every situation. I want multiplied peace. I want multiplied grace. It doesn't come by Church attendance, it doesn't come by offerings; it comes by studying the word of God and spending time with God. When this knowledge comes, you will be in Church and you will give an offering. You will find out that the principles of God's word begin to happen.

Let's look at Isaiah 28:9-13:

(Isa 28:9 KJV) Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

We know that milk is what babies need. Paul, writing to the Corinthian Church, said these words: "I would like to give you meat, but I am not able to because you are carnal or babes in Christ, and you only have need of milk (1 Cor 3:1-2). We need to grow up and become Leaders in the body of Christ. We can't always be a people that are drinking milk, and whining, and moaning, and groaning, and griping. We need to be a people who can stand strong in the things of God. In this scripture he says, "Who can God teach wisdom to." Surely not to those who are on milk.

Isa 28:10 KJV) For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:

Precept = Conc. #6673 = a commandment.

Dict. = a command or direction given as a rule of action or conduct.

Line = Conc. #6957 = a rule

(Isa 28:11 KJV) For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

This is talking not only about when the Holy Spirit came, but talking about the body of Christ beginning to witness to Israel, not with their language, but another language. You should get excited about that because you are a part of it.

(Isa 28:12 KJV) To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

What was it that they would not hear? They wouldn't hear line upon line, precept upon precept. They would not hear the word of God, would they. They would not hear what the Spirit was saying to the Church in the wilderness. Their desire was for flesh. Their desire was for the lust of this world. Their desire was to build other gods and worship them. At one time they would go into the temple and worship God, and go across the road and offer their children to Molech, the god of fire. In many Churches today, we are doing the same thing. We come into Church on Sunday morning, and we neglect our children the rest of the time. We don't teach them the word of God. We are giving them to the world.

(Isa 28:13 KJV) But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

The same word that delivers us and makes us strong, has become a snare to them. I want to build a sure and strong work in my life, don't you. To do that I have to take the whole counsel of God, the whole word of God, and begin to look into greater things in God than I see now.

"Who shall I teach wisdom? Who shall I teach knowledge? I can't teach it to the babes." Unfortunately, 90% of the body of Christ are babies. The trouble is that a lot of them have been saved until they are on crutches, and they still have no teeth to eat the meat of the word. They have no strength to eat it, and every time you preach line upon line, precept upon precept, or faithfulness, or commitment, or the word of God, they leave you. They fall backwards, but the person who gets hold of it doesn't fall back, he becomes strong in the Lord because the Holy Spirit is teaching him wisdom and knowledge.

I would like you to look at Jeremiah 3rd chapter. Knowledge is one of the key things that we lack. These are things that God wants us to realize so we are not taken snare.

(Jer 3:14 KJV) Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion:

(Jer 3:15 KJV) And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

He said He would give them pastors after His heart. They will feed them with knowledge and understanding. Any pastor, any man or woman of God who is ministering the word of the Lord, has to impart two things at least: knowledge and understanding. We read in Nehemiah and Ezra that they stood up and they read the word, but they gave the understanding. Leaders or shepherds or those who have the oversight of the flock, God said He would give them His heart, because they will teach knowledge and they will teach understanding. You can always tell if a man or woman is of God, because they teach knowledge and understanding with that knowledge.

(Jer 3:16 KJV) And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.

(Jer 3:17 KJV) At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

(Jer 3:18 KJV) In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

(Jer 3:19 KJV) But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.

We are just about to see the fulfillment of the fulness of that scripture. The north is giving the Jews up, and they are going to call God something that they have never called Him before: Father. What do we have the right to call God? Father! Hallelujah! I wish we could get hold of this, so we would start preparing our heart to win the Jews to Christ. If you don't know this word, you cannot take people back to Isaiah and begin to show them how Jesus Christ was there. You can't take them back to Jeremiah and see the promise that God gave, that He would bring them back from the north, and give them a family relationship and they would call Him Father. I love that. We are to call Him, Abba Father, aren't we.

This is prophetic scripture that we are living in right now. These pastors are not going to teach the law. They are not going to teach the Old Covenant. They are going to teach the New Covenant. They are going to bring forth knowledge and understanding. That is what is going to happen in the body of Christ. God is going to shake it until finally there is nothing left in the pulpit except those who are preaching the word of God and bringing knowledge and understanding.

(Mal 2:7 KJV) For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

Revelation 1:6 says: And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

If I am a priest, then what should be coming out of my lips? Knowledge. Where are we going to get the training? From the Lord! This is where Jesus really reaches in when He said that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matt 4:4, Luke 4:4); here is the confirmation of Deut 8:3. If I am going to learn, it is going to be the Holy Spirit who teaches me. He said, "Whom shall He teach wisdom? Not to babes; not those on milk, but those who can hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church."

The Holy Ghost's job is to be a Teacher, as well as the Comforter, a Guide, and a Counselor; but He is not teaching those who are not interested, or lukewarm, or uncommitted. He is not teaching those who are unfaithful, or those

who do not desire with all of their heart the word of the Lord. We must receive our teaching at the mouth of the Lord.

(Phil 3:8 KJV) Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

This is Paul talking. Here is a man that is greatly trained in the law, and knows every jot and tittle of it, but he counted it all loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Here is the bride of Christ, the one who is going to win the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ. What does a young man set out to do? He sets out to win the heart of the one whom he wants to be his wife. The wife sets her heart to win her husband's heart. Paul said that everything he had gained in this life is but dung. Why do we chase after dung, when we could go after the excellency of the knowledge.

I want to win Christ Jesus. That is my true aim in life. I want to be in the bride; I want to be one who Jesus puts His arms around, and says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." To win Christ, I must count everything else dung. It is all going to burn up except for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Everything in the Spirit will remain, but everything that is temporary will be burned away, so we need to get the right perspective of what we are chasing after.

None of us would go around in a cow pasture at night chasing after a pile of dung, and then say, "Oh, what riches I got." We want to get on that highway of holiness, don't we. When you are tempted to turn to the right or left, just say that is all dung, that you are on the way to win the Lord Jesus. Paul said, "I want to win Jesus. I don't care how much I know in the natural, or how well I can understand the law, it doesn't mean anything. All the education, all the riches I've had, it doesn't mean anything because I have a motive now and that is to win Christ Jesus." If we are going to win Him, we have to win Him in this lifetime.

I want to come with clean hands, don't you. I don't want to have hands that have been playing in the pasture all the time. Would you want the Lord to ask what you had in your hands? That sounds humorous, but I can picture that in my heart, and Christ is who I want to win. I don't want to win popularity or riches of this world, I want to win Him, and when I have Him, I have everything. You have peace and joy and righteousness. You have an ability to have a relationship and a fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul evidently became a fanatic or as close to it as you can possibly get. He said he got beside himself (2 Cor 5:13). He got pentacostal, and spoke to himself making melody in his heart, singing spiritual hymns (Eph 5:19). He had a vision, didn't he, to win Christ.

(Col 2:1 KJV) For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;

(Col 2:2 KJV) That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

(Col 2:3 KJV) In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

If I am going to receive this knowledge, it is going to be **IN HIM**. You aren't going to get this in any of the universities; you can get it right where you are when you begin to realize that God intended you to have the treasures of God. I look at Moses life, and he was one of the richest men in all the earth. He was next in line to be the king of the greatest nation of power at that time, Egypt, but in Heb 11th chapter it says that he forsook it all.

(Heb 11:24 KJV) By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

(Heb 11:25 KJV) Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

(Heb 11:26 KJV) Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

(Heb 11:27 KJV) By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

He said that the riches of Christ were greater than all that Egypt had. Why? Because God owned Egypt, and owned all the riches that Egypt had, and when it was time to leave there, He gave it all to the Israelites. Can you imagine how the women of Egypt felt when they had to give away their jewelry and garments to the Israelites. They thought the Israelites would be coming back and they would get their things back. Let's look at what the Lord had spoken to Moses in Exo 11:2-3:

(Exo 11:2 KJV) Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

(Exo 11:3 KJV) And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians....

(Exo 12:35 KJV) And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment:

(Exo 12:36 KJV) And the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians.

Spoiled = 5337= to snatch away, whether in a good or a bad sense: take (out).

Not only were the Israelites not going back to Egypt, but Pharaoh and the great armies were not coming back either, and all of a sudden the government crumbled. It has never been resurrected again.

I want the riches of Christ in my life. I want to find the ability in Christ to win Him, to have His approval in my life daily. I really think that we should start courting the Lord, but I can't court Him without knowledge because I have to know what pleases Him.

I am destroyed without knowledge. It can be my finances, it can be my health, it can be anything. A Leader without knowledge should not be a Leader, because what they will do is build line upon line, and precept upon precept and fall backwards, and when they do they will take everybody with them who are following them. We need Leaders who are builders, but builders according to God's holy word.

(Hosea 4:6 KJV) My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

"My people are destroyed." Isn't that what He said? "It isn't those who don't know Me. They are already condemned because they believed not, but MY PEOPLE, because of lack of knowledge." It certainly wasn't because they were poor. They were wealthy people, but that doesn't make you prosperous in God. Daniel in the lions den was more prosperous than the king who had him thrown in because he had peace with God. That is something we cannot buy.

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge, because thou hast rejected knowledge. If I don't accept knowledge, I automatically reject it. I have an option. I can choose the human knowledge or I can choose God knowledge. If I choose human knowledge, I will be destroyed; but if I receive God knowledge peace and grace are multiplied, and I begin to walk in Christ.

When we receive the worldly knowledge we begin to be judgmental and critical. We begin to have jealousy, envy, strife, murmuring and complaining, because we go by what we see and hear and feel. That is the world knowledge. It develops your sense realm, but Christ knowledge develops the mind of Christ in you to where these senses can be used for the glory of God. So we have an option to either reject God knowledge or to receive it. I would rather receive it, so it is an act of my will. I can sit around all day long if I want to and never read the word, or study the word, or pray and seek the Lord. I am rejecting God knowledge. This is the meat that God can teach to the Leaders.

(Hosea 4:6 KJV) ...because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.

I want God to bless my children, so I can't live carnally in the world and seek after the things of the world continually, and expect God to bless my seed. It doesn't work that way. There is a condition to that scripture, and that condition is to begin to seek the knowledge of God. After you seek the knowledge of God, then He begins to bless your children. Running around after the world is not going to give you God's knowledge. You have to spend time with the Teacher. The Teacher is the Holy Spirit, and He asked who He could teach wisdom to. Who is going to be able to hear it? Not the carnal Christian; he doesn't want it. He is still living to the flesh, and singing, "I'm on my way to heaven." His family is falling apart, and he has no peace at all. He can't make a commitment.

God's people perish for lack of knowledge; rejected knowledge, rejected people. If I want to be a good Leader, I am going to have to have knowledge of how to be a good Leader. Suppose God calls me to be a Leader, and I won't get in and begin to pray and seek God and study His word and commit myself to some fellowship or leadership that I can learn from.

Do you think I am ever going to be a Leader? The horrible thing about it is that God called me to be a Leader. When the time comes that I feel I want to do it, I am rejected, but I still have to give answer to God for the call. It is a serious thing being a Christian. I don't think we know the rules of the game. We think it is just going on and doing our own thing, and God is happy with us. We are happy as long as nothing is going wrong, and we don't seek God.

When God puts a principle into the word of God you can be very sure that principle never changes. If I want God to receive me and be able to go to the throne of God at any time, I have to have some knowledge, or be seeking after God knowledge, not continually rejecting it. Someone told me he didn't have to go to Church. I told that person he had already rejected God knowledge. He had chosen his own knowledge over God knowledge. I took him to Hebrews 10:25 where it says to not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, especially as you see the last day approaching. He said he didn't even know that scripture

was in there. From Malachi back is the established truth; but we are having the opportunity to live in the manifested truth, but I am going to have to seek some knowledge.

(1 John 2:13 KJV) I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

Notice that he says **THAT IS**, not that was or shall be. You have entered into revelation truth. You know the alpha and the omega; you know the beginning and the end. You can understand God's plan from before Adam until the last dot is put in the word of God. You are not shaken by things that are going on, because you have studied the word of God and you know what the word says. We are living in the age of fulfillment of prophetic utterance. We are seeing things that Jeremiah and Isaiah and Ezekiel looked at, and they said, "This is the way it is going to be." We are living in that day when it is that way. They were talking established truth; we are living in manifested truth. We are seeing the north give up. We are seeing the south give up. We are seeing the east give up, and even Jews in America are starting to go home.

(1 John 2:14 KJV) I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

He says the same thing about the fathers every time, doesn't he. What else can you say. If you know Him from the beginning, what else is there. When a baby grows up in a house, he knows his parents as Daddy and Mommy; the baby doesn't know all about them. But as he grows and begins to have fellowship as well as relationship, he begins to understand his parents. Eventually he gets to the point where he is a father, and he knows what it is all about from beginning to end. There is a full-grown relationship, and fathers are qualified as totally grown.

So here he is saying, "You fathers, Leaders, you should have a revelation of what God is like, from alpha to omega, knowing that everything that is happening today is ordered of the Lord." Paul said 1 Cor 4:15 that you have ten thousand instructors in Christ but very few fathers. I want to be a father, a really spiritual father. He is talking here about the growth in Christ Jesus. I want to have that full growth, and be in a place where I can talk with God and communicate with God, just like Paul did in the midst of that storm when the ship was about to go down. He didn't get disturbed; he just communed with the angel of the Lord.

What we need is to grow up by seeking knowledge and opening the treasures of wisdom and knowledge that are only found in Christ Jesus. College

degrees will not give it to me; all the letters behind my name will never get it for me. I have come to the combination I have chosen and I have given up my salvation, over the knowledge, and the word of God that is the excellent knowledge that is to and fro. A father is what God wants us to be. How long is it going to take us. It will never happen until we start. When we are going someplace, we never get there unless we start. You can read all the scripture you want to, but someday you have to make up your mind and say, "This is it. I am making a commitment right now. I want to be a father of the faith. I am tired of being tossed to and fro. I am tired of indecision. I am tired of making a commitment and then falling apart in three days. I am tired of all this. I want to make a commitment. I want to be strong in the Lord. I want to know Him from the beginning, and to the ending."

For little children 'to know' means to be introduced to salvation. For fathers 'to know' means to really know or understand. I can know a thing but I need to understand the thing I know. Paul wrote, "I know whom I have believed..." That knowing is the full knowing, "and "I am persuaded..." When you have that real knowledge working in your heart, persuasion comes along, "that God is able to keep whatever I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim 1:12).

If I commit my wife, my children, my business, whatever I have, to the Lord and seek after the knowledge of God and know Him, He will take care of everything in my life because I know Him. I don't know about Him, I don't know Him like a little child knows Him, but I can talk to Him and He can tell me what He would like me to do. Isn't that what He told Moses; isn't that what He told Noah and Adam, and different men and women down through the word of God. He told them what He wanted them to do, because He had conversation with them.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we would talk to God like this: "Father, I love You. Thank You for everything You have done for me. What can I do today for You." You can't if you don't have the knowledge to know that you can do that. He doesn't want us to sound like babies when we talk to Him.

(Luke 11:52 KJV) Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

Knowledge = G1108 = knowing (the act),

The priests also took away the key of knowledge and the people perished, but in this scripture Jesus is dealing with the lawyers; the ones who were trained and should have known the way. But rather than that they just simply took away the key of knowledge and they inserted their own thoughts. They entered not in themselves, and them that were entering in they hindered. We are either helping people to enter the Kingdom of God, or we are hindering them. If I don't know how to use that key of knowledge, I can't unlock the Kingdom to them. Whatever

I loose on earth will be loosed in heaven; whatever I bind on earth is bound in heaven (Matt 16:19; 18:18). If I don't use the key of knowledge to loose the Kingdom of God to other people, I am binding it up and God will honor that.

There are five things to look at in this scripture: #1- A Warning. #2- Lawyers, those taught and instructed in the law, should have known and showed others the will of God. #3- They denied the people knowledge of God's will. #4- They would not move into the Kingdom of God. #5 -They hindered others.

I don't want to be a lawyer; I want to be a son. I want to be a priest and king, everything that God said I can be, so that I can win Christ. I am going to a wedding and I don't want to be a friend or observer there. I want to be the bride. I will be living with Jesus because the bride doesn't live next door. If you want a little cabin in the corner of gloryland, go ahead, but you won't find it because God isn't building cabins. If you don't make the bride, you come and visit me, because I am going to be living where Jesus is, and sitting on His throne like He promised me in Rev 3:21. I want to win Christ; winning anything else is dung.

(REV 3:21 KJV) TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH WILL I GRANT TO SIT WITH ME IN MY THRONE, EVEN AS I ALSO OVERCAME, AND AM SET DOWN WITH MY FATHER IN HIS THRONE.

Let's look at Habakkuk 2:12-14:

(Hab 2:12 KJV) Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and stablisheth a city by iniquity!

(Hab 2:13 KJV) Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?

(Hab 2:14 KJV) For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

If I am going to be in that final move with God, it is going to be a knowledge movement. It is going to be with the people who know when to move, and how to move, and where to move. It is not going to be with a bunch of people who are tossed to and fro. It is not going to be with a bunch of people who say they will serve God today, but don't have time for several weeks because they have other things to do. Wherever you go and whatever you do, be sure you do it as heartily unto the Lord and not unto man. Whether it is a vacation, a job, washing dishes, or doing anything, do it as unto the Lord. I want to win Christ. I want to win His approval on jobs that I do. I want to win His approval on vacations I take, or anything I do, because He is going with me.

There are four things here: #1-Warning. #2-Reward of people working of their own vision and ability. #3-God's desire and vision for the Church to accomplish. #4-Knowledge of the glory of the Lord subdues all sin and wickedness.

If I know, I don't have to guess any more. If I know a thing is sin, I am free from it. If I am not sure, then I am still trying to make up my mind. But the word of God, as I study it, will reveal that and if it is sin, I can lay it aside. It also tells me what a weight is. I can get rid of that weight, so I can run this race with patience. Knowledge is so important. For me to be a Leader, I have to have some to give somebody else.

It doesn't do me any good to get up and preach and say, "This is my opinion; or so-and-so and I conferred together and we finally came to this conclusion." Who really cares? What does the word of God say? When Jesus dealt with satan, He dealt with him by knowledge. In Matt 4:4,7,10 He said, "It is written, it is written, it is written." That knowledge was backed up by the Spirit of God, and when He spoke it became Spirit and it became life. He wasn't speaking out of His own mind; He very simply spoke to satan from Deut 8:3 and said "It is written, it is written, it is written." Satan had to leave, didn't he; he couldn't handle the word of God.

Jesus wasn't upset when it was time to die, because He knew this is why He had come to earth.

(John 10:15 KJV) As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

(John 10:16 KJV) And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

(John 10:17 KJV) Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

(John 10:18 KJV) No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

You can go through anything if you have God knowledge that it is working together for your good.

Knowledge = H3045. yada' = to ascertain by seeing, to make known, to be diligent, to discern, kinsfolk, acquaintance, teach, understand (have understanding).

Notice that it also means kinsfolk and acquaintance because God is a God of knowledge. Look at the book of Ruth where she is talking to Boaz, who is a kinsman by marriage:

(Ruth 2:10 KJV) Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

This word knowledge = G5234. nakar, to scrutinize, i.e. look intently at; hence (with recognition implied), to acknowledge, be acquainted with, care for, respect, revere,... (Doesn't this sound like the knowledge of God)

If I am going to be related to Him and I really want a relationship, or acquaintanceship established with Him, He is going to talk in His knowledge. I had better be able to understand and hear what He is saying to the Church so I can, with His knowledge, speak back to Him. That doesn't mean this: "God, poor little old me; if You will remove sister so-and-so from the Church I really won't have as much trouble." Or, "If You will remove the Pastor and his wife, we could really grow." We are holding our diaper up with one hand and have the bottle in the other, and think we are talking to God. God will just give us another rattle and tell us, "Go around this mountain one more time." When you get tired of going around the nursery eventually, and put on the whole armour of God, you will become a warrior and finally grow up to be a father, and you will speak only the word then.

Knowledge - yada - also means to teach and understand. Knowledge teaches, doesn't it? Knowledge gives understanding. It doesn't mean that there has to be a large crowd to be taught. I read this Bible when I am by myself, and God is teaching me. I get excited when I read it. He gives me understanding. God knowledge is so far superior to anything the world has to offer, I don't know why we waste our time on dung, when we could have the mind of Christ working in us. Leaders must by study, prayer, and self denial develop through the Holy Ghost these areas to be heard and seen; lives that are examples to the flock. When you want to change, you can change because it is the Holy Spirit saying to you that you need to change.

(Isa 9:16 KJV) For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed.

Notice that: the leaders cause them to err, and they that are lead of them are destroyed. I don't want to be one that causes people to err. The only way I can keep from doing that is to operate in God knowledge, knowing the truth and applying the truth and living the truth. The truth is what makes me free. The Son sets me free, but it is that truth that makes me free or growing in that freedom, until every area of my life is free. I don't have to worry anymore about the

finances, or worry about my family, or worry about anything. It is all free now. We should be so free that we could throw our hands up at anytime and praise God. Clap our hands, dance before the Lord, and say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

(Rom 8:14 KJV) For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

That is knowledge being imparted to us. I can't be led by my flesh and tell people that I am a son of God, but if I am led by the Spirit of God, I won't have to tell anybody that I am a son of God. They will know that something is different about me. If we are led by the Spirit of God, we will have joy when nobody else has it. We will have peace when everything is in turmoil.

Jesus was led by the Spirit, and when all around Him things were in total chaos, He brought peace, didn't He. He spoke to the winds and the waves. He multiplied the loaves and the fishes (Matt 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16; John 6:11). Look at the account in John 6:5-7:

(John 6:5 KJV) When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

(John 6:6 KJV) And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.

(John 6:7 KJV) Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

In this account Philip was skeptical, so Jesus said that to prove Philip. Can't you just see the frustration that is happening in Philip's life. Andrew came up with a little boy with five loaves and two small fish, and Jesus told them to make the men sit down on the grass, and there were about five thousand men. They all ate and they took up twelve baskets of the remainder.

That is what God knowledge can do to your life. It multiplies your peace and your grace. No matter what the situation is, it isn't the bigness of the situation, it is the greatness of God. It is the horrible opposition that is coming, but it is the victory that is in Jesus that will take care of the opposition. So we need to get to that place where we are being led by the Spirit of God.

(Isa 10:1 KJV) Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed;

(Isa 10:2 KJV) To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless!

There are people who use the word of God to their own advantage. We know these men were thieves and robbers. What was true religion and undefiled before God? To visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction and keep ourself unspotted from this present world. Knowledge tells me that when I start to put grievous weights or laws on people, it is not of God. If we are going to serve God because there is a law that says we have to serve God, that isn't going to work. We have to serve Him because we love Him. That is what God wants. God wants a love relationship, not a law relationship. People tell you that you have to do this or that, and load people down with all of this and they are never happy.

(Isa 10:27 KJV) And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.

There is no reason that I cannot press into God's knowledge. The yoke is not only broken; it is destroyed. Hallelujah! When God destroys something, it is destroyed. I have a liberty now in Christ. I can accept or reject the knowledge of God. I can follow Jesus every day of my life if I want to. The anointing has come, and in that anointing is the knowledge of God. If I want to be free and moving for God in every area of my life, I just have to take it and say, "Lord, I want to cast this care on You for You told me to, and I thank You." You don't have to get real religious about it. You need to talk to God like your Father.

David was a bold man. He talked to God. Moses talked to God. Moses even talked to God in such a way that he caused the nation of Israel to be spared. You have to have boldness, but you don't have boldness without knowledge, because you are not sure you can do that. This is not disrespectful; it is the attitude of your heart not the words of your mouth that God looks at. You come boldly to the throne of grace. We carry things around because we think that is what God wants us to do. Then we get upset when we see people doing penance, crying over broken glass, and over cobblestones, and we are going around with this heavy burden all the time. We say to them, "You shouldn't be doing that," and we are as bad as they are.

God knowledge sets you free from all that religious activity, and when you come to Church it is because you want to. When you praise the Lord, it is because you want to. When you talk to God, it is because you want to. God wants a family.

David imparts the knowledge in Psalm 51:10-13. It is knowledge that we need to get hold of, and begin to let the Holy Spirit examine our own hearts.

(Psa 51:10 KJV) Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

You cannot create in yourself a clean heart. It takes the Creator to do that. After David had sinned with Bathsheba he still had the call and the desire, but he knew that he couldn't do it in the shape he was in. It is like people who will not commit. They can never do the work of God. There is something wrong in their heart, and they need to ask God "Create within me; cause a creative work to happen in my heart, Lord." Everything is out of kilter when you start to become lukewarm. When you backslide, or won't commit or are not faithful, there is something wrong in your whole being.

David starts with his heart, then he asks God to renew a right spirit within him. He is saying that his motives have to become right. He said, "I ruled as King; You made me the King. Lord, I was overcome with sin; now Lord, I am sorry about that sin. God, start to do a new work in me."

(Psa 51:11 KJV) Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

If you lost everything in the world, and still had your relationship with God, you still have everything. But suppose you lost your relationship with Christ, and gained the whole world. You would be in real trouble, wouldn't you. This is the same David that used to get up and sing praises; and go out to battle and shout the victory, and kill his ten thousands and come back, and just do all kinds of victorious exploits. But he got overcome, didn't he. He quit conquering and began to take a place of ease; instead of going to war daily, and going to war with the army like he should have done, he decides he will stay home and rest awhile.

That is like taking Sunday off from Church, because you are going to do something that Sunday. You are going to fill your time with something. Then it is easy not to come on Weds. night; you think that can't be too important because there are only a few people who come then. Your heart and your spirit are beginning to turn upside down. The Laodicean Church started off right but they began to cool down until they got in a lukewarm state, and then they began to think wrong (Rev 3:14-18). They began to think that the riches of this world was where it was at.

Here David, because he had not gone to war, began to look for pleasures of the flesh. Whenever you quit fighting and pressing into God, and fellowshiping daily with God, your flesh is going to rise up and you are going to begin to look for ways to entertain the flesh. Do you see the humbleness here. It isn't David the mighty warrior now. It isn't David the great King of Israel now. It isn't David the great praiser; it is David a humbled man. David, a man that is flat on his face before God, crying out to the Lord.

(Psa 51:12 KJV) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

David prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of THY SALVATION." It is not my salvation, it is not your salvation. It is the Lord's salvation. What does Jesus tell the disciples to rejoice over in Luke 10:17-20? They were rejoicing that the devils were subject unto them through Jesus name, but Jesus told them, "Rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven." You can cast out devils and be the most unhappy person in the world. But you can't be saved and thank God for your salvation very long, and realize what a great work God has done by taking you out of the pit and the miry clay, and continue to be unhappy. You are going to start being full of joy! Casting out a devil is just a thing that takes a portion of time, but being saved is an eternal work of God. It is forever.

David goes on to say: "...and uphold me with thy free spirit." Not a lost spirit, but a free spirit. Now notice the reason he wanted this.

(Psa 51:13 KJV) Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

David had enough knowledge to know that in the shape he was in, he was not an example to teach. When our hearts are not pure with God, we should not try to teach others. We need to repent first, get our heart right with God, and then we can get up with boldness and say, "This is the way it is." David knew that the way he was living, you couldn't tell him from a sinner.

How blind we become, thinking that we get away with things. Wondering why there is no activity in our life, why there is no stirring, no reaching out. Many times it is simply because we are not pressing into God anymore. We become used to God. We become accustomed to being saved. We start running our own lives again. The first thing you know, the commitment is gone. The faithfulness is gone, and we are in real trouble. David realized that the only way out of the mess he was in, was to get up and go and repent to God. He wanted to teach again; he wanted to see sinners converted. But he knew that in the shape he was in, he couldn't do it. He said, "First, Lord, you have to clean me up. Then you have to do a renewing in me, and put back that presence in such a way that I know You are there."

That is the horrible thing about a backslider; there is an emptiness there. He knows he should be in Church. He knows he should be right with God. He know he should be doing what God says. He is a miserable person. There is nothing worse to be around than a backslider. I can stand sinners better than I can stand a backslider. They get drunk and start talking about Church or the Bible. A sinner is just out there doing what a sinner does.

There has to be a work of restoration. Let's look at Exodus 31:1-6 and see something about the building of God's work. There was a tabernacle to be built.

(Exo 31:1 KJV) And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

(Exo 31:2 KJV) See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

(Exo 31:3 KJV) And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,

(Exo 31:4 KJV) To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

(Exo 31:5 KJV) And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.

(Exo 31:6 KJV) And I, behold, I have given with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan: and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee;

Here Moses has received his commission to build, to institute the priesthood, to build a tabernacle, to begin to institute worship services there, but he has to do it according to God's plan. Do you think you would have to do this all by yourself? Knowledge tells me that I wouldn't have to do this all by myself. God will raise up other people who have knowledge and understanding and wisdom, and they will be able to do a better job in that area than I could.

Moses could never have done this work; he didn't know how to do this work. He had the ability of administration. He had the ability of government. He had the ability of prophetic utterance, but he didn't have the kind of wisdom, and knowledge, and understanding that it took to build the mighty work of God in that tabernacle. Moses had already learned something from Jethroe: he can't handle this by himself. He will pick out others and make them captains over all these areas of life. He is going to do his job, and that is to seek the Lord and plead their causes before God, so when the tabernacle was ordered built, he didn't run out there and get a hammer and a chisel. God said, "You don't have to do that, Moses. I am going to give you builders, workers, laborers, and they are going to be skilled. You won't even have to read the blueprint even though I gave it to you. You are the foreman on the job. All you have to do is anoint the priests, and be sure the law is projected to them."

A Pastor's job is not to build everything. His job is to take the people before the Lord. He called every one of us specifically into a program area where we are talented and have ability in. It may be as a carpenter, painter, electrician,

administrator, musician, teacher, or whatever calling God has for each of us. He is never going to use us until we can build together. We burn out too easy. It isn't God's fault or the devil's fault. It is because our knowledge is so limited. We really think we have to do it all, or it won't get done.

We read about Elijah, where he had done all this great work, and He said to the people "I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord"(1 Kings 18:22). Pride? Elijah actually killed the 450 prophets of Baal, absolutely destroyed and annihilated them, and then what happened. Burnout time. "I am going to quit. Take me home, Lord. Let me die. This is it; I am walking away from this mess" (1 Kings 19:4). Elijah said he was the only remaining prophet (1 Kings 19:10,14), but God told him that he was a good prophet, but he wasn't the only one; He had seven thousand in Israel which had not bowed to Baal (Vs.18). Then He told Elijah to go to Hazael and anoint him to be king over Syria; and to anoint Jehu to be king over Israel. Then he was to find Elisha and anoint him to be a prophet. Elijah decided he should not quit. That is what knowledge does; it frees you from all that stuff.

Let's look at 1 Samuel 2:1-3:

(1 Sam 2:1 KJV) And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.

(1 Sam 2:2 KJV) There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.

(1 Sam 2:3 KJV) Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. What does He weigh your actions by? By knowledge. We can boast about what we are doing, and we can tell God that we are working day and night for the Lord; or we can tell people that we have such a big heavy load that we can hardly make it. God isn't impressed by that. He looks at the actions of our heart, not the words of our mouth. We are taken snare by those. God weighs the thoughts and intents of the heart, and He weighs them by knowledge.

God knowledge is perfect knowledge. It is correct knowledge; you can't improve on it. You can't add to God knowledge and you can't subtract from it. When God puts a law or principle into motion in the word of God, everything is weighed by that principle. "Thou shalt not steal." If I steal, am I guilty? Has God pointed a finger at me. No, His knowledge that has been written down, has already told me that I am guilty. He doesn't have to wake me up in the middle of

the night and say, "You are guilty." His knowledge has already weighed that action. You are weighed in the balances and you are found wanting (Daniel 5:27).

This is why we need knowledge so we can know what God's principles are; so we can know what His judgments on everything in our life really is. If I know that, then I can seek His judgments, can't I. Look at Psalm 91:8-11:

(Psa 19:8 KJV) The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

(Psa 19:9 KJV) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

(Psa 19:10 KJV) More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

(Psa 19:11 KJV) Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

That is how God through His knowledge weighs all our actions. He lets us be our own judge. You see, when the sinner and the ungodly and the unrepentant stand at the white throne judgment, they will have to contend with these scriptures. They will judge themselves. They won't be saying then, "Oh God, you are so great and so sweet, and so wonderful to send anybody to hell." God will say, "I didn't send you. You sent yourself. You rejected knowledge, and because you chose your own knowledge, you tilted your scale and thought you were right."

That is why you need to stay in the word. That is why any good Bible teacher or good elder tries to get you into the word, because these are the knowledge principles of God by which He weighs every action. If I do something out of a prideful or arrogant spirit, I am guilty. God's principles say to humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. If you exalt yourself, you will be abased.

That is God's principle; that is the knowledge that God said is there, and He will weigh the action by that and your reward is determined by how that action balances with the scale of God. That is why it is important to have a right heart, a pure heart, a clean heart, and to have a right spirit about us when we visit somebody to encourage them. Then the reward of that action is just as great as the man who preaches to ten million people. Look at Psalm 19: 9 and 11 again:

(Psa 19:9 KJV) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

(Psa 19:11 KJV) Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

Now that is God's principle. Every action I take is weighed in the light of that principle. Am I doing it with a humble heart, contrite spirit? Am I doing it because I love the Lord, and I love people, or am I doing it because I have to do it. "If I don't show up at Church today, they will think I am backslidden." Crazy things go through our minds. Here God is saying, "I just weigh the actions of your life. I am not looking at all your words. I am looking at the motive of your heart to see if it lines up with My scale and with My judgment of what is right for you. My statutes."

Leaders, we need to impress on people that God is weighing all of our actions and He is keeping a record. We know when we are guilty and we need to repent, because if we don't it will remain there. We will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ one day and have to give an account for every idle word and deed done in the body, and receive for the good or the bad done there. I like to examine my life, and say, "Lord, that was wrong. I am sorry. Father, forgive me." He takes the big blotter and it doesn't even appear there.

Let's look at 2 Chron 1:7-12:

(2 Chr 1:7 KJV) In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

What would we tell God we wanted if He asked us that question? Be sober-minded about this. I think I would keep my mouth shut for a little while, and I would start to mull it over in my spirit and my heart to be sure that what I asked of God was that which would please Him. Look what happens when you do that.

(2 Chr 1:8 KJV) And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast showed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead.

(2 Chr 1:9 KJV) Now, O LORD God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude.

(2 Chr 1:10 KJV) Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great?

Solomon wanted to an example; he wanted to know how to walk and live. He blew it later, but here he had the right heart.

(2 Chr 1:11 KJV) And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king:

(2 Chr 1:12 KJV) Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like.

Look at the reverse role here. A lot of Christians, including myself, have said this: "God, if I just had a million dollars, I could really do something for you." That was out of a sincere heart, but I had to repent of it. God doesn't want us to tell Him what we are going to do with a million dollars, because He knows what we would really do with it. He wants us to ask of Him wisdom and knowledge, to know how to live and conduct our life in this world, so that we can be Leaders unashamed, to know how to go in and to come out.

Look what happens next. God said, "Because you asked this, I am going to give you riches, and wealth, and honour, like none of the kings before you had, and there won't be any after you." In Matt 6:33 Jesus summarizes this:

(Mat 6:33 KJV) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

This should be a Leader's prayer. That is what pleases the Lord. I really believe that God did summarize this up in Matthew that they were to seek first the Kingdom of God. That is exactly what Solomon was doing. He was seeking God's best. When you do that, the riches you need will come. The wealth you need will come. The honour you need will come. Whatever you need, will come, but we need to turn it around where we are not seeking God just for things all the time. We should be seeking God for wisdom and knowledge so we will know how to walk before the Lord, and before the people. Let's look at Nehemiah 10:28-29

(Neh 10:28 KJV) And the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the porters, the singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had separated themselves from the people of the lands unto the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge, and having understanding;

Notice the word "separated" in verse 28. Come out and be separate, saith the Lord (2 Cor 6:17; Numbers 16:9). Let's look at Num 16:8-9:

(Num 16:8 KJV) And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:

(Num 16:9 KJV) Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near

to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?

You have to separate yourself unto God before God can really begin to use you.

(Neh 10:29 KJV) They clave to their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse, and into an oath, to walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes;

When knowledge and understanding really become real to you, then you will separate yourself unto God, and you will start cleaving to the body of Christ. You are going to hold the Leaders up, and if you are a Leader, you are going to start holding one another up in the body of Christ. People who have not separated themselves do not have enough knowledge of God. They don't have enough understanding. They still mix with the world, and yet they want to be used of God in the body of Christ. It never works that way. You have to separate yourself.

We have to have the knowledge of God, the understanding of that, and then the automatic thing that happens when that works is that you start loving the body of Christ, the Church and protecting the Church. You don't tell people about it's failures, or about this or that preacher doing you wrong. You love them; you cleave to them. You become a part of them. You see the importance then of the body when you receive knowledge. You go to Church because you want to. You give because you want to. Knowledge and understanding are beginning to work in your life.

They separated themselves from the people of the lands, unto the law of God. It was an act of their own will, wasn't it. These people had intermarried, they had taken on all the pagan gods, and they were distributed out throughout a bunch of pagans and heathens. But when knowledge and understanding came to them, they separated themselves from that. They began to cleave to the Lord their God and to all the nobles and their brethren. They even entered into a curse and an oath. The curse here is the same statement that Ruth made to Naomi. She said to Naomi: "If I do anything else but what I have committed to you to do, may the Lord do more also unto me. May the Lord just wipe me out."

I am making a commitment, but it should be strong enough that I will honor it. If I honor my commitment, God will honor it. If I don't honor it, God won't. If you want to do something for God, there has to be a commitment that you will honor first, so God can honor your commitment. A lot of times we want God to honor what we are doing, and there is no commitment to it, no faithfulness to it, and we wonder why it is just not working. It is because we haven't really made a commitment that we have honored. We get used to making commitments. We

make them all the time. "I'll see you tomorrow. I'll be there Sunday. I'll be in Church Wednesday. Oh, you can count on me." You never honor it, and you say, "Oh, Lord, how come I am not being honored." God will say, "You don't honor your own commitment."

We have to have Leaders who when they say something, their word is their bond. That is why David said not to vow a vow and then try to get out of doing it by saying you hadn't said it. You cause your flesh to sin. If you have made a commitment, stick with it no matter what it costs you, because God is going to honor you. Pay your vow. It is too easy to make a commitment and then walk away from it.

This commitment they were making was they were telling God that He could kill them if they didn't fulfill it. If they went back to the heathen and all those ungodly people, God could kill them. They were very strong in those days in their commitments. They were honored. Today there should be more honor in our commitment than they had, because we are supposed to have the Holy Spirit. We are supposed to be representing Jesus Christ, the one we personally know. They were representing a God that they didn't personally know. Look at Psalm 94:7-11:

(Psa 94:7 KJV) Yet they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

(Psa 94:8 KJV) Understand, ye brutish among the people: and ye fools, when will ye be wise?

(Psa 94:9 KJV) He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

(Psa 94:10 KJV) He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?

Sometimes we think that we can say anything that we want to, make any kind of commitment that we want to, and God doesn't really care. Or we can live like we want to, and God won't care, because we are under grace. The principle is here, weighing your action. God would say, "Don't you know I see it? Don't you know I hear it? Don't you know I observe it? When are you going to get wisdom?"

(Psa 94:11 KJV) The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

The Lord knoweth, or has knowledge, of the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Your best thought in the natural is vanity. To get rich is vanity. To be famous is vanity. How many movie stars do you know that died happy? Many of those who made great successful strides in life, either died in homosexuality, or

overdose of drugs, or their brain burned out on alcohol. They lost their own identity. ~~God is saying, "The cup is full. I yet will bring it, the seed is in the earth. That is clarity. Secret our gods look, the principle we can stretch it and do anything balance it with him, to his going, so I don't want to be of service, anything, going to serve God.~~

(John 14:26 KJV) But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

When the Lord teaches you, He teaches you knowledge, doesn't He. It is just like we have been reading here in Psalms about how God sees everything, and hears everything, and He knows everything, so even if we do it in a dark closet, the scale is still there. The principle is still there. We can do something that no one else knows about, but the scale is still there, and God will weigh the action. We should be quick to repent, then it starts balancing out again.

(Prov 1:7 KJV) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

If you don't have knowledge, you don't have the fear of the Lord, and without the fear of the Lord, you are not going to receive any knowledge. The more knowledge you receive, the more the fear of the Lord comes into you heart, but it takes the fear of God to start that knowledge. You come to a point where you finally say, "I have been fooling around long enough, and I am going to waste my whole life and then when I come to the end of it, I am not going to have any rewards. I had better start to have some respect for God, because He said that I had better get to work."

(Prov 1:22 KJV) How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?

They reject knowledge, don't they. No matter what God says, they are going to do it their own way. Isn't it amazing how those of us who have been around for a few years, think we know more than God does on how to live our lives. "Thanks for saving me, Lord. Now I will take it from here. I will see You there." God will say, "NO, YOU WON'T." When you start running your own life, you are in rebellion, and if you don't repent of it, you won't be there.

(Prov 2:3 KJV) Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;

He said, "If you cry after knowledge..." Look at the result in verse 5:

(Prov 2:5 KJV) Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

We are told that it is be sought after, aren't we. We cry for a lot of things, but how many of us cry for knowledge? God wants us to ask or cry to Him for knowledge. Then He will show us how to do it so it will work right.

This is what happens when you begin to cry or seek that knowledge, when you want that knowledge more than you want anything in this world. You finally realize that you can't understand the fear of God without knowledge, and you can't please God. You don't know what pleases Him. If I want to win Christ, I will want the excellency of that knowledge. I know I can't get it anywhere but from the Lord. It is the Holy Ghost who teaches.

If I am going to have any knowledge, I have to sit down and read and study, and let the Holy Spirit teach me, especially if I am a Leader, and I am going to teach others. I have to have knowledge to teach with, because it will not be me teaching, but the Holy Ghost teaching through me. It isn't me that leads you, but the Holy Ghost through me that leads you. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

(Mat 7:7 KJV) Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

We ask a lot of times, but we don't seek it. It is ask, seek, and knock. It is funny how that comes in order, because when you get it all done, it is 'ask', isn't it. ASK. Ask, Seek, Knock. There has to be more than just saying, "OK Lord, I need this." It has to be a desire of your heart, where you cry after the Lord for it. You pant after the Lord like David did. That is why God loved him so much. His heart was fixed on the Lord. Even after he messed up, he came back strong, because his heart was always to love the Lord.

God said, "You ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." You have to really, really desire it. He tells us how to find wisdom too, but you must seek for it. Everything in God, you must seek for. It doesn't just come automatically. He doesn't just dump it on you.

Someone told me they would like to teach like me, and I said, "You have to give up some things to do that. Besides it isn't me teaching; it is the Holy Spirit teaching the truths that I found. All I did was find them and put them in my heart, and when it was time to bring them out, the Holy Spirit brought them out. You have to go mining, digging like you are looking for gold."

What if someone told you they had a gold mine that was in their name and your name. It was the most precious gold, the richest deposit, that has ever been

in the world. It was only a mile away, and you could have all you dig up. You would immediately get a pick and shovel and go down and begin mining out that gold, wouldn't you. You would say, "Boy, oh boy, when I get that gold I can buy a new car, and a new house, and get out of debt, and take a vacation and go around the world."

Okay, how about something that will open heaven to you. All that gold won't open heaven to you. All that gold won't get God to talk to you. All the gold, and silver, and precious gems in the world, will not get God to talk to you. You have to want Him to talk to you. You have to desire Him to talk to you. You have to cry out to hear the Lord. David cried out many times. He kept crying to the Lord until the Lord broke through for him.

God wants to see how sincere you are about knowledge. If you went to college, and as you walked in the front door, would they give you a degree? No! You have to work, you have to study and take tests. Besides that, you have to pass the tests. How much more precious is the knowledge of God. All the degrees we get will pass away, but the wisdom and knowledge of God will never pass away. You must hunt for it.

(Prov 2:6 KJV) For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.

It all comes from the Lord, and you only get as much as you put the effort in to get it out. God doesn't give it to people who are on spiritual welfare. They aren't smart enough to get off of it. He isn't going to give them something so they can go and lay around and spout off big things. He is giving it to those who are digging, those who are searching, those who are crying, those who are pressing into the Kingdom of God. You have to press into this.

It all comes from one source. Whether it is wisdom, or knowledge, or understanding, it comes from the Lord, from the very mouth of God. All scripture is given by inspiration, which means inbreathing. It is God breathing into you and making it alive. You can memorize it, but that doesn't mean it is alive to you. But when the Holy Spirit breathes it in there is life. Jesus said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life."

(Mat 4:4 KJV) But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

This was Jesus telling satan. If He told that to satan, how much more is He telling that to the Church. We don't live by what we have. We don't live by our circumstance or conditions. We live by the word of God, and the more we live by the word of God, the happier we are. When we start taking the knowledge of God and applying it to every area of our life, we are free. We can rejoice.

(2 Pet 1:2 KJV) Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

(Mal 2:7 KJV) For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

Who is He going to teach wisdom to? Babes? No! "He that is weaned." What kind of Leader do you want to be? One after God's own heart? We should be seeking after the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, that we might win Him. We should look at wisdom and knowledge as treasures. I can't take all my credit cards and go down and get one ounce of wisdom or knowledge. I can't write a check big enough to get that. I must ask Him, and when I ask Him, He gives liberally. He just opens that treasure up and says, "Spend all day here if you want to. Get as much as you want. Stay as long as you want to. I will take care of everything for you, because these treasures are everlasting treasures. With these treasures you can build for eternity. Look at James 1:5-8:

(James 1:5 KJV) If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

(James 1:6 KJV) But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

(James 1:7 KJV) For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

Look at Proverbs 2:10:

(Prov 2:10 KJV) When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;

(Prov 2:11 KJV) Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:

(Prov 2:12 KJV) To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;

We see then that it becomes a pleasant thing unto our soul, but it is not just something that we seek after to be knowledgeable, but rather a pleasantness in our heart. Then as Leaders, we begin to discern, don't we. Leaders need discerning, need deliverance, need to deliver other people. Without knowledge, people perish. That knowledge never becomes exciting to you until it becomes pleasant. We say something is pleasant or good, but knowledge should be more important than that to us. We can't walk by our feelings and emotions, but we

can walk by faith. Knowledge has a lot to do with faith. The more knowledge you have, the stronger your faith becomes, and the more you know what God will do, the more your faith hinges on that true knowledge of God. Knowledge will bring faith, because faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

You find then that when wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to thy soul, then things begin to happen for you. If you are going to lead somebody, first of all you have to know how to walk. If you are going to tell people they need knowledge, it should not be a job to get knowledge. It should be pleasant. Going to Church should be pleasant, not just that you have to go. It isn't pleasant to you then. When it is not pleasant, then you don't have any discretion in your life. Without knowledge you don't know how to make right choices. Without knowledge you don't know how to be discreet. You don't know what God wants you to do, so reading the word of God should be pleasant to you, not just something you have to do.

(Prov 5:1 KJV) My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding:

(Prov 5:2 KJV) That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge.

What comes out of your mouth is in your heart. If your heart is filled with knowledge, things of discretion will come out. They are going to be knowledgeable things. They will be things that bring forth honor to God. If I don't have God's knowledge, I can't bring it out of my mouth. What I bring out may be quoting somebody else, may even be quoting scripture, but unless I am knowledgeable about that scripture, it doesn't work the same. When knowledge becomes a part of my life, I learn how to conduct myself wisely. I learn how to be discreet. As leaders we should have a knowledgeable discretion in our speech, speaking things that are discreet and pleasing to God.

(Prov 8:1 KJV) Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

(Prov 8:2 KJV) She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

(Prov 8:3 KJV) She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

(Prov 8:4 KJV) Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man.

"Unto you, O men, I call;" God wants to talk to the Church, doesn't He. Underline that verse. He doesn't want to talk to angels, angelic hosts; He wants to talk to the sons of man. If you get this into your heart, you are going to get

excited. God wants me to know things that He knows, which man cannot know. 1 Cor 2:14 says that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God because they are foolishness to him. They must be spiritually discerned. It takes knowledge to discern. We also have to know how to conduct our lives.

(Prov 8:5 KJV) O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

(Prov 8:6 KJV) Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.

(Prov 8:7 KJV) For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

(Prov 8:8 KJV) All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them.

(Prov 8:9 KJV) They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

How am I going to prove the way of God in my life? Through knowledge. If I am going to be a good Leader, there is something I really need to pass on to people, and it is knowledge. Too many times we pass down a lot of theory, a lot of doctrine, but when we pass true knowledge down, it sets people free. Knowledge brings forth a speaking of truth. How can you speak truth if you don't know any. God's word is truth. If a Leader doesn't have the true knowledge of truth, then he can say anything he wants to, and take scripture out of context and use it against you and bind you up. You could say that you heard the preacher say that, so it must be true. Because we don't have the knowledge to discern we are led in an evil way. You are already a Leader or a potential Leader. You may already be responsible for how men and women conduct their lives, so we need to impart to people true knowledge.

Notice how simple this knowledge is. He said He would speak it. He told the simple to understand wisdom, and fools to have an understanding heart. You didn't need to be educated to understand and have wisdom. All you had to do was hear the word of God and let the Holy Spirit begin to bring it forth in life and in Spirit. Even if a person couldn't read, they could hear the spoken word.

If we are going to be good teachers, we have to find out that the way of God is right for those who have knowledge. When knowledge comes in, it ceases division. That is why the enemy has fought us so hard in obtaining true knowledge from God. We take what portion we want, and then we build our doctrine with other men and women who believe that same portion of truth. We become different denominations, because we will not accept the full knowledge of God.

We act in our emotions, we act in our worldly wisdom, our worldly knowledge. God wants us to be acting on what God speaks. Jesus used true knowledge when he fought the enemy. Three times He said, "It is written, it is written, it is written." He brought scripture forth, and it was Spirit and life when He spoke it. The enemy can't handle that. The reason we have so much trouble with the devil is because we are not knowledgeable enough that he has no right, no authority in the believer's life.

Knowledge also brings light into areas of our life that have been in darkness. When knowledge begins to cover areas of our life, children, job, marriage, anything, and that area is saturated in God knowledge, it becomes victorious. That is why it is so important that we deal a lot on knowledge. You don't argue anymore. You just tell them the Bible says this and give them the scripture and the truth.

A lot of people don't really know what the Bible says. Many denominations still do not receive the truth of the baptism in the Holy Ghost, and don't teach about Him. They don't know the truth about speaking in other tongues. Their Church stopped without that and had division with those who went on. The ones who went on didn't have enough knowledge to help the others come on ahead; instead they stood and pointed fingers at them. When true knowledge is there, love begins to work. The truth begins to work. As that truth begins to work, it automatically begins to set people free. If you speak the truth in love, through the knowledge of God, you will find people getting free. There will be a cleansing and a washing of the water of the word.

(Prov 8:10 KJV) Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

Silver and gold are probably the two most precious minerals in the world, so our markets are upon these two, but He said there is something beyond what man calls the greatest: wisdom and knowledge. He said, "Receive My instruction..." Receive! It means that I have to become actively involved with Christ. You can minister to me all you want to, and I can sit there and grin, and never get anything. I have to come with a heart that is open, and let the Holy Spirit of God impart it into my spirit. Then it becomes a part of me. When I leave I have come willingly and desiring. I have thirsted after knowledge.

(Mat 6:33 KJV) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Never does He say to seek shelter, or clothing, or the worldly things, but He said to seek the Kingdom of God. That is God's knowledge. I can say, "Yes, I believe that scripture, but if I am not doing it, it means I haven't received it. You will know when you receive a truth, because any time when you walk contrary, you will get convicted. That is why so many people in the body of Christ today

are never convicted of anything. Don't get mad at them. They never received any knowledge. They will sit under teachers, and go to seminars, but they will not receive knowledge.

Wherever we go, we should go with a hunger and a thirst. We should go there wanting something. We should say, "Praise God, I want all the knowledge and wisdom and understanding that I can walk out of here with today." That knowledge will bring joy to your life. That knowledge imparts something else to you. Romans 8:28 becomes a reality, for we know, have certain knowledge, that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord, and are the called according to His purpose. That is what knowledge does to you. It sets you free from fear. You don't have to go around saying, "Look what the devil is doing to me." He isn't doing a thing to me. If I am getting anything done to me, I am doing it to myself; because of a lack of knowledge I am destroyed in that area. The enemy doesn't want you to become knowledgeable. He doesn't want you to really know what God wants you to know.

(Prov 9:10 KJV) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

The knowledge of the HOLY is understanding. Who is going to reveal that knowledge? It will be the Holy Ghost, won't it, but He is going to use the Bible. I have to spend time in the Bible. It wasn't written to be put away on a shelf or holding books apart. I like to see Bibles that are worn, dog-eared, written in, bent, and stained with tears. If I am staying at someone's house and they tell me to come and eat, I don't go up in the bedroom and say, "I don't think they really want me to come and eat with them." That is the way we treat God. He says, "Come and dine." We say, "Does He mean me." He wants us to become fat on the word of God. When you get that knowledge of God then you are starting to understand something. You don't understand anything until you know what God is trying to say about that subject. God is saying here, "If you want to really understand Me, and have true understanding, you have to know Me, not know about Me.

(Prov 10:14 KJV) Wise men lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.

Ask yourself, "Am I a wise man or woman? What am I laying up? That tells whether I am wise or not. You don't have to go around telling people if you are wise. They can tell by what you have laid up, where your treasure is. That is where your heart is. Jesus would say, "Where your treasure is, that is where your heart is." If you are laying up anything but the knowledge of God, you are not wise. If you lay up the knowledge of God, whatever you need will be added to you; whether it is wealth, health, or whatever, God will add it to you.

We, as Christians, lay up treasures and then we want God to add knowledge to them. We are told to seek the Kingdom of God FIRST, and then these things will be added unto us. So, as Leaders, we have to show people how to lay things up and make the right choices of what we are laying up. Where is the importance of our ministry? Where is the importance of our life? Is it upon knowledge? The Holy Ghost is in each one of us, and he is the teacher, so while we are at home we can start laying treasures up. When we come to Church, we can start opening that treasure up. Each one can begin to share that knowledge. God is saying that if we are wise men, we will lay up knowledge, but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.

Look at what Jesus said:

(Mat 6:19 KJV) Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

(Mat 6:20 KJV) But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

(Mat 6:21 KJV) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

If my treasure is knowledge, then if the world folds up, I haven't lost a lot. You cannot take knowledge away from an individual. You can take silver, and gold, and their status in life, but you can't take knowledge from them. True knowledge becomes a part of them. The more that knowledge becomes a part of you, you become more like the one who teaches you that knowledge, which is the Holy Spirit. That is why we are changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18). One of these days we will be like Him, because we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

The sign of a wise man is that he is laying up real treasure that cannot be taken away from him. None of us can keep anything physical. Paul said, "I know, I have knowledge, that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim 1:12). When you have that knowledge, you can give everything to God and have peace, and you can truly say that you have all things.

(Prov 11:9 KJV) An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

There is deliverance in knowledge, isn't there. If you want a deliverance ministry, get into a knowledgeable ministry. If you are in THE WORD ministry, it will deliver you and others who are following you, from the snare of the enemy. You can go from one deliverance to another.

(Prov 12:1 KJV) Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.

There are all kinds of little check points. Am I a person who loves instruction and knowledge, or am I a brutish person? Knowledge and instruction changes you. It changes your very nature. That Christ nature that God gave you begins to come forth in you. The more knowledge you have, the more that Christ nature begins to be what is projected or manifested through you. Many Christians give the same testimony every time: "I have been saved twenty years, filled with the Holy Ghost. Pray for me that I make it." Why can't they get up and share something with the body of Christ, that they have just read in the word of God today. Everything is to be done unto edification, isn't it. What gets me excited is when someone gets up and says "I was reading the word of God today, and guess what the Lord showed to me. God showed me some good stuff."

(Prov 13:16 KJV) Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open his folly.

Knowledge is pretty important, isn't it. It gives you discretion, it gives you an ability to be able to prudent, so you don't have to tell people that you are prudent. They know you either are or you are not.

Prudent = Dict ref. = exercising sound judgment in practical matters; cautious in conduct; not rash; managing carefully.

You really don't have to know which you are; a prudent man or a fool. They can find out pretty easy. All they have to do is talk with you for awhile and you let them know. You can't hide it if you don't have knowledge. You can't fake it. You either know it and that person knows if you know it, or you don't know it.

God is saying that we need to examine ourselves. Paul said, "Let a man examine himself to see if he be in the faith" (2 Cor 13:5). If I am not working in knowledge, then I am not working in faith. Faith has principles and rules to it. It is not just a blind thing that you grope around with. It is an established truth that you read in the word of God, and you hook your faith on that. Later you will see that manifested. That isn't faith anymore, that is not even hope anymore, that is reality. Faith is an established truth that you read in the Bible.

(Prov 14:6 KJV) A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.

Knowledge is not hard to find if I understand that God wants me to have it. Many of us wrestle with this, "God doesn't really want me to know. After all, look at my education and my background, and look at all the times I have failed. He surely doesn't want me to know." What we are really saying is that we don't want to know anything, because if I know, I am responsible for it. Then we say, "But I

want God to use me." It doesn't work that way. He uses those who are knowledgeable. So if you want to be used of God, you have to start growing up.

I have to grow up some more. I want to be used of God, and go farther into God than I am right now. I want to be like Paul: forgetting those things which are behind, and pressing onward toward the mark of the prize of the high call in Christ Jesus. Jesus said in Luke 16:16:

(Luke 16:16 KJV) The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

Knowledge tells me that I can't get there by just laying back and doing nothing; not reading, not praying, not entering into worship. I can't get into the Kingdom of God in the depth that I want to get unless I am willing to spend some time knowing God. How can I walk, unless I know the way to walk. You don't send somebody from New York to Calif. and a little town called Selma without a map. You don't say, "Well, it is out west somewhere." God has given you a road map, and it will take you from knowledge to knowledge to knowledge. When you finally get to where you are supposed to be, God can use you like He wants to.

(Prov 14:18 KJV) The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

If I am searching out an answer for something, and I have received the true knowledge regarding that situation, that is the end of my searching. I am crowned (or finished) in that area. One dictionary reference says that crowned means it is a wreath worn to show victory; an honor; a reward; to put the finishing touch on. God wants us to realize that there is a place in God where we can walk with Him and go from different areas in our life and be crowned in those areas, finished, completed in our life. We have accomplished what God wants to accomplish.

What kind of inheritance do you want? Do you want to inherit folly like the simple man? Do you realize that some people are not going to have any rewards (1 Cor 3: 11-17). Read it! They will not have one ounce of reward yet they will be saved as by fire. Why? Because they simply would not go on and look for knowledge, but were satisfied to inherit folly. If you don't have time to read the Bible, that is folly right there. If you were going to become a brain surgeon, how much studying do you think it would take. If you didn't study the books, you wouldn't operate on me. I would want to see some degrees on the wall, and some successful patients. It is not enough to just hear the word; you have to obey the word.

(Prov 15:7 KJV) The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.

It is pretty easy to see if a man is foolish or wise, isn't it. A wise man disperses knowledge, but the foolish man does not. He is snared by the words out of his own mouth. If I speak foolish words, I have been taken snare by my own words, because they are not words of knowledge. They are words of folly.

(Prov 20:15 KJV) There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

He said that silver and gold were not where it was at, and now He says that rubies are not either, but the true precious jewel was the lips of knowledge.

(Prov 21:11 KJV) When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

When the wise man is instructed, he receives knowledge. Any time we study the word of God we are being instructed by the Holy Spirit. What we receive proves whether we are wise or unwise. It proves whether I truly studied to receive knowledge. We need to start hungering and thirsting for the word of God.

(Prov 22:17 KJV) Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

(Prov 23:12 KJV) Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church. Where does knowledge come from? It comes from God.

When I was in the service, there were guys there who were just putting in their time and they couldn't wait to get out. They never took advantage of the time they had to learn anything. If they went to a foreign country they never took the time to explore and see the beauty that was there. Some of the men I was with went on to college and went on to good careers because they took the time to receive some training. The training was available to everybody, but everybody wouldn't take it. Some of those who didn't learn anything, are grumbling and griping today, because they felt fate had dealt them a bad blow. It wasn't fate; they did it to themselves.

God said that with knowledge, you begin to understand something. In 2 Cor 2:11 Paul said "We are not ignorant of satan's devices; we know what he does, and we won't let him get an advantage over us." Satan is a liar, a deceiver, he brings confusion and strife, and envy and every evil work (James 3:14-16). If any of that starts working in my life, I had better get rid of it quick. I want to get it out before it gets into my heart.

In Proverbs 23:12 God said, "Apply thine heart to My knowledge." Not our knowledge, but God's knowledge. This shows me that I have to get personally involved again. I have to either apply it or hold back. The word of God causes us to walk right. It is a light and a lamp, and shows you when you start going in error. I have to apply that, and say, "That's not right, that's sin," and go in the other direction. If we don't, we get in trouble and then we need deliverance. We need to be pulled out of our mess. When we are down, we pull others down too. I want to walk on the highway of holiness, and it is by shunning all of these things that the enemy brings and tries to make look good, because knowledge is a light.

The Kingdom of God is a spiritual realm, which spiritual people can press into, but sometimes you have to get violent with the old man. Flesh and blood cannot inherit it. Isn't it strange that we can read the newspaper and watch television, but when it comes to studying the word of God or praying, we have too many other things that we have to do. What kind of Leader is that person?

(Prov 24:5 KJV) A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.

The wise man's strength is not in himself, is it. Look at what Paul said:

(2 Cor 12:9 KJV) And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

(2 Cor 12:10 KJV) Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

In our weakness, the strength of Christ is perfected. We usually rely on our own strength. When you really walk in this, you can praise the Lord in spite of how your body feels. Do you think that Paul and Silas really felt like praising the Lord at the midnight hour when they were in prison? They were beaten and in stocks; they were really messed up in the physical, but were they complaining. No! They began to pray and praise the Lord. They became strong, didn't they, and their strength was not a physical strength. It was the strength of almighty God. Hallelujah!

Knowledge tells me where true strength comes from. It doesn't come from my lifting weights. The weakest one in the body of Christ is as strong as the strongest one in the physical realm. The widow who gets in the prayer closet and prays, moves heaven and earth just as quickly as some minister getting up and preaching and teaching the word of God. We never have to be in a certain location to have power. Our strength doesn't rely on whether we are physically well or sick in bed. We can get hold of the throne of grace any time, and any

place, and in any condition, and call on the name of the Lord and His strength is what does the job.

It is not by might nor power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord. We need to truly understand that, and we would stop frustrating the grace of God. We would just say, "Lord, I am available and I am listening to You. I am ready to move when you want me to move, but it is going to be by Your Spirit. I will quit letting my flesh talk me out of it." None of us in our flesh can stand against the devil, but in Christ we can stand against the wiles and devices of the devil and he can't do anything to us.

As Leaders we need to let people know where our strength is. If you tell me that your strength is in the Lord, then you need to let that strength increase. How is it going to increase? By knowledge! It is not going to increase by just coming and filling a seat up in the Church. It isn't by how much you give to the Church. You can't buy it! The only way you can get it is to seek for it, and desire it more than gold. You want it. You come to the Lord to receive knowledge and instruction in Christ.

(Eccl 1:16 KJV) I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

This was written by Solomon, the writer of Proverbs, who got all messed up. All the great wisdom and knowledge didn't do him a lot of good. He forgot to apply it after he got it. You can write it down, but that doesn't mean you are applying it. Those who are going to be Leaders, must first of all be partakers. They must be like Christ.

Solomon did exactly what America is doing today. He brought in all the foreign gods, and gave them a place in the garden of the temple. America has allowed all kinds of gods from the north, the east, the south, and the west, and are giving them an equal place in our land and we just call them religious gods. They can't stand in the presence of God, and when the Church begins to stand up and walk in knowledge, guess what will happen to all the other little gods. They will fall over and break to pieces. They are not going to do it until the Church finally rises up and declares they are no gods at all. They are stones and wood, and have eyes that can't see and ears that cannot hear. They can't save or deliver anybody, and can't hurt anybody.

Most of the time when we go out to fight against pornography, abortion, or anything else, we don't go in knowledge. We go in anger and self justification and all kinds of emotions. We yell and scream at the people who are going in. I don't mind making a stand against abortion anywhere, but I want to be there to give some knowledge to the individual that I am dealing with, that God has a

better plan for them. God has a better plan for the child in that person's womb than what the devil has for it.

When we start walking in knowledge, we will start praying first, and pray all the time we are out there; and when we talk to somebody, it isn't going to be condemning them. It will be reaching out to them to help them. We will tell them Jesus made them and loves them, and He has a better plan for their life. If they go past that, they have gone past the love of God, not the wrath of the human nature. I want to be a wise and knowledgeable Leader. I want to be one who can reach into areas of destruction and restore, not add chaos to it.

Solomon went on to teach many good things, but all of his experience and all of his knowledge was not applied knowledge to the point where it changed his life. He gave great commandments, great word, but when it came to keeping other gods out of the presence of Israel, he never did it and he knew it was an abomination in the sight of God.

If we are going to be good Leaders, we have to get some God knowledge where we can allow the peace of God to rule in our hearts; where we can have our minds kept at peace. We can be a people who can come into a situation that is confused and messed up, and speak peace into that situation. You can't do it except by knowledge, and you are no more of an overcomer than you have knowledge to overcome with. You can shout all you want to, but if you don't have knowledge of what you are shouting, it is empty. We should lift our hands and praise the Lord, but we should be knowledgeable of why we are doing it. We should know it pleases God, and that this is what God desires.

Whatever I do, I want to know it pleases the Lord. Praise is comely (Psa 33:1; Psa 147:1). The Concordance reference for comely means suitable or beautiful, so I want to be a comely person in the sight of the Lord. Knowledge tells me in order to do that, I need to praise Him from a sincere heart. Knowledge also tells me that it is not to be lip service, because the word of God declares that He had thousands of those who praised Him, but their heart were far from Him. We get in a habit of saying, "Well, praise God" when we aren't truly praising Him. That is just lip service. It didn't come from the heart. I need to have knowledge in my life, and it has to become more precious than gold or rubies. It has to be my treasure chest, because that is where my heart is. My heart can't be in the fulness of Christ Jesus without knowing Him.

I had a couple come into my office for marriage counseling, and I told them there will be problems. The man said, "Oh, no. You don't understand. She is the perfect woman." I told him that there hadn't been a perfect woman since Eve, and she messed up. I believe in telling the truth. Two imperfect people can't have something perfect come out of them. If you sit down with people and tell them that, then when it happens it won't shock them. Imperfection never brings forth perfection. When they know

that is truth, then they can pray to the Perfect One to help them through their imperfection, and to become everything that God intended that marriage to be. Your perfection is in Christ, but your body is still messed up.

Father, we thank you. We know who the teacher is. It is not flesh and blood, though you use flesh and blood vessels, but we are only oracles. It is the Spirit of God speaking through us. Lord, we desire to have that knowledge that liberates and sets free; that causes us to be able workmen in the harvest field of the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to be a people that have Your intelligence; have Your Knowledge, Your wisdom, Your understanding, so that we might work and minister effectively in the body of Christ as well as in the harvest field of the world.

It isn't by power or might, but it is by Your Spirit. Lord, we know there is so much more to learn, so much to understand, but unless we begin, we will never understand anything. Unless we start, we cannot finish the journey. Lord, we need to begin to search for the hidden treasures of knowledge and wisdom; and we need to begin to order our lives according to the words of Your mouth. I thank you that all of us can be great Leaders in Christ. We can all be an overcomer, a conqueror. Bless the hearers of the word. In Jesus name, Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 6

SPEAKING THE TRUTH

This chapter is on speaking the truth. It is very essential that Leaders learn to speak the truth. The truth sets you free. If you ever get in trouble for telling the truth, the Lord will be there with you. If you get in trouble for speaking a lie, you are going to have problems. When you study the word of God you find men and women who went into testings and trials because they dared to speak the truth, and God always brought them through. I want to show you what the Lord said about truth. Look at Malachi 2:6-7:

(Mal 2:6 KJV) The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

(Mal 2:7 KJV) For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

The Lord calls it the law of truth. If truth is in your mouth, iniquity will be missing. The end result was that he walked with the Lord in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. You can't tell the truth and a lie at the same time. They won't mix. That is why we are told to speak the truth; lie not to one another. If you mess up, just tell the truth. Someone will find out about it, and God already knows about it.

We worry about what people think about us, instead of what God knows about us. If we don't get rid of that, it will show up one day where it really counts. It will show up on the record, for man shall give account of every idle word and deed done in the body. He shall receive reward for those things, whether good or evil. The only way to get rid of anything that is not right in our life is to ask God to forgive us and turn from that thing. If you have a habit of lying, turn away from it and repent, and ask God to forgive you and help you. The next time you tell a person a lie, be honest and confess that you just lied to him. He won't get mad at you. He will respect you for telling him. It shows that you have strength and character.

You might say, "Why did I say that?" We are so worried about people's approval, and very little concerned about God's approval. I want the truth in my lips. I don't want iniquity found in my mouth. Let's look at Deut 31:30; 32:1-6:

(Deu 31:30 KJV) And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.

(Deu 32:1 KJV) Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

(Deu 32:2 KJV) My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

(Deu 32:3 KJV) Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

(Deu 32:4 KJV) He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

(Deu 32:5 KJV) They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

(Deu 32:6 KJV) Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

He is our Rock, but there is truth in Him. You might say that you want to be like the Lord; well, He is a God of truth. Every Christian leader who really wants to exemplify Christ, must not only say that Christ is a God of truth, but I am His child, so I am a child of truth. We know who the father of the lie is; it is the devil. When I lie, I am in league with the devil. If I keep telling people that my God is a God of truth, and my life is not a life of truth, then I am found to be a liar. If I say that my God is a God of truth, I begin to believe what is in the Bible. If He is my healer, my deliverer, my provider, my strength, all of those that we keep saying He is, I had better get some knowledge of Him truly being that.

I want to speak truth, and that truth means that I have to line up with what I am saying. If I keep telling people that my God shall supply all of my need according to His riches in glory, and that He is the Lord my God who provideth, and I am running around like a beggar, always worried about finances, always worried about tomorrow, that is an area that has not become truth to me. When I

Speak it isn't really truth in the sense that I understand it or am walking in it. I am just saying this is the word.

God wants a person that when they speak it, they live it. That is knowledge and the truth combined. If I KNOW that my God shall supply all of my need, then it becomes a manifested truth. If I am just quoting that scripture, it is an established truth but not manifested. Don't tell somebody that God will take care of them but He won't take care of you, because God is not a respecter of persons. What He will do for someone else, He will do for you and me. If He did it for Moses and Abraham, He will do it for us. They believed God would provide for them. We say He will supply our need (we hope). He is the Lord thy God who healeth thee (I think or maybe). If it doesn't happen, we blame the other person.

Knowledge begins to couple together with truth. If I am going to speak something, I need to know it. If I say the Lord will supply all my need, then I shouldn't have to beg people to take care of me. If God has given me a true vision and I have taken the knowledge of that vision and begin to work in it, there is no condition for it not to come to pass, except my unbelief that hinders it. God will add others to help, people who have the same heart that He has.

Leaders have to have a heart to speak truth. Let's look at Jeremiah. He is always in trouble because he is always speaking the truth. He wasn't the most popular man in town. He told the King he was going to get killed, but the King didn't believe him, and threw him in the pit. He thought he could hide the word of God if he threw him in the pit. You can't get rid of the word of God because it is settled in heaven forever.

(Jer 4:1 KJV) If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the LORD, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove.

(Jer 4:2 KJV) And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.

"...in Him shall they glory." I cannot glory in the Lord if I am lying or deceiving. If the motive of my heart isn't right, I can't glory in a God who is truth. Israel took what God blessed them with and used it on themselves and their own substance, and became selfish with it. God said if they would turn around and see Him for who He really is, a God of truth, judgment, and righteousness, then they would bless themselves in Him, not in what they have.

Most people feel blessed if they have money or position, etc. That is not the word of God at all. In Matt 16:13-19 Jesus asked the disciples who did men say He was, and then asked the disciples who they said He was. Peter answered that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and Jesus said, "Blessed art

thou, Simon Barjona." I don't know if Peter even had any money in his pocket. Judas had the moneybag. Jesus didn't tell Judas that he was blessed because he had the bag. He told Peter he was blessed because he had the revelation; flesh and blood hadn't revealed it to him, but His Father which is in heaven.

We can bless ourselves in the Lord, because we are walking in truth and righteousness, and in judgment, and as we bless ourselves in the Lord, we begin to thank God for the salvation that has been given. We need to learn to do this. If you are saved, you are blessed. Don't clutter up the picture by saying, "That is true, but what if... If I had this or that, I would be more blessed." You can't get more blessed than being saved. You do not get more saved. You got 100% saved. "If I had gold and silver, I would be more blessed." No, you might be more troubled. All Peter had to think about was just following Jesus and try to learn what He was saying. Judas had the problem; he had the bag with the money.

Let's look at 2 Cor 13:6-8:

(2 Cor 13:6 KJV) But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates.

(2 Cor 13:7 KJV) Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.

(2 Cor 13:8 KJV) For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

Paul is saying here that he doesn't care what it makes him look like, if the truth is his guideline, he can't do anything except that which is truth. A lot of people think that Christians who just want to live for Jesus are out of their mind and strange, but they have no other motive to serve God than that they love Jesus. They go to Church because they love Jesus. They love one another because they love Jesus.

You cannot help but love people if the truth really gets into your heart, because the word says, "Love one another, even as I have loved you. Love your enemies." God is love. If I am representing God, the truth warns me when something says: "You really need to begin to think about that individual and start hating them. They aren't doing you right." Haven't you ever thought that. I know I have. Then the truth gets up in my heart and says: "Wait a minute; you are to love your enemies, pray for those who spitefully use you, and bless those who curse you."

That truth makes me free to love my enemies and those who would spitefully use me. You can go anywhere and love anybody, because it is not your natural man who is loving people. It is Christ flowing through you in the

Spirit of truth, and because of that truth being there, you can't do anything else. When we start picking and choosing who we are going to love, it means the Spirit of truth is not really in the operative mode that He needs to be in our life.

Leaders have to come into this truth and begin to walk in it in such a way that when we talk to a Leader, he loves people. If a person says to him that someone is trying to destroy the Church, he just says, "Let's pray for them." The disciples before the Church was birthed, were running around with Jesus and they wanted to knock off the Romans. Jesus didn't come to knock off the Romans. He came to save them. Because the Spirit of truth wasn't in them, the disciples wanted to call fire down from heaven, didn't they. They didn't love their enemies. You can't call fire down from heaven to kill people if you love them. You have been sent to save those who hate you. You have been sent to love those who persecute you. You have been sent to be the light.

If you want people to leave you alone, don't argue with them; just start loving them. If you start loving them, they are going to leave you if they are not of God and don't want to be of God. How can you argue with love. It will get on somebody like it did the centurion when he said, "We have crucified the Son of God" (Matt 27:54; Mark 15:39). When the Leaders get the truth and say, "Wait a minute; is that the Spirit of truth working in my heart. Does it line up with God's word," the Church will get it back together. That is what truth does; it lines everything up with God's word because the Spirit and the word agree. The Holy Ghost is called the Spirit of truth. That is why no lie is of God. Everything that God says is truth.

Let's look at James 3: 13-18. James is probably the person that was the most disliked of the whole bunch by Christians who didn't want to line up, because he was always on their case.

(James 3:13 KJV) Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

(James 3:14 KJV) But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

(James 3:15 KJV) This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

(James 3:16 KJV) For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

(James 3:17 KJV) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

(James 3:18 KJV) And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

If there is something wrong in our lives, should we try to hide it? We don't want people to think we have a weakness, do we. If somebody comes to you and says they think you have bitterness in your heart, do you scream at him: "NO! I DON'T HAVE BITTERNESS IN MY HEART. I'M A CHRISTIAN. I'M A DEACON." What have you just done? You have lied against the truth. Why do you think God reveals those things in your life to somebody who loves you. The word says if you find a brother overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual go to him (Gal 6:1). We have a lot of people who guess a lot, don't they, but when a person is spiritual, they don't guess. The Holy Spirit will speak to them quietly. They won't tell it to everybody, but they will go to that individual and give him a chance to line up with the truth. Let's look at what Jesus said in Matt 18:15-17:

(Mat 18:15 KJV) Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

(Mat 18:16 KJV) But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

(Mat 18:17 KJV) And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

If that person doesn't repent, he is counted as a heathen and a publican (or tax-collector). He will be excommunicated from the Church. You may not like excommunicators, but Paul did. In 1 Cor. 5th chapter he gives the account of a man who wanted his father's wife, and Paul told the Church that they had all lied. None of them had mourned about it, but they puffed themselves up, so Paul had to come down to save the whole Church, and root out one man. He said, "I will tell you by the Spirit what I will do. I will turn him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved (vs. 5). Later on in 2 Cor. 2:5-11 he restores him back.

Suppose that Paul had never taken that step because he was walking in the truth and the love of God and had just allowed that sin to go on. Sometimes a Pastor will get up and will say something, and it cuts us every way. We take our tattered garments and go out the door, and then we start talking bad about the Pastor because he had gone to meddling. If a person doesn't have anything to hide, he doesn't mind the searchlight.

Paul said, "Here is what you do to him; you put him outside." The Spirit of truth always lines up with the word of God. Paul isn't talking about a man who

things, so why should we try to impress one another with how great we are. We are told to exalt the Head, aren't we, and that is the Lord Jesus.

(Prov 18:21 KJV) Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, so it behooves me to speak truth; to be sure that everything I am saying in counseling or ministry, had better be something that is going to bring forth life. There are going to be times like when Peter and John brought death to Ananias and Sapphira, because they lied and didn't love the truth (Acts 5:1-5). Just because they were going to give money to the Church doesn't mean they loved God. If they had loved God, they would have told the truth. They would have told how much they sold the land for and how much they wanted to give, and they would have lived. They were deceiving, weren't they, and satan is the deceiver. They allowed satan to come into their hearts, just like Judas allowed satan to come into his heart, and they lied to the Holy Ghost. The moment Peter spoke those words to them, there was power and they were dead.

I truly believe the Church is going to wake up one day, and they are going to quit being namby-pamby about everything that is going on, and they are going to speak the word that God gives them and let it do what it wants to do. I am not sure that Peter wanted Ananias and Sapphira dead. The Holy Ghost showed it to him, and when the Holy Ghost spoke through him, it was all done. After that great fear fell on all of them, and no one wanted to join the Church. The fear of God has to happen to the Church today. That is part of knowledge. When we start working, walking, and loving in the fear of God, the power of God is going to become evident again.

I want to eat the fruit of life, don't you. When my body doesn't feel good, I just speak life to it, because Jesus died for it. His stripes healed me, and I am not calling Him a liar. If I tell you that He will heal you, I had better have a little practical experience in my body. If people do not have the Holy Ghost, most do not say that Jesus will heal you, or that you can speak in other tongues. It isn't that they don't love God; they do not have that knowledge imparted to them.

We should have that knowledge and if we can lay hands on those who are sick, we should be able to lay hands on ourselves. This body of mine is just my flesh, and if I can't get to somebody else to lay hands on me, I had better start speaking life into it. When you find that works for you, you are going to have more faith that it will work for somebody else. If you are popping pills all the time for this or that ailment (I am not talking about vitamins), and say to someone, "The Lord thy God will heal thee," and then ask them to hand you your aspirin or prescribed pills, you do not truly have knowledge. God said to apply thine heart to knowledge, so if I am going to apply it to you, I had better apply it to myself first.

If you get mad at me for saying this, that is fine, because you will read your Bible and try to prove that I am wrong. You will find that the Bible says just what I have said. It is good to check what I am saying to you. That is biblical also. I do not want to be teaching something that is not written in the Bible. You need to be believing it yourself before you try to tell somebody else. God wants some powerful Leaders. Jesus said in John 6: 63:

(John 6:63 KJV) It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.

He said it is the spirit that quickeneth. That is a little s, not a capital S. In the book of Hebrews, the Holy Spirit is always capitalized. The little spirit is your spirit. If you are trying to get this word quickened to you by your flesh, all kinds of things will be happening in your heart. You will wish this study would be finished, and that you hadn't even started it, because it will not line up with your doctrine.

The Holy Spirit does not speak to the flesh man. You may hear it with natural ears, but it is the ear of the Spirit that you must receive with. When the spirit inside of you hears it, it either rejects it or it quickens it. It is called the Spirit of truth working in there, right along with your spirit. That is why you never have to worry about being in error. If you really love the Lord and study His word and have knowledge, when any false doctrine comes and tries to get into your spirit, it just doesn't line up. Christians do not have to worry about eating spiritual loco-weed. If they have let the knowledge of God reign in their hearts, if they have let Christ become everything to their lives, no poison thing will harm them or kill them.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." I can make the flesh look good, and talk good, and act good, but it doesn't profit anything. If the Holy Spirit of God is not in you, then you are just reading words, but if the Holy Spirit is in you, you may hear something that you don't want to hear, but your spirit will say, "That is right." This happens to me once in awhile; I hear something I don't want to hear, but my spirit quickens it and I can't lie against the truth.

"... the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." So Jesus doesn't just give you a bunch of ink and paper, and expect you to live godly. He gave you the Holy Spirit of God, and when you read this your spirit within you begins to have the Holy Spirit speaking to it. Your spirit begins to quicken that word of God, and say, "That is alive, that is truth. That is more than just the knowledge of intellectual men; that is something that will bring life into me." When I read the word of God, I want life to come out of that word. I don't care how much He has to kill me or how much I have to die to self, I want life to

come. If I am trying to be puffed up in my own mind, it is not the Holy Spirit who will speak to me. The Holy Spirit speaks to my spirit.

That is why the world cannot receive this. The world classifies everything as religion, whether it is buddhism, hinduism, or Christianity. In Haiti they call all of them cults. When you say 'religion' we think a person is saved and loves the Lord. No! If you don't have the Spirit of Christ, you are not His. You can do all kinds of things, but if you do not have the Spirit of Christ, you are not operating in the Spirit of truth. Your motive is going to be wrong. What we need today are Leaders who are not afraid to speak words that are Spirit and life, so when a person comes into the Church, the word of God is alive, and the healing power is flowing while they are ministering. Look at all the things that happened when they preached the word of God. Miracles happened. They received the word with great joy, seeing all the miracles that were done.

Things begin to happen when the word of God is alive. When you are counseling one to one, if the word of God is alive and the words that you are speaking to that person are Spirit and life, and they want to know the truth, it will lock in. But if they are natural people and have never been saved, don't try to lay a religious trip on them. Tell them the truth that they need to be saved. If they ask you how they can be saved, then witness to them. We are prone to just speak words to everybody, but if they don't know Jesus, you are not helping them at all. You seem to be the babbler and in confusion.

Look at the account of Jesus talking to Nicodemus in John 3:1-12:

(John 3:1 KJV) There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

(John 3:2 KJV) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

(John 3:3 KJV) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

(John 3:4 KJV) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

(John 3:5 KJV) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

(John 3:6 KJV) That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

(John 3:7 KJV) Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

(John 3:8 KJV) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

(John 3:9 KJV) Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

(John 3:10 KJV) Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

(John 3:11 KJV) Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

(John 3:12 KJV) If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

We should get excited about this. The world can hear the Bible. They can't hear the Holy Spirit who is the Preacher. Now when somebody's heart is open, and you go at that time and preach to them, they can hear the Preacher. We need real Leaders who know when to speak and what to speak, and know when to hold their peace. Notice in Matthew 12:37:

(Mat 12:37 KJV) For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Whose words are you justified or condemned by? By your own words. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Guard your heart with all diligence for out of it proceeds the issues of life. We are taken snare by the words of our own mouth. I am never taken snare by the words of someone else's mouth. It is what I in my own heart believe. When I speak it, I am locked into it, and if it is wrong, the Spirit of truth will try to correct me. That is when I need to quit lying against the truth, and saying it isn't true. I just told a lie. No one is perfect; our perfection is in Christ. We are going to be perfect as He is perfect. Our flesh is subject to fits and blows it. The important thing is to realize that I can be taken snare by that if I try to hide that and lie.

My hope is not in whether I mess up or not; my hope is in the One who does not mess up, and when He tells me that I have messed up, I don't want to lie against Him. I want to be justified. Leaders do mess up. Peter messed up, and Paul said he withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed (Gal 2:11). It was his own mouth that was condemning him. it was his own mouth when he

compromised. You don't need to go around condemning people; their own mouth will do it. You should be there to exhort them. Psalm 51:6 says:

(Psa 51:6 KJV) Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. So God speaks to the spirit, doesn't He. If there is truth and a right heart in me, it will come out. God wants truth in that new creature, because sooner or later, that new creature will grow to take control of the outer man. He will finally get to the point where he can bring the old man under. When the old man says, "I don't want to go to Church," he will grab him and throw him in the shower and dress him, and tell him, "We are going to Church." "I don't want to read the Bible." "Who cares; read it. God gave me a mind so I could read this Bible, so start reading." We should start taking control, but if we lie to ourself and deceive ourself, we never grow up and we are tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. When we can be honest inside and truthful with ourself, then it is not hard to be truthful with other people. Look at Psalm 91:4:

(Psa 91:4 KJV) He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.

The devil can't fight against truth. That is why Jesus said that nobody could take His life. He had to lay it down, because He was truth. He gave His life; nobody could kill it. That is why nobody can kill your spirit, nobody can kill your new man. He is truth. God says this is what He wants, and if you will walk in that truth, it will become a shield and buckler to you. The enemy will not be able to get to you as long as you live and walk in truth. Haven't you noticed that when you had something way down deep inside that you didn't want anyone to know about, you were afraid someone would find out about it, and that fear had torment, didn't it. It is better to tell God, "Lord, I blew it and I am really sorry. I am probably the worst mess You have, but I love You. Please forgive me?" God will say, "It never happened." But if I go on deceiving myself, that shield and that buckler are not there, and I am always being tormented and in fear and worried. We need to come to the place where our minds are in perfect peace in Christ. Notice this in Psalm 119:30:

(Psa 119:30 KJV) I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.

A person must be involved. As much as I love my wife, I can't let her pick my way with Jesus. She stays busy doing it for herself. We can pray together, and read and study and walk together, but no one can pick for me. If you let God's judgments be laid before you, they become a path to walk on. That is what orders your steps. God's decisions are righteous all together. Look at Psalm 19: 7-14, a Psalm of David.

(Psa 19:7 KJV) The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

(Psa 19:8 KJV) The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.

(Psa 19:9 KJV) The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

(Psa 19:10 KJV) More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

(Psa 19:11 KJV) Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

(Psa 19:12 KJV) Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.

(Psa 19:13 KJV) Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

(Psa 19:14 KJV) Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

I need a shield and buckler. I need a path to walk on that pleases God. You know when you are not pleasing God. You know when you are choosing flesh over God. We have to have Leaders who will say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ." Why am I even arguing with myself? We wouldn't go to the morgue and tell one of those dead bodies that we wanted to argue with him. That is about as reasonable as debating with yourself. We are talking to dead men, and that natural man is still not going to receive the Spirit of God, no matter how long we argue. It has to be the inner man. God said that is who He desires. You make the choice. It is the words of your mouth that are going to justify or condemn you. Look at Zecariah 8:16.

(Zec 8:16 KJV) These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:

What am I to speak to my neighbor? Truth! If he is lost, what am I going to tell him? The truth; he is lost. I am not going to tell him to get religious. That won't help him. He might go join the Buddhist or one of the other wrong religions. They aren't going to make it. I need to tell the truth, but speak it in love. If that truth is not working in love flowing out of me there is no need for me

to tell my neighbor, "Look neighbor, Jesus loves you, and He wants to help you in your life. He is concerned about you." If I stand up and say, "Man, you are going to hell if you don't get your act together," he doesn't need that. What he needs is a friend. He doesn't need the finger pointing at him; he needs a hand reaching out to him. You need to get that vision in your own heart: are my fingers pointing at people, or are my hands reaching out to them. Look at John 17:17. Jesus is saying this is what I want.

(John 17:17 KJV) Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

What is truth? Thy word is truth. If I am going to speak the truth in love, I am going to speak the word of God. I am going to share the word of God. Is there anything in the world that is an absolute truth? The only thing is the word of God. Everything else is worked on theory or ability or knowledge of certain limits. An airplane can fly because someone finally figured out through God that air could flow under that wing and over that wing, in such a way that it would suck the airplane up. Airplanes are not lifted, they are sucked up. Now they find that maybe that is not the best way, and they need to do it a different way, so their truth changes all the time, doesn't it.

If they had the absolute truth, we would never have lost the astronauts who were blown up. They were working on partial truth, applied to the best of their ability, and men and women were willing to risk their lives on partial truth. Then why can't the Church stand the absolute truth. You can't change it. You can't take it away. It is absolute! **ONCE GOD SAYS IT, THAT IS ABSOLUTE, ESTABLISHED TRUTH.**

What I want to do is take that absolute, established truth and begin to manifest it in my life. If Jesus Christ is Lord, and I believe He is, then I want that to be a manifested truth, not just something I say religiously. I want Him to be my Lord before I tell anyone else that He is Lord. I want Him to be the Lord of my marriage, my family, my job, my finances, and my entire life. I want Him to be the One in absolute control of everything that pertaineth unto me. God wants us to live the truth, not only talk it; put it into action. Look at Romans 1:25.

(Rom 1:25 KJV) Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

This is when you start getting in trouble. You can't change God's word into anything except His word. What you do is exactly what Paul said in Titus 1:11. They subvert the hearers of the word. In their own heart they are deceived. They want to believe a lie. That is why they change the truth and make it convenient to be whatever they want. You can't take the word of God to condone anything you do if it is not godly. Anything the word condones has to be godly, something that brings glory to the Lord. A person who perverts the word of truth is a pervert.

Pervert in this context means: Dict. = to misinterpret deliberately; to lead astray morally. Here they changed the word of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen!

In this country we have what is called "Earth Day." People are worshipping the earth. We should be more conscious of what we are doing to it, that's true, but we are not going to change one person's heart by changing the environment. Our job is to tell the truth. People are spending billions of dollars to try to change the greenhouse effect. I'm not worried about the greenhouse effect, because I know there is going to be a life-house effect. That will take care of the greenhouse and everything else, and God said He is going to burn it up by fire. I'm not going to change that because that is the truth. There is no asbestos suit that will go through that one.

See how we pervert things in our own thinking. They wanted to live ungodly so they started saying things like, "We are under grace. It doesn't make any difference what we do." Romans 6:-1-2 says: What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid..."

Leaders should be a people who are not wanting to hear the word any other way than the way it is. They will want to speak that truth in love. Every leader will want to speak the truth in love to his neighbor, and if he sees a brother who is taken in a fault, he will restore him in meekness. When the Leadership gets straightened out, revival is the next step. This revival will not be a four day revival. It will not be a revival brought by man. It is going to be a revival that God is going to send, and it will flow around the world and end up in Jerusalem. If you think we are dancing in the congregation now, wait until you see the Jews start dancing in Jerusalem. Every Church that loves the Lord Jesus will be dancing. You won't have to psych them up or wear them out. They will be ready when they come in the house of the Lord. They will be rejoicing and dancing when they come, because truth is there. We don't want to subvert it, or change it; we want to be transformed by it.

Let's look at 1 Cor 13th chapter. We are going to study the entire chapter, because we are to speak the truth in love. You can have the truth and use it wrongly. You can use it like satan tried to use it on Jesus Christ. We have to be a people who know what love is. We know that God is love, but do we understand the vastness of what God's love really is, how it should work in us. Paul explains in this chapter what God really wants for Leadership.

(1 Cor 13:1 KJV) Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

You can have every gift in the world and every gift in the Holy Spirit, but having these gifts does not mean you are spiritual. Speaking in tongues does not mean you are spiritual. Prophecy does not mean you are spiritual. I desire to see the gifts and the things of God working in a person's life, but I want to see the ultimate end, and that is the fruit of the Spirit. So Paul begins to measure here on what love is like, the kind of love that God wants us to speak the truth in.

(1 Cor 13:2 KJV) And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

Do not covet to have the gift of prophecy or any of these other things, unless it is connected together with love (or charity, which is the love of God in action). I do not believe God's love is dormant. The first thing we see about God's love is that He gives. For God so loved that He gave His only begotten Son. So it is a love that is a motivating, moving love. Jesus was moved toward the people with compassion. As Leaders we need to be a people who are moved, not by our emotions, not by feelings, but by the love of God. Something will be accomplished if we are moved and motivated by the love of God. Even though you can prophesy and have all knowledge and faith, and it is not motivated by love, it may do something good for the other individual but what will it profit you. Nothing! When you stand before the Lord and say, "But Lord, didn't I prophesy. Didn't I spend all my time doing this and that," it will not get you the reward that God wants you to have. Without charity, I am nothing!

(1 Cor 13:3 KJV) And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Staying busy is not what a Leader is all about. If you are burned-out that is your own fault. You only get burned-out in the ministry when you are doing it yourself. But when you walk in the Spirit, and work in the Spirit, and you are in the love of God, you do not get burned out. You may get tired, but God renews you. God really desires for you to spend more time with Him, than always being busy doing something else. God is not looking for quantity; He is looking for quality.

It is better to speak to one person and bring that person to Christ, than to preach to one hundred and never move any of them. Our intellect does not move people. When they are touched by the love of God, the Holy Spirit begins to draw them. We tell them the truth in love and do not point fingers at them; we reach our hands out to them. When the woman who was caught in adultery was brought to Jesus, He didn't quote the law to them which said that she should be stoned. He said that those who were without sin could cast the first stone. They

had to judge themselves, didn't they. He was reaching out to this woman, to bring her above the law.

That is how we should be. People operating in the love of God are people bringing others above the law, into a place where they are in the grace of God, the salvation of the Lord. If you don't have the love of God in your heart, you are nothing. Men will bestow gifts and title on you because you can do certain things well, but I want God's recognition on my ministry more than I want man's approval. God will not give me a recognized ministry unless I move in love in that ministry.

(1 Cor 13:4 KJV) Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

In this verse he begins to describe what the love of God really is. Charity suffereth long. The Bible tells us that God is long-suffering to usward that none should perish. How long-suffering are we with people. Not very much! That is not the love of God. I am not talking about condoning sin in people's lives. That is not what he is talking about here. We should not press people to grow up beyond their ability. Let's not get in a hurry to get it done. Let's work in the speed of the Holy Spirit. We are always in a rush or a panic because it doesn't happen in our time frame. We wonder what happened. We have to get out of our time frame, and get in God's time frame.

If we have the love of God, there is going to be an attribute called long-suffering, where we are no longer anxious, no longer in a hurry to get things done. We are at rest. People may think you are lazy and don't care, but when you are working in God's frame, the time is not like working in man's time frame. You are at rest and the Holy Spirit does the work through you.

Long-suffering is kind. Charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up. It never really wants to be noticed. Doesn't take the primary place and tell people how great it is. When this love begins to work in Leaders hearts, they become servants. Isn't that what Paul and Peter said, "We are servants of the Lord" (Romans 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1). Until that love begins to work in our hearts, we will not be servants. We are going to try to find a place of preeminence where we can be noticed or the ones who have our names exalted. But when that love of God works in our hearts, we find ourselves to be servants. We are not in a hurry anymore.

(1 Cor 13:5 KJV) Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

"...seeketh not her own..". Then what does it seek? It seeks the things of others, doesn't it. It seeks that someone else's welfare is first before it's own. Seeks to see that your need is taken care of before it's own. I found out that

when this works in our heart, and we begin to seek to take care of the needs of others, ours is taken care of already. It is the principle, because God said, "Pray one for another that you might be healed." We have to reverse this worrying always about our own selves. We need to get to the place where we are concerned about others and become servants. He will talk to us as good and faithful servants, stewards of the things of God.

"...is not easily provoked..." Are we provoked easily? This is examination time, because Paul said for a man to examine himself to see whether he be in the faith. 1 Cor 13th chapter is a good place to go to examine yourself. If there is something wrong in my life it is usually because the love area of my life is not moving me. I am being motivated by something else. If I get provoked easily, that means there is an area where the love of God needs to be maturing in my heart. The love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, but He does not shed it in areas where we won't let Him shed it. Wherever we want to keep our own way, it won't come. The Holy Ghost sheds the love of God in our hearts as we allow Him to do it. We should come to a point where people can see it in our lives.

"...thinketh NO evil..." Not a little bit of evil, or some evil, but the love of God does not have any evil in it. It doesn't think evil.

(1 Cor 13:6 KJV) Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

That is what we are supposed to do: speak the truth in love. There should be a rejoicing in our hearts when we do that. Even if a person won't accept the truth, that doesn't take away the rejoicing. When you have done the will of God, that is what counts. You have spoken the truth in love, then the results are up to that individual and God. They are not up to you. You have done your part and can go away rejoicing. You have told the truth, spoken it in love, so there is a rejoicing in that truth. Usually if the person you are speaking to has his heart open to the truth, there is rejoicing in his heart too.

(1 Cor 13:7 KJV) Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

In other words, it never gives up. A friend read an article of a young lady who was possessed from the womb. As soon as she was born there were two demons that the father had invited to take her and possess her. But hallelujah, God broke that hold, and today she is serving the Lord. Church people especially might have looked at that girl and said, "Well, forget it. There isn't any hope for her." That is not the love of God. Ministers, we need to instill into our people to keep praying and believing, and working in there for deliverance, for salvation, for healing or whatever is needed. Keep believing God for it. Charity never gives up. It bears, it strengthens, it is there continually doing a work of the Holy Spirit. We need to have that in our hearts.

(1 Cor 13:8 KJV) 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.

"Charity never faileth..." How many times have we failed? I know that I need grace. Charity never fails, but if I work in my own strength, I fail. If I work in my own motivation, I fail. If I work in my own vision that God hasn't given me, I fail. But when I work in the charity of the love of God, IT NEVER FAILS. It accomplishes, it does the work that God has set it to do.

"...whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." So out of all of these, what would you seek? You would seek charity; love. All the other things will cease and vanish away one day, but charity will never fail. People don't always need prophecy; they need somebody to come up and put their arm around them and tell them they love them.

***(1 Cor 13:9 KJV) For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.
(1 Cor 13:10 KJV) But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.***

When you speak the love of God to someone it is without respect of persons. You are not expecting something back from that person. You are doing it to give something to that person. You have freely received, and you have freely given. So when we speak the truth there should not be any motive except that you are giving that truth to meet a need in that person's life.

You may want to build your ministry, but you should let God build your ministry. Before you got saved, you tried to build your life; tried to run it. How good a job did you do? When we come into Christ, why do we think we can build a ministry or run our own life. We can't do it. We have to grow up until we are giving and not worrying about receiving. A lady told me one time that the book of Ephesians is right but it is tight. The entire Bible is that way. It is right but it is tight, and the farther you walk with God, the tighter it gets. It is like a little vise; it keeps squeezing you out and Him in.

(1 Cor 13:11 KJV) When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

(1 Cor 13:12 KJV) For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

(1 Cor 13:13 KJV) And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Did you know that faith and hope will not cross over with you when you go to be with the Lord? There will only be one thing left: CHARITY. That is all that will be there, because God is love. You won't need faith when you are there. You won't need hope when you are there. So if I want to build something eternal to take with me, it had better be charity. There is a faith that worketh by love, because we are to speak the truth in love. A trademark then for a Leader is LOVE. It is not whether they can greatly prophesy, or have a lot of gifts operating in their lives, but do they really love. What did Jesus say was the real sign of a Christian? How will all men know we are disciples? Because we can prophesy? No! It is because we have love one for another.

We get so caught up in trying to get something from God, and never realize that we already have it. As we grow in Christ, we even have the ability to give it away, but a child doesn't want to give it away. Usually a child wants to keep it. "This is Mine!" When I was a child I was no different. "If you want me to play ball with you, you play according to My rules, because this is My ball." Isn't that the way a lot of Church members are today. "I have the ball, and you play according to My rules." When you grow up in Christ, it is God's ball. You can have as much of it as you want.

There is a great revival that God has ordained for the Church to see in the last days, and we need Leaders to be ready. Before that great day happens, there has to be a people who are in love with one another and in love with God, and the only motive for doing anything is because they love one another. Wouldn't it be great if people could look at the Church and say, "They are Christians because they love one another." Today it is too bad you don't hear that, because most of us pick on this person or that denomination, or we say, "Yeah, he is a good preacher, but!..." Why do we put that 'but' in there. What is wrong with, "He is a man of God, or she is a woman of God." Let God take care of it. The world hears those little words like 'but.' That usually means that we want to look better than they do. We are still thinking as children, aren't we. God wants some people who think like God and love like God. If you love like God, then you will act like God.

(Eph 4:13 KJV) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

In other words, God has a goal for us. Why should there be Leaders? Why should there be the five-fold ministry operating? Why should we be wanting to do these things for God? This should be the purpose right here, to bring the body into something. To prepare it for something. First of all there has to be a unity of the faith. There is only one faith. There is no such thing as an all faiths prayer meeting. That is a ridiculous statement to make. That means the hindus, the muslims, etc. There is only ONE FAITH, and we need to operate in that one

faith, and get into a unity of that faith, where everything we do is by faith. It isn't by consensus, or emotions; it is by faith.

Faith simply means obedience to the word of God, just like Abraham was. He believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. We need to understand that we have a job to do, and that job is not just to come into Church and build a physical building. It is to build the body of Christ, to bring them into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. So there is a great need for Leadership, isn't there. Followers cannot bring themselves into it; they must have Leaders to help them. That is why we have the five-fold ministry.

If we are not going to work in faith and love, we are not going to work at all. If we are not going to work in the area of building the body of Christ, we are not going to build anything. If big Churches in big cities could save a city, that would be wonderful, but God is far more interested in the people being built up together than for big Churches being built. I don't have anything against big Churches. I would like to see more of them, but what we need is a big body of Christ, full of love, and faith, and charity, and hope, and all of these wonderful works of God, so when they come together to pray, they can get in one accord because they are working in the unity of the faith.

Let's look at Psalm 133:1-3. The enemy would like to keep you out of unity and faith, because he knows something that we probably haven't gotten hold of yet, but there is something that happens only in that area.

(Psa 133:1 KJV) Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Paul called it the unity of the faith. That is the only place that we can dwell together; in the unity of the faith. We can't do it in physical beings, because we don't agree in our physical beings. There are differences of education, differences of backgrounds. But in the Spirit we can agree together. We have to do that by faith.

(Psa 133:2 KJV) It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

(Psa 133:3 KJV) As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

There is a blessing that the Church has not yet walked into. It is the blessing that comes from unity. Look at John 17:21-23. Leaders must first of all

project that unity. You can't just talk about it, you have to manifest it, taking the established truth and making it a manifested truth.

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

(John 17:22 KJV) And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

(John 17:23 KJV) I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

The enemy wants above everything else to keep unity out of the body of Christ because that is where the blessing of God is. That is where the world's eyes begin to be opened. It is going to happen because when Jesus prayed a prayer, it never went unanswered. Where does it start? It starts in the Leaders. If the Leaders cannot get together and love one another, and are not willing to give instead of always wanting to receive, then the body is not going to see it. Jesus used Himself as an example, didn't He. He said, "As we are one, Father." The Leaders should be able to say as Paul did, "Follow me as I follow the Lord." There needs to be a unity and agreement with one another in such a way that when the truth is spoken it is spoken in love, and every Leader saying the same thing. We can't walk together unless we can agree together. If you as a Leader cannot agree with another Leader in the body of Christ, hold your peace. Talk to that individual alone and share together what the problem is. The revival will not come until that unity comes into the body of Christ.

The prophetic word is being fulfilled today all over the world. As Leaders we know where we are on the time-table of God, and see the importance of our laying aside everything that separates us, every weight and sin. We need to get in this race together and begin to run, speaking the truth in love. The body has to grow up. The body has to become a mighty warrior. The body has to become conquerors. The body has to be a triumphant body. It has to be a Church without spot or blemish or wrinkle. It should be a Church full of victory, and it has to start with us.

(2 Cor 5:17 KJV) Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Before, there was no way you could really tell the truth, let alone tell it in love. You told what you wanted to tell, you told what was convenient, you told what made you look good. That is the old nature; but now we have a new nature. We are partakers of the divine nature of Christ. We should begin to speak the

truth in love, no matter how it makes us look because that new creature has to start taking over.

(2 Cor 4:10 KJV) Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

(2 Cor 4:11 KJV) For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

That new creature has to start working that the life of Christ might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Speaking the truth in love is one way to crucify the flesh, the old man. Instead of getting up in the morning and telling yourself how good looking you are, tell the truth. Tell him, "You are fading away, praise the Lord!" We start off deceiving ourselves in the morning, cleaning it all up and trying to make it look good. We should get up realizing, "Lord, this is Your tabernacle. I present it to You. There is nothing good in it, and I don't expect anything ever to be good in my flesh, but inside me there is a NEW CREATURE, and I am going to concentrate today, not on the old man which is crucified, but I am going to start concentrating on the NEW CREATURE."

If you start concentrating on the inner man, you won't expect a whole lot out of the outer man; but we as a Church expect a lot out of the outer man, and the outer man makes the commitment, but not from his heart. He commits either out of his emotion or intellect, or he commits because we want him to, so his commitment never lasts. It doesn't work; it falls short. When we realize we are new creatures, we need to start speaking some truth that brings the realization that the outer man is crucified with Christ, and now the life we live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God who gave Himself for me (Gal. 2:20).

So here Paul says, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ..." You can't be a Leader unless you are in Christ. "...old things are passed away, and all things are become new." That means that the way I speak has become new. The way I think has become new. I'm being transformed by the renewing of my mind. I have to quit thinking the way I used to. I can't think anymore about what is good for me. I should start thinking about what is good for you. We need to make a commitment to Christ without consulting the old man. He is dead. He is crucified with Christ. We need our decision and our commitment based on the word of God, and there should be enough love of God in us to want to keep that commitment. If you don't honor that commitment, God will not honor it.

(Rom 8:28 KJV) And we know that ALL things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

When we realize that ALL THINGS work together for good, there is an authority in that. Leaders, wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to tell those who come to you griping, and whining, and they don't know why this happened to them: "Rejoice. This is working together for your good. Whether it is a fiery furnace, or the lions den, or a shipwreck, imprisonment, or disappointment that things didn't turn out the way you wanted them to, thank God they didn't, because you don't know how your life would have turned out if everything had turned out the way you wanted it to." You are not speaking the truth in love when you pamper their flesh. You are not helping them if you tell them that everything that has happened is evil. Either all of the word of God is true, or none of the word of God is true.

God doesn't let things turn out the way I want them to. He turns it out the way He wants to. He knows the tomorrows of my life. He knows what is just beyond this day. He knows what is working just down the road, so He works everything together for good. That is a truth, and that is a truth that as Leaders we must live and pass on to those in the body of Christ. We are called and He has a purpose for our lives.

(Eph 1:22 KJV) And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

(Eph 1:23 KJV) Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

God's word is truth! Let God be true and every man a liar. If God has put us in a position where we are in His body, truth should be coming out of us, as the Holy Spirit speaks through us. We get in a hurry or anxious about something, and instead of just resting in it and telling the Lord we are sorry, we start trying to justify ourself and lie. Once you have told a lie, you have bound yourself. That area of your life is never free until it is made right with God.

So we need to tell the truth in love, realizing that He is the Head, and we are in the body of Christ in the fulness of Him. Is there any such thing as a little white lie with God? Is there any such thing as a convenient lie? You don't want to hurt somebody's feelings so you didn't exactly lie. You just bent the truth a little bit. No! You can't bend God's word. God never bends His word to fit men. He straightens men out to fit His word. He is the Head, and we are the body. In that body there is a fulness, and I want to walk in that fulness. I want to come into that maturity in Christ. I want to come to that place where that fulness of God dwells in me. He will never do it if I tell lies. He will never do it if I compromise. He will never do it if I walk in the flesh. He will never do it until I come to the place where I want Him more than I want anything else.

As Leaders we have to be honest. We are going to have decisions in our lifetime that will prove what we want more than anything else. You are going to have commitments to make over decisions you made, and they are going to

prove what you truly want. We cannot teach submission to the body of Christ if we are not submitted to the Head. If we are led by our emotions, how can we tell people to be led by the Spirit. If we make our decisions based on what it will profit or cost us, we can't tell people to make decisions for Christ, can we. We can only tell people to do what we are doing if we want them to be able to see what that is like. By now you may be wondering if you want to be a Leader. When you say you want to be a Leader, it is going to cost you something, believe me. You will have to stand one day and give an account to the people that God puts you over.

Look at Isaiah 50:4.

(Isa 50:4 KJV) The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Isaiah is the man that had to have his lips touched with the coal off the fire (Isaiah 6: 6-7), and here he said, "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary:" The Holy Spirit was the Teacher, not man. "...he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." That is a principle that God has never changed. God opens your ear every morning to hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church, but whatever we decide to hear, the opportunity is there to hear what the Spirit is saying. Every morning God wakes me up with an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying, but I can fill that with anything I want to. I would like to fill it with what the Lord is saying, so I can have a ready tongue, a word that is fit to be spoken in due season.

The Holy Spirit didn't come from someplace way off to talk to him. He lives right in us. It isn't like he had to make a long distance over-seas phone call to talk to God. God said to him, "I want to talk to you. Your ear is open this morning." The first thing you should let happen in your life is to let the Holy Spirit begin to talk to you, and then you begin to talk to the Holy Spirit. When our life is filled with so many things we have to do each day, that ready ear never gets to hear the Holy Spirit.

As Leaders if we are going to instill this in people, we have to practice it first. There is no excuse for me not hearing from God, because every morning He opens my ear to hear. Rev. 2:7 says "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." Sometimes I wake up in the morning with so many things to do, and I start planning, and about three o'clock I am exhausted and I wonder what in the world happened. I forgot to let the Lord speak to my heart. I forgot to spend time in the presence of the Lord and fellowshiping with Him because He is our strength. So now the Lord usually wakes me up about five every morning, and we talk sometimes two hours before I

get out of bed. You may say that is not religious and that I need to be down on my knees, but the Bible says that some laid down before the Lord, and some stood up before the Lord. You can talk to the Lord anyway you want to. There is no special location or position to be in; it is the attitude of your heart.

(John 3:11 KJV) Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

What do we speak? Do we know for sure what we are talking about, or is it that we heard somebody preach it last week and it is a second-hand revelation. Second-hand revelations do not work. I have to get something fresh from the Lord so when I give it to you, it is not something that I heard from somebody else. It is from the Lord right through the word of God. As Leaders we should be able to know what we are talking about.

Jesus in this scripture was talking to Nicodemus and He said, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness." Then in Acts 4:20 Peter and John said, "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." The apostles spoke what God gave them to speak. I don't believe they were out running around for three or four weeks and all of a sudden they would decide to get up and preach a meeting. That wasn't the way it worked. They spent time in prayer, time before the Lord. They had their ears open to hear what God was saying to the Church, and they would stand up and deliver that; then the people would go house to house and they would study the doctrine the apostles taught. As Leaders we should have people go away from us with something to study on.

(1 Cor 1:10 KJV) Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

We are talking about speaking the truth in love, aren't we. If we are going to be speaking the same thing, it will either be truth or a lie, so let's speak the word of God together. Let's speak the truth and share the truth together. We have to grow up and come to a place where we are seeing eternal things, not just earthly things. I want things from above not just things from beneath. I want to be like Him more than I want to be like anybody, and when we get that heart, we are going to be able to speak the same things and share the same things. We talk about everything in the world, and wonder why we have division among us.

The body of Christ is spiritual, not physical. My spirit man wants to hear things from God. When I go to a meeting I want to hear the Minister give me something from the Spirit. I don't want to hear about his fishing story from the pulpit. After Church if he wants to talk about that, it's okay, but when we come together we need to be sure what we are bringing is truth, the word of God.

"... that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." The only way we can have that is to have the same word.

(Mat 12:34 KJV) O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Their lives were evil, weren't they. When we speak good things, people should be able to look at our lives and see something different about us. When you look at Jesus you saw somebody different, and what He spoke was the good things of God. When you looked at Paul's life you might have seen a guy that was beat up and marked and bruised, but you saw a man who was different. You saw a man who had a mission in life, meaning to life. What he spoke was lining up with his life, wasn't it. I want the Lord to be able to say to somebody about me, "Do what he tells you to do, and do what he does." I don't want people to say, "Yeah, he said some good things to me, but he lives like the devil." What a testimony. That shouldn't be the Church. The Church should be living like Christ, speaking the good things of the Kingdom of God. "...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

(Col 4:1 KJV) Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

(Col 4:2 KJV) Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving;

(Col 4:3 KJV) Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

We have something that the world doesn't have; something that the religious system doesn't have. We have the mystery of Christ. Why should we waste our time filling up the air with a lot of words, when we could take the mystery of Christ and deliver it to those who are hungry.

(Col 4:4 KJV) That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

When you speak under the anointing and the power of the Holy Spirit, you manifest things. There is a manifestation of truth and sometimes conviction. Years ago when I was Pastor of a Church, I called on those who attended; and there was one lady that I visited who would get under such condemnation because I would come over there. She was a faithful Church attender, and I didn't know what the problem was until she finally told me. She had a bad habit, and she said, "Oh, I hated to see you come." When I came she got convicted and finally quit that habit. Praise God!

Our life should line up, and we should have a door of utterance open that we can speak the mysteries of Christ, and speak in the way we should, not the way we want to. There is a real difference. If we aren't careful we speak what we want to speak, and the Holy Spirit convicts me of it. He says, "No, no, you need to speak what you ought to speak, not what you want to speak." We aren't our own, are we. We are bought with a price.

(Col 4:5 KJV) Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

(Col 4:6 KJV) Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

Let your speech be ALWAYS... That doesn't mean some of the time; it means ALL of the time. Is our speech always with grace, and always seasoned with the preservatives of life, healing of the Spirit. Every time I teach this, I know this is for me also.

(Psa 15:1 KJV) LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

(Psa 15:2 KJV) He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

If I have spoken the truth in my heart, what will be coming out of my mouth? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

(Psa 25:10 KJV) All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

As Ministers of the gospel of Christ, if we keep His covenant and His testimonies, all our paths should be mercy and truth.

(Psa 119:151 KJV) Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy commandments are truth.

(Prov 12:19 KJV) The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

If I am an eternal being and lie, I have entered into sin. The world is in darkness and lies, but that doesn't really bother me. What bothers me is that children of light do what the world does, and are not even convicted for it. A Leader must stand up and have some spiritual backbone and begin to speak the word of the Lord in faith and in love; filling your heart with love and truth, so

when you open your mouth, out of the abundance of your heart your mouth will speak.

(John 8:32 KJV) And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

If you are preaching the truth, it will set somebody else free. But if you are talking and counseling with people, and they go away from you bound, you haven't given them the truth. If they come to you and want to be free, you sometimes have to say things to them in love that their flesh doesn't want to hear. The rich young ruler could have followed Jesus. Jesus told him the truth and gave him the opportunity to be set free, but he couldn't let go of the world. What I want to do is give every person that I meet the chance to be free. I can't make them free with lies; only the truth will make them free. If I am not free, there is no way I can bring freedom to anybody else.

(John 14:17 KJV) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

So inside of us there is the Spirit of truth. If the Spirit of truth is allowed to work in our lives, whenever we tell something that is not truth, He checks us immediately. A person who lies all the time does not have the Spirit of truth in him because he is in darkness. Years ago I went to a salesman school to sell vacuum cleaners and they didn't care whether you told the truth or not about that machine. They just wanted people to buy it. They showed you all kinds of little tricks to deceive people into buying it. It never bothered me. As long as I got a paycheck, that was what my game in life was all about. I couldn't do it today. God wants Leaders who can speak the truth in love. By doing that we give people the opportunity to be free. Love is not an inactive word. It is really Christ dwelling in you, and the love of God taking control of your life, and you speaking words that are carried forth, girded and wrapped in the love of God.

(Eph 5:9 KJV) (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

There is nothing unclean, nothing evil, nothing in darkness; everything is pure. The fruit of the Spirit of God is produced by the Holy Spirit, but it is produced in our lives. It has no other motive for being produced except that it can bring glory to God. I want God to produce fruit in my life. We can't produce fruit, because we are only the branches. He is the vine. We are limbs and He is the tree, and everybody knows that a limb without the tree cannot bring forth anything. God wants that branch so pure and clean, having its' motives only in the love of God, until fruit is the automatic outcome of our life that is lived for Him.

(Eph 6:14 KJV) Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

The first article that we should have on is truth. One thing about us that is evident is that we are walking in truth, speaking truth, for it is motivated by the love of God.

(2 Tim 2:25 KJV) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

When the day of Pentacost was come, what did they preach? They preached the word of God, the truth. Do you think Peter got mad at those people and begin to consign them to hell. That isn't how they did it, was it. He began to tell them what was wrong with them, and their hearts were pricked as he revealed Christ to them. Did God give them repentance? Yes, of course. Three thousand souls were saved (Acts chap. 2).

We need to begin to give that instruction and give the love of God and the word of the Lord, so possibly God will give repentance to the acknowledging of that truth. When the Jews acknowledged what they had done, and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, they received the gift of the Holy Ghost. It hasn't changed; it is the same pattern.

(Psa 51:6 KJV) Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Where does God reveal truth to us? In our spirit; in our heart. In the inward parts.

(Psa 119:30 KJV) I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.

Every person has to become personally involved, working out his own salvation with fear and trembling. "I have chosen the way of truth." You have choices every day of your life. You choose what path you are going to walk in, what words you are going to speak, either truth or a lie, and are they going to be natural or spiritual. Those are decisions that I have to make every day of my life. We can't go a week at a time and then make a decision. We need to make it daily, and we need to decide this is what we want: the truth in my heart, working in my spirit. That is what I want to choose.

(Zec 8:16 KJV) These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:

Is there any reason that we should ever lie, even a little white lie. No! If we are going to speak the truth it had better be the truth, because God will hold us accountable for every idle word and deed done in the body (Matt 12:36-37). Idle means useless, powerless, so no lie has any power to it.

(John 17:17 KJV) Sanctify them through thy truth: THY WORD IS TRUTH.

The more word you really understand, the more you are continually setting yourself apart from sin. That is why the enemy does not want you to understand the truth because the truth makes you free from areas of your life that have had you in bondage for years. I hear people say they are bound with this or that habit. I say, "Let's pray together. Let's let the Spirit of God move on it, and bring the truth into that area." As soon as that truth comes in, the deliverance comes and they are free. So when we begin to fill our life with the word of God and speak the truth in love, that truth begins to cause us to become more and more free from the things of sin in our lives. I want that, don't you. I want to be a good Leader, so it is imperative that I understand this.

(Prov 16:6 KJV) By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

Notice what truth does. It is a purging tool, isn't it. If you are living in an area of sin in your life, and that word of God comes to you, it is truth. When the truth comes it is mixed with mercy. When God showed me that I was a sinner, He brought along mercy and grace. When the Lord shows me an area in my life that is not right with Him, He brings in the mercy to change. He brings in the grace to strengthen me. So when we speak to people and give them the truth in love, there should be some mercy with it. They go hand in hand, because it purges iniquity. It takes it away; cleans people. There is a washing in the water of the word, and the word is truth; so when we as Leaders speak the truth, there is a washing there. That is why we want to be sure that what we preach or teach or counsel is the word of God, because it has an automatic washing effect. But we have to speak it in love.

(1 Tim 3:15 KJV) But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

One thing about the Church that should be quite evident, is that it is full of truth. It is solid and built upon a foundation of truth. There are no termites in it. There is no man's wisdom in it. It is the pillar and ground of the truth. Wouldn't you Leaders like to have every word you speak be truth. That is what God really wants. I am like Paul; I haven't arrived yet. but this one thing I do, forgetting those thing which are behind, I press onward. I am moving toward that. That is what I want.

There are times when I say things I shouldn't, and I know it after I say it and have to repent. I would like to redeem the time in that area; instead of saying something I ought not to say, to say those things I should say. So I had to spend a lot of time repenting. What should have been spoken at that moment was a word that was fitly spoken. That is what pleases the Lord. The Church should live in that realm.

(Isa 59:9 KJV) Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.

(Isa 59:10 KJV) We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men.

(Isa 59:11 KJV) We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us.

(Isa 59:12 KJV) For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;

(Isa 59:13 KJV) In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

This is what happens when you begin to lie.

(Isa 59:14 KJV) And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

There is no equality without the word of God. If we try to serve God, loving one another without the word of truth, we are going to love the way we want to love one another. We will love with dissimulation, and this is what happened to this nation. They began to fall backwards because they began to lie in their hearts. As Leaders we have to continually speak truth to people, and if we are going to tell them the truth, they need to see it in us. Our motives should be clear and crystal clean. People should know why we are doing things. The body of Christ should know why the Leaders are doing what they are doing. We shouldn't have to do something in secret.

(Isa 59:15 KJV) Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.

How do I know what judgment is if I don't know the word of God? Then I have to decide if the word is true. God's word is true, so I know what judgments are, because the word reveals His judgments to me. The enemy doesn't want you in the word of God. He would like to keep you busy being religious so you won't have any time to spend with the Lord. The devil will get you caught up in your ministry until you forget to minister. You will be wrapped up in all kinds of stuff, and you won't know His judgments, and you find out that the Church is hurting. What has happened? The word of truth is no longer ministered. Let's look at 1 Cor 13:11 again.

(1 Cor 13:11 KJV) When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

A child speaks out of his emotions, his feelings, and his desires. He is seldom concerned about other people. He is concerned about himself. If we are still thinking that way, we are children. We are like the Church at Corinth. All it could take was milk. All we would ever be doing is drinking milk. I would hate to have it for breakfast, lunch, and dinner with mush. I would like to have steak and chicken; stuff that I can get my teeth into. The Church does not seem to want to grow up. It plays it's own games and serves God the way it wants to. All it ever thinks about is getting MY needs fulfilled.

What God wants are people who will quit thinking as children and become men. Let Christ be formed in you until you think as a man. Paul said that what he received from the Lord, he gave unto them, but a child can't receive much from God. He is unstable in all of his ways, tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. One day he is going to serve God and the next day he is going to quit.

I've been there. I would be going along really good until the Preacher said something I didn't like. We were going to a Pentacostal Church, and almost every Sunday morning it seemed like the Pastor was looking right at me and talking to me, and I wasn't the only one in that Church who needed it. I knew that but I would tell my wife I was never going back. Thank God she never said, "Me too, honey. We will both quit." She would just be quiet. Sunday night we would be right back there. If she had said, "Me too, honey" we wouldn't have been there that night. I would have set a pattern in my life that I would never have been good to any work. I would commit myself for awhile until I didn't like it anymore, and then I would go.

That was childish thinking. I was a child in the Lord. I look back now and I could speak in tongues, and I could prophesy and do all kinds of things. I looked good, but then God let a Preacher who told the truth be my Pastor, and that was the worst thing in the world for my flesh that God could ever do. He let some man get up there and tell the truth about me to everyone in that Church. Whew! The

truth will make you free. It may not come the way you want it to, but it will make you free when it comes. One night in that Church we had a revival, and a little Baptist man who had gotten filled with the Holy Ghost came and preached. He was a little short red-headed man, and he was preaching good, but I sat there judging him and saying to myself, "Huh, I could do a lot better than that." No one could have known what I was thinking because I was smiling. After Church was over I was going to leave in a hurry, but I couldn't get out because the people around me didn't want to get out. I couldn't climb over the pews.

This man came right down there where I was and he got right next to me and waited until everybody left, and then said in the sweetest words I ever heard, "Brother, you think you could do better than me, don't you." It was truth, sharper than any two-edged sword. What could I say? Can you lie against the truth? I will never forget him because he spoke that word of truth to me. It hurt, but it set me free from the wrong thinking I was doing. I thank God for people who will tell the truth in love.

Let's look at Galatians 5:22-23.

(Gal 5:22 KJV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

(Gal 5:23 KJV) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Look at the word 'fruit'; it is singular. It does not say 'fruits' plural. The fruit of the Spirit is Love. When we begin to see the joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance, that is the fulness of that love. Did you ever eat an orange that looked good, but it was green inside, and when you peeled it and you took one slice of it, you would throw the rest of it away. It tasted terrible. That is like the love that we project through Jesus Christ. If our love is not full of joy, it has bitterness in it. If it has no peace it is not good to eat.

God is wanting a people who have the fruit of love in their lives. Fully matured love, and when any need comes along, there will be joy, peace, and all of these other traits there. It will be a mature love. As a young Christian the kind of fruit I had looked good but it was bitter. It had judgment in it. It had pity and envy in it. It was like eating an apple with a worm in it. God wants us to speak the truth in the full love of God. He wants there to be long-suffering in the word of truth that we speak. He wants there to be gentleness and temperance. He wants there to be meekness, and joy, and peace.

This love will set people free, just like it set me free that night. I didn't want to hear that man say that. I wanted to get out of there before he got down from that pulpit, but God wouldn't let me. There was nothing to do but face him with a big smile so he wouldn't know what was going on. But he bit into my fruit, and

there was judgment, and bitterness, and envy in there because I was thinking, "Why wasn't I doing it. I could have done it better." The Holy Spirit told him what was wrong.

I want God to mature that fruit in my life. Wouldn't you like to have people bite into your life and find joy and peace. In Acts 7:56-60, when they were persecuting Stephen, what did they find in his life? They found the full mature fruit of love, didn't they. They found forgiveness and long-suffering and gentleness. He prayed "God, lay not this sin to their charge; forgive them, because they know not what they do." It was the same words that Jesus spoke. Love was on the cross, but out of that death flowed life.

When love is motivated by words like that, and it is a mature love, it will bring an answer into a person's need. It will be a reaching out to people; not pointing fingers at them. In Isaiah 58:9 we are told to put away the pointing of the fingers because it is not what God wants. He wants a Church that is reaching out. What I want in my life, and what the Holy Spirit wants for all of us, is that we have a love that when people even gnash on us with their teeth, they won't find reviling there. They will find meekness. They won't find envy or bitterness; they will find joy and peace. If somebody tried our fruit, what do you think they would get? God may send a little Preacher into each of our lives. Lie not against the truth.

I don't want that orange that has nothing in it. Here in Calif. they may get frostbite. It freezes the orange, and when you open it up it is dry inside. It is still an orange, and looks good on the outside, but there is no juice in it. It is dry slices that taste like cardboard. I do not want to be a Christian who is cardboard inside. If a person needs to take a bite of the fruit of the Holy Spirit who is in my life, I want them to get something good. I want them to get peace, and long-suffering, and gentleness in their life. I want to be like Jesus.

In conclusion on this chapter, let's look at the following scriptures regarding our Lord.

(Psa 34:8 KJV) O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

(Psa 119:103 KJV) How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

(Song 2:3 KJV) As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

(Song 2:4 KJV) He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was LOVE.

Lord, we thank You for having the Holy Spirit teach us these truths of Your word. May they be imbedded in all of our hearts and enable us to share these truths with others. Lord, my heart's desire is to be conformed to the image of Jesus. I pray this will be every Leader's heart's desire also. In Jesus name we pray. Amen!

LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 7

FAITH

In this chapter we are going to be studying on Faith. Let's look first at Hebrews 11:6.

(Heb 11:6 KJV) But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Without money? Without prestige? No! Without faith it is impossible to please God. I can't come to God on the good things that I have done. No one can come to God on their good works. As Leaders we have to show people how to approach God and how to please God. If having faith does it, then not having faith certainly does not please God.

Paul is talking here to Hebrews who have been converted, and he is telling them to forget about the law and move into faith. A lot of us can never forget what we were, to become what we are now. We approach God on something we think we are doing that entitles us to get something from Him. There is only way that you can really please God, and that is with faith.

"...for he that cometh to God must believe..." You can't even be saved without believing. Faith and grace mixed together were what saved you, so if you want to get something from God, come in faith, not in your goodness or your works of righteousness. You come in His goodness alone. You come in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. You will come boldly to the throne of grace when you have faith, and make your wants and petitions known unto God. But without faith we cannot please God. If we are telling people that this is going to please God if we do this and this and this, and are doing it out of our own effort, then we have failed to be good Leaders. We must tell them that they have to believe in what they are doing, and that they must do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they must do it heartily as unto God.

That takes faith. If I am going to give someone a cup of coffee, I have to get it like I am going to give it to the Lord Jesus, and give it to that person in the name of the Lord. Our attitude has to change. A lot of times we are 'habit' Christians. We just do things out of habit, so it is not

exciting to be saved. It is not exciting to get up and face the world and say, "Praise God, this is the day the Lord has made. It is different, it is going to be wonderful and exciting because everything I do today I am going to do it as unto the Lord. I am going to do it heartily because I know that of the Lord I shall receive my reward." Look at Colossians 3:23-24.

(Col 3:23 KJV) And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

(Col 3:24 KJV) Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

If I work in the realm of faith, whatever I do for somebody, I do it believing that I am doing it as unto the Lord. If I do it otherwise there is no reward to it. We do a lot of things because we are saved and we are supposed to do them, and then we wonder why we are in the miserable shape we are in all the time. It may just be that there is no faith involved in what we are doing. So if there is no faith involved, it is just a work I am doing. I want to do it as consciously as though I am doing it to the Lord, and then there is a reward.

When I come to God, I must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder to them that diligently seek Him. How do I seek Him? It is not just seeking Him in prayer. It is seeking Him in everything I do. I should be seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness in everything I do. No matter what it is, whether it is serving food, cutting the grass, washing the car, I should be doing that, knowing that it is what pleases God and it is going to be a thing that will bring honor to the Lord.

We should become conscious of who we are serving. If you worked for someone and only showed up about one hour a week, do you think the boss would be pleased. He would probably give you your paycheck with a little pink slip in there that would say, "Don't show up next week or any other week." Isn't that the way we do things? We get in a habit and don't show up. We don't do them as unto God. We just do them when we feel like it.

Have you ever said, "If I don't do it, it won't get done." I have said that. That is a real good attitude to have, isn't it? No! And sure enough, it doesn't get done unless I do it. I have already said it. I spoke it into existence. I believed that in my heart when I said it.

Without faith (not without money, position, or personality), it is impossible (cannot be done) to please God. We must come to Him and believe (without doubt, unbelief, or fear) that He is (acknowledging His sovereignty) a rewarder (He will give us our petition) of those who diligently (without wavering - looking for Him in everything) seek Him.

If as Leaders we began to do everything as unto the Lord, people would start saying, "Thank you. You are such a wonderful person." We should say, "No, I am nothing without Jesus. I'm doing this for you because I love you." Pretty soon the body would start doing that. When we serve God out of habit, the people serve God out of habit. They watch our habits. "Have you ever noticed that guy is ten minutes late? Have you ever noticed that guy; he never sings." People start watching you, and when you become a Leader they really watch you. Their old man tells them to watch you, because he doesn't want to serve God either. If it gets to be a habit, the only time they will serve God is on Sunday, and they are not really serving God. We pick and choose, don't we. We say, "I'll go when I want to," but God said that is not the way it works. You have obedience demanded of you.

Faith has a lot to do with our walk with God. We are not to do anything out of habit; we are to do it because there is faith in our heart to do it. Let's look at Romans 14:22-23.

(Rom 14:22 KJV) Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.

(Rom 14:23 KJV) And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

I like to go to places to speak, but if I didn't believe God wanted me to be in a certain place, there wouldn't be any faith in it and no blessing in it. I would just be in that place. I believe that God sends me where He wants me, and that He wants me to teach this study. I also believe that results will happen from this. There will be things manifested in all of your lives as you study this. God is saying that if you want Him to move in your heart, you have to move by faith. You have to do everything by faith, because that which is not of faith is sin.

That means EVERYTHING! I need to really believe that what I am doing pleases God. It is important for me to believe that. It takes the fear and doubt and unbelief out. Even if I am buying a new pair of shoes, I do it as unto God. He provided the money and made a way for it. Every step of our life should be a faith walk, steps of faith. It pleases God. God gave me this study to share with Leaders or potential Leaders, so you should be doing this study because you believe God wants you to. You should not be doing it just to say you did it. You should do it as unto the Lord. You will get something with that attitude. Any other way and there will be no reward. It will be wasted time and you will be tired. All you will want to do is eat and watch television a couple of hours and go to bed. You will think about the time you lost studying this, but you will think, "I was faithful."

Leaders have to begin to think differently. They have to believe that what they are doing pleases God. The words that they are speaking pleases God. The actions they are taking pleases God. That which is not of faith is sin. It is a principle you cannot change.

"He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." There is always someone trying to bring others under condemnation for the day they worship on or what they eat. You should read the 14th chapter of Romans and it will set you free. The day isn't even important if you do it as unto the Lord. The meat you eat or don't eat is not important as long as you do it unto the Lord. I am sure if you have been in other countries, you had to eat some things that you weren't even sure what they were. You had to eat it by faith. I would eat what was set before me, because I knew I was where God wanted me, so I had faith that it wouldn't kill me. Faith does a lot of good things for your life. Faith will keep you in a lot of situations where you cannot keep yourself.

We have to be able not to doubt. We have to be a people whose conscience is at rest. Everything we do must be by faith. We need to get that into our spirit. We say we like to teach people faith. The best way to do that is to live it. Live it! Don't talk about it; just live it. The just shall live by faith. The only way you know you are saved is by faith.

Aren't there times when you don't feel saved? Maybe times when you and your wife are not agreeing, you think that maybe you aren't saved; that you really are messed up. First thing you know the enemy comes in there. But when you are saved by faith, even when you blow it, somehow you know that God is able to change things for you. If you are on a roller-coaster emotion, the only time faith works is when you are on the top. You need more faith when you are on the bottom than you do when you are on top. When you look like you are about to drown, you need a lot more faith to be able to rest in the Lord and be settled in your spirit, knowing that God is taking care of you no matter what is going on in your life.

Look at Romans 1:17. This is probably one of the most important scriptures on faith that there is.

(Rom 1:17 KJV) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

"...from faith to faith..." Not from intellect to intellect. Not from emotion to emotion. If you want God to reveal the righteousness of God to you, it is going to be from faith to faith. I have to believe what God is telling me is truth. I can't just say that someone said it. I have to believe it in my heart that God said it. How does faith come? Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God. If I want faith and faith and faith, so that righteousness can be revealed from faith to faith, I am going to have to get into the word of God.

Leaders must walk in such a way that people are seeing changes in their lives. The problem is that we want people to think we have arrived, because we are Leaders in the Church. That is not true. There are a lot of things that I haven't seen yet from God. There are a lot of things that I want to experience yet from God; but it only comes from one faith to another faith. That is where God reveals it to me. If I don't spend time in the word or with God, and listening when He wakes me up and gives me the ear to hear, there will not be any more faith revealed to me. I am going to live in that same area with the faith I was saved in. Faith has to grow. When faith is growing in your heart, because the word of God is feeding it and the Spirit of the Lord is ministering, righteousness is unfolded to you and you find all kinds of wonderful new areas that God has and He reveals them to you. If someone is going to lead me, I want them to lead me from faith to faith, so I can be changed from glory to glory. I want someone to be honest with me and say, "I haven't arrived yet, but let's go together and we will go from this glory and see the righteousness of God revealed more in the next faith. From this faith to that faith."

I think it is wonderful that we didn't attain everything when we were born again. We have to press into this. There is a kingdom that we must press into. If we stand in the same faith we were saved in, we are standing in the doorway. In that kingdom there are great and wonderful things to be revealed to us, but we don't go through the doorway. We want someone else to get them for us so we won't have to put any effort in getting it. That other person will start off down the road, and he starts going from one faith to another faith, and forgets to come back and get me.

The next guy comes by and I ask him to go and get me some more of that righteousness that has been revealed from faith to faith. He starts getting from faith to faith, and he never comes back. All of a sudden someone comes along and I ask him, and He says, "I am the Lord, and I am taking you home now." "But Lord, I haven't got anything but a doorway." God said, "You have been standing there for forty years." "But I have been praying that somebody will give me a revelation." God said, "Every man has to press into it and do it for himself."

God will let you stand there being saved on that same faith, but you have missed the mark of the prize of the high calling. If you press on, you start conquering areas that brought fear into your life, because God's righteousness is revealed in that area and says, "Wait a minute; there is nothing to fear here." You begin to walk in faith in the area where things had you bound. You take another step of faith and the righteousness of God has revealed what that thing really is, and it is nothing.

As Leaders, we need to begin to press into the kingdom of God and walk by faith. It is not a downward path; it is an upward path. The closer you get to the Lord, the more glory of God you see. Soon you are walking in the light as He

is in the light. The things that used to bother you do not bother you anymore. The things that used to hinder you, don't hinder you anymore.

If it is needful, I would go to prison or be shipwrecked for the gospel. It doesn't make any difference, because in that faith in Christ the righteousness of God is revealed to be greater than whatever the situation is. The just shall live by faith.

(Hab 2:4 KJV) Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

(Gal 3:11 KJV) But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

There is something very evident that should be in a Christian Leader's life, and that is faith. You won't instill much in people's lives if you get up and say, "I don't know if we can do it or not, but this is my vision." I can tell you right now, it will never be done. Give me a Leader who will stand up and say, "God is with us and we shall do valiantly. We shall triumph. We shall overcome the world, for this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

When I got saved, I thought I had overcome the world. I thought I had licked everything and had arrived. It wasn't long until I found out that I was in the nursery, looking up. When I looked to either side, I found people around me who were supposed to be Leaders and they were in doubt and fear. The best thing that ever happened to me was when God put me in a Church with a man of faith and spoke the truth of God in the love of God. When he said we were going to do something, you knew it was God working through him and that it was going to happen.

We are going to see Churches triumphant all over the world. I don't care how many laws they pass against the Church, nothing can stop the Church. I don't care if they exempt tax structure, it doesn't make any difference, because we are still going to have a Church triumphant that one day will feed the world. One day it will rule with Christ; a Church that is not going to be defeated by the winds of men, but it is going from faith to faith, and seeing the greatness of God's righteousness more than any situation or areas in their own lives.

I can confess that I haven't arrived yet, but I am working on it. We need Leaders like that. It doesn't matter what Church you belong to. I am talking about the body of Christ universal, all over the world. God wants Leaders who can stand up and lead people from faith to faith, not from failure to failure. That is the kind of Leader I want to be, one who leads people from faith to faith, not from failure to failure. We all have that ability to go from faith to faith, not looking for failure.

The just live by faith, but do we understand what that means or is it just a scripture that we quote. A lot of people think that means you should quit your job, or something like that, but that isn't the meaning at all. It means being obedient to God's word without question. If I say I live by faith, it means that I live by the word of God. That is what Jesus said, isn't it. "Men should not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

We are going to look at the book of Ruth, chapter 1, and see a real example of faith. The background of this story is that Ruth and her sister-in-law Orpah, who were Moabites, had married into the family of Naomi, a Jewish woman from Israel. Naomi and her husband and two sons had come to Moab because there was a famine in the land of Israel. First the husband died, and then later the two sons died, leaving their wives without children. Naomi heard that God was now blessing the land from which she had come, so she wanted to return to her own land. Both of the daughter-in-laws said they would return with her. We will start at verse 10:

(Ruth 1:10 KJV) And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

(Ruth 1:11 KJV) And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

Naomi asked the daughters why they would want to go with her. That is a good question when we say we are going to follow Jesus. We should ask ourselves why we want to follow Jesus. We already have eternal life, so that is not a good reason.

(Ruth 1:12 KJV) Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

(Ruth 1:13 KJV) Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

Naomi asked them to turn again, and go their own way. At this point they were both in the commitment to return with Naomi to her land in spite of what she said. They both were committed to follow her. But in the next verse comes the real commitment.

(Ruth 1:14 KJV) And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

Kissing the Lord and weeping for your sins and saying, "Lord, I am really sorry for my sins," is good, but that isn't all that God wants from you. God doesn't want you to just weep and kiss Him and say you are sorry. God wants a commitment made by faith that will cleave to the Lord. We have too many people who are not cleaving to the Lord. When anything comes along that doesn't please them, they just go their way. God is looking for that people who will make a commitment by faith and say, "I'm going to follow You, Lord. I am going to cleave to You." Orpah kissed Naomi, but Ruth clave to her.

(Ruth 1:15 KJV) And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law.

(Ruth 1:16 KJV) And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:

Look at the determination that Ruth has here. She doesn't say, "Where you go, I will try to go." She said, "I WILL GO; I WILL LODGE. YOUR PEOPLE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND THY GOD MY GOD."

Some people say, "Well, I am going to try my best to serve the Lord." They may as well stay home and watch television, because their best is not going to be good enough. It takes the actual conscious awareness of your will being invoked here. Saying, "I WILL." Ruth continues to make her commitment.

(Ruth 1:17 KJV) Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.

(Ruth 1:18 KJV) When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.

This may not mean much to us, but it certainly meant a lot to her. She was going to follow a mother-in-law to a land that she does not know. She has no understanding of this land. She doesn't know the perils of the journey. She doesn't know what is going to happen between the time she makes this commitment and the time she arrives there, but she has locked herself in to the very point where she is willing to die if she fails to follow Naomi. This is a commitment by faith. We understand that she went with Naomi, and eventually she became the great-grandmother of David.

We need to make a commitment based on faith and not on what we think we see or think we understand. I am going to follow the Lord Jesus Christ wherever He goes, and lodge where He lodges. I am going to change identity. His people are going to become my people, and I am going to follow hard after

Him. I believe with all my heart that is a faith commitment. I am saying to the Lord, "I don't know what is out there, but You do." Those who are led by the Holy Ghost are the sons of God, aren't they.

Naomi here was representing the Holy Spirit, bringing Ruth into the presence of the blessings of God. Ruth could have turned back with Orpah, who is never mentioned again in the Bible. Ruth is mentioned again many times in the word of God. So we find out here that there are blessings that await our commitment, but it has to be a commitment by faith.

We see men like Moses and Abraham living by faith. By faith they separated themselves. By faith they followed and went to a land they knew nothing about. We are pressing into a kingdom that we know nothing about. We have to have a guide. We cannot do it by our emotions. We cannot do it by our feelings. We cannot do it by our intellect. We must be led by the Spirit of God. We must press into the kingdom of God, and be able to walk on steps of faith because from faith to faith is the righteousness of God revealed.

Our commitment has to be more than an emotional feeling that I am going to follow Jesus all the way. It is better to do like Orpah did and just turn away and say, "Forget it, I'm not going. I am not going to make that kind of commitment. I know what is here in this land, because I am familiar with it and with the surroundings. I am familiar with all that is going on here, but I don't know anything about that land. "

None of us know anything about the kingdom of God without the Holy Spirit. We are on a journey, and we are strangers and pilgrims here. The Lord has called us to a new land, to a heavenly city. God called us into a new work that we know nothing about, but it takes a commitment of faith. We can't say we will serve God because He is blessing us, or that we will serve Him when things are going good. It is serving God every day, all day long, twenty-four hours a day, no matter whether you call it good or bad, because we know that ALL things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are the called according to His purpose.

Many of us have not received the blessings that we need to be receiving because we are following the Lord at a distance. We want to go to heaven, but even the worldly people would like to go to heaven. God wants Leaders who are committed to Jesus Christ, and are following hard after the Lord. David panted after the Lord; He thirsted for the Lord (Psalm 42:1-2). That man just wanted God. As Leaders we have to be a people that make a commitment by faith.

As long as I am blessed by the Holy Spirit, I am all right. I may get into places where my flesh wouldn't like to go, but I know that the Holy Spirit is there with me. The presence of God is with me, and I am going on, and I will pass through that area. Sooner or later I will go through that place that seemed so

bad, and on the other side will be the joy of the Lord and the presence of God in new ways that I can't imagine now.

When you decide to press into God and really see God do something in your life, you are going to find there are some people who aren't too happy for you. When you start walking with God you find that you start putting distance between yourself and a lot of people. You are not trying to be a smart aleck or a show off. It is just that they don't understand that kind of commitment. I want to serve God with all of my heart, all of the time.

Let's look at 1 Samuel chapter 17. David is being sent down with some food for his brothers who were fighting against Goliath and the Philistines who had come against the armies of Israel.

(1 Sam 17:26 KJV) And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

(1 Sam 17:27 KJV) And the people answered him after this manner, saying, So shall it be done to the man that killeth him.

David was asking what kind of a reward the King was going to give to the person who killed Goliath. We studied earlier that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. David is going to lay his life on the line here, but before he made the commitment, he wanted to know what kind of reward he would receive. There is nothing wrong with that. If I am following the Lord, one day I expect to have a pay-day. In fact, I pray that I am not laboring in vain. I pray that the work and the labors that I have done have been to the glory of God, so when pay-day comes there will be something there for me.

Paul said in 1 Cor 3:8 that every man shall receive his own reward according to his labour. You wouldn't work on a secular job if you didn't receive a paycheck, would you. You are not down there as a volunteer; you are down there to work. 1 Tim 5:18 says, "A labourer is worthy of his reward." We are laborers with Christ and there is a reward. We need to be aware of that, because that which God has for us is far greater than that which the world has to offer us.

(1 Sam 17:28 KJV) And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.

Eliab's anger was kindled against David. Right away you are questioned when you commit to God. "What do you want to be a preacher for? Why do you want to work in the Church? Why do you want to sing in the choir? Why do you want to serve God all the time?" It is almost always someone really close to you, because if a sinner says that it doesn't mean a lot to you. It may even be one of the brothers or sisters in the Lord who say, "You are getting a little far over."

Eliab didn't understand David's reason at all. David wasn't there by his own desire. His father desired him to be there. Remember, the steps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord. Sometimes whether a Pastor or a Leader asks us to do something, we just say, "Well, I don't think I want to," when we should say, "Praise the Lord." David was not down there to see this battle. He was there because his father has sent him to bring provisions to his elder brothers who are dead-locked in this battle.

(1 Sam 17:29 KJV) And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?

David was saying there had to be some reason he was down there.

(1 Sam 17:30 KJV) And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

(1 Sam 17:31 KJV) And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul: and he sent for him.

(1 Sam 17:32 KJV) And David said to Saul, Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

I love that scripture. It really gets me in the heart. Here is a man that has stood up for the Lord, and he is encouraging the others to not be afraid. He said, "I will go fight Goliath." It sounds like Isaiah, "Here am I, Lord; send me." God wants some people who are desirous to do something for Him.

(1 Sam 17:33 KJV) And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.

Saul said to David, "You are just a kid. You are not qualified to go out here and fight." The first time you step out for the Lord, there is always going to be somebody who says you can't do it, or who do you think you are. It is always those who are afraid to go. It isn't the guy who is in charge of the battle. He is saying, "Come on!" It is the guy who is sitting in the background who says you can't do it.

(1 Sam 17:34 KJV) And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:

(1 Sam 17:35 KJV) And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

(1 Sam 17:36 KJV) Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

David is getting a little righteous anger going now. He is tired of being called a kid; he is tired of having his motives questioned. He is ready to go to war. He wants to get out there and do something.

(1 Sam 17:37 KJV) David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.

(1 Sam 17:38 KJV) And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail.

(1 Sam 17:39 KJV) And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

In other words, you can't go out and fulfil someone else's calling. Don't try to pick up somebody else's armour. Put your own armour on. Get that which fits you; which God made for you.

(1 Sam 17:40 KJV) And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

(1 Sam 17:41 KJV) And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

There are two coming after David. There is the shield bearer and Goliath.

(1 Sam 17:42 KJV) And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

(1 Sam 17:43 KJV) And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

(1 Sam 17:44 KJV) And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

Every time you start to move against the powers of darkness, this is the kind of voice you hear. But David wasn't walking by sight. David knew he was there because God had ordered him to go there. He knew he was there to fight a battle with Goliath, and he knew he could only do it by faith. His testimony is already given. He said that God had delivered him from the lion and the bear, and that God would deliver him out of Goliath's hand.

(1 Sam 17:45 KJV) Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.

The powers of darkness are always defying the Church. They know they can't stop the Church, so they try to defy the Church to give up. They look big and nasty and they smell bad. When you by faith come against the enemies of the Lord, the battle is already won. David knew that. David already knew the established truth was there, and that he would see it manifested.

(1 Sam 17:46 KJV) This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

(1 Sam 17:47 KJV) And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's, and HE WILL give you into our hands.

That is faith talking there. This isn't a giant talking to a giant. This is just a young man who knew God. He said, "I am going to tell you something right now, Goliath. You have had it. My God will deliver you into my hand. I come against you in the name of the Lord of hosts." That is faith! You are not coming in your strength. You are not coming in your intellect. You are not coming in your own power. You are not coming in your might. You are coming in the name of the Lord. Something that looks invisible. Something that doesn't even seem to appear; and yet that name alone will go before you and destroy the enemies that have come out against you. We have to make the commitment by faith.

If you look at the giant, he is bigger than you are. You look all around you and here is Saul over in his tent, and his knees are smoting together. A big man, a big Leader, the King, but he is not going out there and fight the devil. He is not going out and fight the enemy of the Church. Because David's act of killing Goliath the entire army of Israel wakes up. They jump out of their hiding places and take off after the enemy and begin to slaughter them.

IT TOOK ONE MAN! You may be the one person by faith who makes that commitment that is going to really change the hearts and lives of other people around you.

The world is looking for leaders, but they are looking for leaders in the natural. The Church is looking for Leaders who have this kind of confession by faith, "It is well. It doesn't make any difference what it looks like. It doesn't make any difference how big the enemy looks, we are coming in the name of the Lord and the enemy will not be there tomorrow. He is going to be gone. We are going to possess that ground."

I am tired of the Church giving up and losing everything. It is time the Church rallied and says, "We shall do valiantly. Through our God we shall do valiantly." Quit looking at our circumstances, the conditions, our emotions, our feelings, but make a commitment like Ruth and David did, and see God begin to move in the Church again. God is looking for people who will not look at their inabilities, but they will look at God. They will say, "If God said it, we can do it."

Too many times we get like the ten spies who were sent to the land of Canaan. They went out with Caleb and Joshua, and they came back and said there were giants in the land and that they couldn't go up there and take that land. I like what Caleb and Joshua said, "If God be for us, we can take that land. What are we waiting for. Let's go get them" (Numbers 13: 17-30). The people finally listened and wanted to go up and take the land, but God said, "No, you won't. You received the bad report; you will die in this wilderness until the next generation comes along" (chapter 14).

I don't want to die in this wilderness; I want to take it for Jesus. I want to cross into some great things for God, but I know it is going to take faith to do that. It is going to take commitment and faith; an unwavering commitment that says, "Here it is, God. I have laid it all on the line." When you honor your commitment, God honors it. If you don't honor your own commitment, don't expect God to honor it.

Let's look at 1 Peter 1: 3-7:

(1 Pet 1:3 KJV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

(1 Pet 1:4 KJV) To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

(1 Pet 1:5 KJV) Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

How are we kept? We are kept through God's faith. There is a preservative quality in God's faith, because it is an eternal work.

(1 Pet 1:6 KJV) Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

(1 Pet 1:7 KJV) That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

The only kind of faith that is going to have praise and honor and glory in it, is the kind of faith that we live; the kind of faith that we do things by. If I have not done anything by faith, if I've been regulated by what I see, or my circumstances, or my natural man, then the faith that is there is not going to be an honorable faith. It is not going to be a glorious faith, and it is not going to be a praiseworthy faith.

You might say, "Well, I'm just waiting to go to heaven." If that was the only reason that God saved you, He would have taken you the day after you said, "Yes, I do Lord" so there had to be something that God wants to be done while you are still alive. One of those things that He wants us to do, is to begin to reach into the powers of darkness and snatch out those who are held captive against their own will. What he wants us to do is preach the gospel, to stand up and declare the goodness and the mercy of the Lord in our every day living. Faith without works is dead, even as the body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26). Talking faith is not where it is. That is not the kind of faith that is going to be honorable and glorious and full of praise. That is not the kind of faith that God gave you. God gave you the kind of faith that would sustain you, would cause you to do great and mighty things way beyond your own abilities.

I love this. I think we have the wrong picture of the Church. We think that it is cowering in the corner waiting for Jesus to come and rescue it. That is not scriptural. The Church that the Lord of God declares is a Church that overcomes, is conquering, is totally victorious, without spot, without blemish, without wrinkle. It is a Church standing victorious when the Lord returns, not hiding somewhere. They are victorious, treading down principalities, tearing them down, casting down imaginations. So here we find that the faith that God wants has praise and honor and glory in it.

(Rom 10:8 KJV) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

The word of faith is in your mouth, and you have no right to preach anything else except the word of faith. When you preach the kingdom of God by faith, you must make it real to people, because you are living in it, and what you are bringing to others is real because you have experienced it. That word of faith is right there in your mouth and in your heart, but it needs to get out. David spoke words out of his heart, and he said to the giant, "This day the Lord will deliver thee into my hands, and this day I will smite thee, and I will cut off your head and I will feed the carcass to the dogs." That has to bring a guy away down, because dogs had no real place anywhere.

God is saying to us that the faith which is in our mouth and our heart, needs to be brought out of our mouth. Our faith needs to be declared; we need to tell people what we believe, instead of compromising. You don't need to worry about what people are thinking of you if you are going to Church faithfully. I seriously doubt that many people stay awake at night worrying about you anyway. Only the devil really cares when you are in Church, because he is being uncovered. That faith uncovers him; that light shines in the darkness and all you see is exactly what Isaiah said about him:

(Isa 14:16 KJV) They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;

You should read the account of that in Isaiah 14:12-20. In that day we shall narrowly look upon him and say, "Art thou the man (not a great wonderful God), that caused nations to tremble. Are you the one who gave us all that trouble with all those people." We should look at him now through the eyes of faith and see what he really looks like. Stripped of all powers, stripped of all authority and power, and now the only power he has is power that has been given to him of God to carry out God's purposes. God uses people to carry out the intent of evil as well as He uses the Church to carry out the intent of good.

(Rom 10:9 KJV) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

(Rom 10:10 KJV) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

When David spoke to Goliath and said, "God is going to deliver you into my hands," was he speaking salvation to Israel? He was speaking salvation from that situation they were in. We need to begin to speak those things that are not as though they were. We should look by the eye of faith and see what God says

can be done; not by the natural eye and the natural reasoning, and then say that they are too big for us. We need to believe in our heart and confess with our mouth; then we are going to begin to see the salvation throughout every situation. If confession is important for salvation, it is also important for growth.

When Jeremiah was told by the Lord that He had ordained him to be a prophet and Jeremiah said he couldn't speak because he was a child, God said, "Quit making that kind of confession. I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb, and I ordained you to be a prophet. Quit saying what you see, and begin to confess what I say" (Jer 1:4-10).

We are never going to grow up until we get out of this old natural way of thinking and being bound by the carnality of our human nature, or wrapped up in our emotions, our feelings, our intellect. We have to believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths that we are more than conquerors through Christ, and then start living that. He always causes us to triumph in Christ Jesus.

Someone said to me, "Well, Brother Krider, you win some and you lose some." That is not God's plan; that is your plan. God said "I ALWAYS WIN. I ALWAYS TRIUMPH." So God is saying that we need to speak the words of faith out of our hearts. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Guard the heart with all diligence for out of it proceedeth the issues of life. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

I think David really believed in his heart that God had commissioned him that day to take the head off of Goliath. He wasn't trying to psyche himself up, was he. He knew God had spoken those words to his heart, and that what he needed to do was speak them to Goliath. The moment he mouthed them, Goliath had nothing more to say. David went into action and it was all over. I believe if David had gone there and said, "God, I hope that you are with me in this," God would have said, "Get back down off this hill, boy." You have to go without doubt, without fear. You have to have the real faith in your heart that has been planted in there through the power of the Holy Spirit of God. I want that faith to grow. I want that faith to become something more than mouth talk. I want that to be a living style of my life, for the just shall live by faith.

(Rom 10:17 KJV) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Faith cometh by hearing, but not just any kind of hearing. It comes by hearing the word of God. That is why the enemy tries to keep you out of the word. Quit sitting around and saying, "I don't know if God wants to use me or not." He wants to, but He is unable to, because you won't let Him. When people want to keep you out of the word, just tell them you have more important things to do; "I need to get in the word."

We need Leaders who are saturated with the word. We need Leaders who base every statement that they make, on the word of God. All counsel they give is based totally on the word of God, not mixing in a little psychology or psychiatry. That won't mix. Oil and water do not mix. Nothing mixes with the word of God; it is pure. We either accept it pure or we don't accept it at all. We may think we do, but when we try to water down the word of God, we are not watering the word of God down; we are just watering the hearers down. We are subverting the ears of the hearers. We are tickling their ears with what they want to hear.

Leaders, it is time we stand up and say, "The Lord says..." When Jesus was being tried by the devil, He spoke three times to the devil and said, "IT IS WRITTEN." He didn't say, "I think back there somewhere that some of the prophets said something." NO! He said, "IT IS WRITTEN, Satan"(Matt 4th chapter). The devil didn't stay around after that.

We should use the word of God on the devil when he tries to come and harass us, and say, "I haven't got time for you. In the name of Jesus you have to go." The enemy wants to keep you out of the word of God if he can, because faith comes by hearing, and the more I hear, the more I go into another faith, and more of the righteousness of God is revealed.

(Gal 5:6 KJV) For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

It is not a boasting faith, is it. It is not a prideful faith. When David was making that boast to Goliath, it was in the Lord. He said, "The Lord this day is going to deliver you into my hand, and then I will take care of you." Paul said, "If I boast, I will boast in the Lord. I will glory in Him."

So here he is saying there is a faith, and the right faith is faith which works by love. We found out earlier that love is not a dormant thing. Love is an action. It is a motivating power, driving that faith to do things. If I really love the Lord and I want to do something for the Lord, I will find that there is faith in there to do it. If I love people then I find the love of God will motivate that faith in me to begin to reach out to them in their need.

You can't buy faith. You can't give me a hundred dollars and expect God to give you back a thousand if your motive hasn't been because you love the Lord. You should be doing it out of faith because you know that pleases God. That should be the only reason you are doing it. Remember in 1 Cor 13:2-3 where Paul said, "If I have all faith, and have not charity (or love), I am nothing. It doesn't profit me." I want faith that is profitable. I want faith that will move God's heart. I want faith that will release the hand of God in healing and deliverance and salvation because of the love of God that is there. We are to speak the truth in love.

(Gal 5:7 KJV) Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

He said, "Why are you not walking in faith now? What has hindered you?" Faith is being obedient to the word of God. If you are not being obedient and you have quit obeying God, you are not walking by faith any more. You think you are going to be perfected in the flesh. It never works. We have to be a people who are running this race by faith. Everything we do has to be done by faith.

(1 Tim 3:9 KJV) Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

Faith is a mystery, and faith has mysteries. The world doesn't understand faith at all. They believe in luck or that their skill got them through. We have the right faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and everything that is happening in your life is there because God's divine providence has ordered it to be there. It wasn't your skill or luck that got you out of anything. It was the faith living in you to believe that God wanted you where you are.

Do you think Paul and Silas were happy in jail? I am talking about their spirits, not their flesh. I don't think their flesh was happy about anything. It was hurting. But in their spirits there had to be a rejoicing and a knowledge that God was in there with them, and they were there because that was where God wanted them, and they hadn't seen yet what God wanted to do.

A lot of times in our trial and testing of faith we get down to rock bottom, and we think that now we have accomplished everything that God wants to accomplish. Not so! They were not ready yet to get out of jail. They began to have a prayer meeting. They began to praise the Lord. They had to do it by faith because there was no light there. They were in darkness, and all of a sudden God gave a visitation because they were faithful. They were faithful in their situation to bless God and to praise Him, regardless of the circumstances and conditions. Then the fulfillment of why they were in prison became very clear. The jailer was ready to kill himself, thinking that everybody had left. Paul said, "Do thyself no harm. We are all here." The jailer came running in, and he got saved and his entire household.

What if Paul, this great man of God, had gone down there and said, "I don't know why I am in jail. I have done everything I know to do, and here I am in jail for preaching the gospel." He wasn't in jail for preaching the gospel. He was in jail because God ordered that sentence for him. God wanted to reach that jailer. Sometimes we just get into seemingly horrible situations when there just isn't any way out, so you might as well relax. You might as well start praising the Lord, and say, "Thank You, Lord. Hallelujah! I am in here, but it is all working together for good. Lord, I love You. Thank You, God." The first thing you know you are

going to feel a shaking going on. Then pretty soon there will be a whole lot of shaking. You will see those prison doors begin to open, and you will see salvation granted to those who God sent you to minister to.

God's way is a mystery to every one of us, but the only way it can be unraveled is by faith. Faith is the only key that unlocks the mystery of God in any dimension in our life, because without faith it is impossible to please Him. So it is a mystery of faith, isn't it. If any of us was God, we probably would have killed all the bad guys and sat up a kingdom right here and that would have been the end of it. We would have gone on living happily ever after. Right? No! That wasn't God's plan.

God's plan is still a mystery to me. There are a lot of things that happen in my life that are mysterious. A lot of times I end up in places that are a mystery to me as to why I am there. But I want to tell you this, God had a plan for the Church and it is still a mystery to the world, and only those who are in faith can begin to understand God's plan. The world is trying to save 'mother earth', and that is opposite of scripture. Jerusalem is the mother of us all according to scripture. Look at Gal 4:26:

(Gal 4:26 KJV) But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

There are a lot of well intentioned Christians getting out there and giving their time and their effort trying to change the world. The world is going to burn up and all that is therein is going to burn up. The heavens are going to melt, and the elements are going to be on fire with a fervent heat (2 Peter 3:7-12). It is all going to come to nothing. They are spending billions of dollars now to try to change all of that. It wouldn't take a billion dollars; all it would take is repentance, but it takes faith to repent. It wouldn't cost anybody a dime. Can you imagine a world with no more smoking, no more drinking, no more drugs. The pollution is not what we see outside. It is what is in the hearts of men. God has enough oxygen left until He comes. He has enough gas and oil in the ground until He comes. Do you think it is surprising Him that there are so many people being birthed on the earth today.

I was in Calcutta, India a few years ago, and I had just flown over the most lush tropical country I had ever seen in my life. It is called the banana belt there in India. There is enough ground that is fertile in India to grow enough food to feed India and half of the nations that surround it. I stood in Calcutta and watched the cattle fertilize the streets. I watched people die on their little mats on the sidewalk, which was their house. They carried them away in the middle of the night in a cart and took them out and burned them. I stood in the street and said, "God, why?" God said, "Because they have chosen the wrong God." That is just exactly what He spoke to me. All of our billions of dollars will not change India. It has to be changed when the heart is changed. That is the mystery of faith.

We are to hold that mystery of faith in a pure conscience. All I have to do is let God do through me what He wants done. I have to quit trying and let God begin to do what He wants to do in my life. That is a mystery, because the world tells you that if you don't help yourself, nobody else will; that God helps those who help themselves. I couldn't help myself when God helped me, and I found out the foolishness in trying to take care of myself. But I found the mystery of faith that says to me, "Trust, lean on Me. Seek the kingdom of God first and all these other things will be added unto you, whether it is a job, or whatever it is, all of that will be added unto you, if you will open the mystery of faith in a pure conscience, and find what My heart is."

God's heart is to take care of you. He wants to provide for you; to heal you; to deliver you; to set you free; to put you on high; to make you the head and not the tail; to make you above and not beneath; to make you a lender and not a borrower. Those promises are real in the word of God. That is a mystery. Why does God want to do that for me? I know why; it is because He loves me. HE LOVES ME! Say that to yourself often. He loves me; I'm the apple of His eye. He likes to take care of me, and He does a lot better job than I ever did. Let's look at Eph 4:3-6.

(Eph 4:3 KJV) Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

In other words you can't force people into unity; it takes the peace of God to do that.

(Eph 4:4 KJV) There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

(Eph 4:5 KJV) One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

There is only ONE FAITH. There are not many faiths. If we are not saved through Jesus Christ, we are not going to be with the Lord for eternity. I don't care how many people get up and say, "There are many roads that lead." That is called the new-age movement. It isn't new at all. It has been there all the time. There is only road. Jesus said, "I AM THE WAY." That is the mystery of the faith. If you know that, God has opened a mystery to you. Why did God save you? Was there anything about you that was worth saving? I saw a bumper sticker that I wanted to tear off; it said, "Christians are just recycled beings." God didn't recycle us; He made a new creature. That is a mystery of faith. I am not somebody trying to get better. I am trying to be somebody getting deader. The deader I get, the better I get. As I die to self, I live more and more to the Lord. So we find there is one faith, one baptism, and (Eph 4:6):

(Eph 4:6 KJV) One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

The mystery of faith. How could God be in me? How can the Holy Ghost be in me. Did He say to Israel, "Can you build me a house that can contain Me, seeing that I fill the heavens and the earth." No! He said, "You shall build Me a house, and My Name shall rest there." We say we are the temples of the Holy Ghost, don't we. Do we ever think about that. That big glorious temple which was built in Israel, which God said could not contain Him; yet He says to us that He lives in us. That is a mystery of faith. I have to believe by faith that God lives in me, and when I believe that, I have to start living it.

He is not afar off; He lives in me, and the word of faith is in my mouth and in my heart. What I need to do is speak it. The elders do it every time they pray for the sick. They speak health. Isn't that what the prayer of faith is supposed to do? Save the sick. Heal them, raise them up. We need to have faith that the blood of Jesus will do what the word says.

Remember the story in Joshua 2nd chapter when Joshua sent two spies into Jericho, and Rahab the harlot hid them. When they heard that they were being hunted, Rahab helped them escape, but she made them promise that when they came back they would not harm any of her family. They promised and told her to tie a scarlet thread in the window, and when they saw the scarlet thread her household would be saved. The scarlet represented the blood of Jesus, and they were saved.

(Heb 11:32 KJV) And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

(Heb 11:33 KJV) Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

Through faith! This is where understanding comes; through faith. We don't get it through intellectualism. We don't get it through emotionalism. We get the view of God through faith. We get the view of victory through faith. A lot of times when you need a view of victory, it is almost impossible to have it. When you need a vision of up, that is when it is down. You have to look through the window of faith, and there you begin to understand that God framed the worlds by His word that was spoken.

(Heb 11:34 KJV) Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

(Heb 11:35 KJV) Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

(Heb 11:36 KJV) And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

(Heb 11:37 KJV) They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

(Heb 11:38 KJV) (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

And in the midst of all this, they were subduing kingdoms. Sometimes we think that to subdue a kingdom we have to be in perfect health. That is where we are counting on our strength or we must have everything in a perfect condition. That is our emotional wisdom, our intellect. Sometimes when you are flat on your back, when everything is coming apart, you can subdue the kingdom of darkness that is trying to defeat you even when you are physically being attacked.

This was all going on, but there was resurrection power going on, there was strength. They were a tremendous conquering and victorious people and many of them were being tortured, they were being slaughtered, but they had victory. They had it by faith. So then faith has nothing to do with our condition, our circumstances, or anything else, but it is operated through the power of the Holy Spirit when we release that faith. Leaders, we have to have that kind of faith working in our hearts.

(Heb 11:39 KJV) And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

They died short of the promise and yet, praise God, they had obtained a good report. When Jesus died the graves of many of them that slept were opened. After His resurrection, they came forth. Who do you think He brought out of paradise? These that have obtained a good report! That is the way we need to be. We need to have a good report even though we haven't yet obtained. Paul said, "We have not obtained yet," so he was realizing something. If I have a promise of something, or if I have the down payment on something (like the Holy Spirit of God), then it is as good as done.

We learned earlier that there is an established truth and there is a manifested truth. They believed in the established truth. They hinged their lives on it. They hinged their futures on it. They believed with all of their hearts that it was going to happen. Do you think they were disappointed when Jesus Christ appeared in paradise? I can just see the Lord saying, "You who have received a good report, step forward. The promise has been made manifest." Can you imagine if we would live like that, believing the established truth, and waiting for

the manifestation of it. Not becoming over excited or torn up. They had overcoming lives and miracles happened, and they obtained a good report.

(Heb 11:40 KJV) God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Faith tells us that something better has been prepared for us. They could not walk in the kingdom of God; they could not have the Holy Ghost walking in them. They could not have Christ in them, the hope of glory. They could not come in without us, so they by faith waited for us. That is what faith does; it puts you in eternity and it is as good as done. Lots to times we put faith in the realm of emotion or feeling, or something that we can grab hold of in the natural. Faith is very solid, but it is invisible, even though it becomes the force that brings things into manifestation.

(Mat 8:10 KJV) When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

(Luke 7:9 KJV) When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

This is the report of the Roman Centurion who sent Jewish elders to Jesus, asking that Jesus heal his servant. He had been used of God to rebuild the temple. He had been used of God mightily to bless the Jewish people, and he had compassion in his heart. He had faith in his heart that Jesus could heal his servant.

I want the Lord to have a good report like this on me. Great faith. Jesus said that not in all of Israel had He found so great faith. What was that faith? It wasn't to get Jesus to come and go home with him. He acknowledged that Jesus was a man under authority. That is one thing about faith. Faith will let you take your rightful place in the body of Christ. You don't have to be the boss. You can be submitted to whoever is in authority, and if you are under that authority, that faith will operate. But if you are rebellious to the authority and you want to be on top all the time, that faith will never work.

The Centurion said, "I know you are a man under authority, and I am under authority also. I know that the authority you represent will do whatever you ask. I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but speak the word only and my servant liveth." Wow! This was before the cross; before the death and the resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit. If that kind of faith could work back then in a man who was outside the covenant promises of God, why can't it work in us. I think a key to it is that we won't submit ourselves totally to authority. There is that human nature that still wants it's own way. I find times in my life when I want to do it MY way, don't you. If I am not careful to bring that

thing under subjection, I do it my way and it is not faith working, and it is disaster.

This Centurion knew what authority would do. All he had to do was call on Rome, and they would send whatever help he needed. In his heart he knew that this man was under the authority of God almighty. He said, "All you have to do is ask the authority; just speak the word, and it will be done." The servant lived! We need to recognize the authority of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "In MY NAME you shall cast out devils." There is only one name, the name of Jesus. There is no other name we can use.

If I really acknowledge that name, then I am going to become conformed to His authority. I will do what He tells me to do. I will go where He tells me to go. I will be what He wants me to be. Anything else than that is rebellion, and then when I ask God for something, I will not get it. I have to recognize authority first. I have to recognize that Jesus Christ is my authority, and I can't do just anything I want to. I must do whatever it is that He wants me to do.

The Church of the living Christ has to have Leaders who are doing this, so members of the body who have a need can come to the elders, realizing they are under authority; and that they can pray the prayer of faith, and when they pray the prayer of faith something is going to happen in their lives. That is the situation where many of us are right now. We submit to the areas of authority that are commanded of us, but to totally commit one hundred percent is hard to do. We must die daily. Look again at what the Centurion said:

(Luke 7:7 KJV) Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

He said, "All you have to do Lord, is just speak it." Psalm 107:20 says He sent His word and He healed the sick. The Centurion had probably heard the Priest reading and discussing that scripture and how God had sent His word and He healed the sick. He recognized that was the authority that Jesus represented, and that all He had to do was speak the word and the healing power would flow.

We can do that today. I believe in prayer cloth ministry. We take prayer cloths and during prayer time we anoint them with oil and we have a stack of prayer cloths. When people want one, we send it to them. We have had all kinds of wonderful things happen. We need to get to the place where Jesus was when this was written. We should recognize those under authority and ask them to pray for us, and something will happen in our lives. Also people should be able to come to the Leaders and recognize their authority, and ask like the Centurion did for them to pray for them.

(Mat 17:20 KJV) And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to

yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

So it isn't the quantity of faith that I have; it is the quality of my faith. If our faith is in our faith, we have a problem also. Our faith must be in His faithfulness. We can't go around boasting about how much great faith we have. That doesn't get the job done. The greater your faith becomes in Christ, the more it depends totally upon the faithfulness of the Lord God almighty. So it does away with boasting, doesn't it. It excludes boasting. That faith gives us the solid secure lockup with the faithfulness of God.

That is what the three Hebrew young men were doing. They were not boasting on their ability. They were boasting on God's ability to deliver them. While they went through the fiery furnace they knew God was going to deliver them. Their faith was in the faithfulness of God.

(1 Cor 10:13 KJV) There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Notice that it says, "God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above that you are able." The key thing there is that God is faithful. God has done more things for me at times when I felt like I couldn't do anything but call on the name of the Lord and remember His faithfulness. That is when things happen. When I got puffed up and prideful and thought it could do something, I would pray for people and it was like praying for a clump of sawdust. There was nothing happening. But when I depended on the faithfulness of God, God was faithful. What was the Centurion depending on? His position as a Centurion? No, he was depending on God's ability and authority and the faithfulness of God. So faith is the quality of faith; not the quantity.

When our children were little we were in the car going to Canada, and our son was in the front seat. He was about three years old, but he knew the Lord. One of my daughters in the back seat was sick, and she was crying and said her stomach hurt, and quick as a flash that little guy jumped in the back seat and laid hands on her and said, "In Jesus name, be healed." Just like that she was healed. Why? Because his prayer hadn't become contaminated with pride, and envy and strife. It was pure. It was like that little grain of mustard seed. We have to become like little children, don't we.

Leaders should be like little children. A little child who knows the Lord just believes, trusts, and obeys without question. Jesus said that unless we become like little children, we shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. John the Baptist said that he must decrease so Jesus could increase. I have to quit trying to understand in my natural intellect how faith works. There are all kinds of

books that appeal to the natural man on how faith works, but faith works out of purity. Faith works out of love. That little son of ours loved his sister, so he just prayed and she was healed. If we have that kind of love for one another, that kind of faith is going to work. If that kind of love is not there, then faith is not there.

(Mat 21:21 KJV) Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

(Mat 21:22 KJV) And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

He said you can't have faith working with doubt. You can't get up there and say, "I believe," and then say, "I wonder if it will work." It has happened to me. I would go to the hospital to pray for somebody, and by the time I got off the elevator I was wondering if it would work. It is comical sometimes. We have to look at ourselves. That faith if it is in you, motivated by love, will have a connection with the faithfulness of God. It is God's faithfulness that delivers; it is God's faithfulness that heals. It is God's faithfulness that saves. I need the faith that will link me to that faith, and not doubt in God's ability. Not doubt in His faithfulness. Not doubt in whether He wants to do it or not. I like to go to the throne of grace and say, "Lord, I know you will do it. Thank You."

I don't try to give flowery speeches anymore. I gave that up. Did you ever give God a snow job trying to get Him to move? God would say, "Wait a minute. You are the same one that was in here yesterday, all messed up, and you couldn't wait to talk to me. You didn't give Me all that flowery stuff then. You just needed help." We are supposed to come to the throne of grace in faith, and that faith connects us to the faithfulness of God. I would rather have God's faithfulness than man's anytime. Faith is what releases that and connects us to it, but it has to be a faith that doesn't have doubt or wavering in it.

(Acts 3:16 KJV) And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

This is the account of the lame man at the gate of the temple (Acts 3:1-16). A great miracle had happened. The people knew this man. They had passed him all these years, and all of a sudden he was leaping and shouting and praising God. People who saw him wanted to give Peter and John all this glory, but Peter said, "Let me tell you how this really happened." It wasn't faith in Peter that did it. We have to quit building up these big ministries. We do a great injustice to people many times, because we put them on pedestals that they are not able to stand on. Peter said, "And His name through faith in His name hath made this man strong."

You can pray for people in Jesus name, and not believe it, and it will not work. There was a faith here that was believing in the name of Jesus, in God's faithfulness. Is there any other name you can be healed by, or any other name you can be delivered or saved by? No! Only in the name of Jesus. We should start building faith, but it should always be channeled toward the faithfulness of God.

(Acts 6:7 KJV) And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

There has to be obedience. These priests had seen what was going on around them, and they saw the power of God which was not working in the synagogue. They saw people committing their lives to this man who had just been raised from the dead. It wasn't happening in the synagogue. These people were joyful and dancing. These priests began to say, "Wait a minute. I think they have something," and they began to be obedient to the faith. Why? Because the word of God increased. The numbers of disciples multiplied. When the word of God increases, faith increases and gets on somebody else.

The man at the gate Beautiful was certainly not in a faith position. He was looking for a handout. It was the faith in Peter in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that gave that man life and made his limbs whole. We are going to see a revival when we begin to multiply and increase in the word of God, and God is going to add to the Church daily such as should be saved. There will be a great swelling of the move of the Holy Spirit, and people that you never dreamed would get saved, are going to get saved. Cults are going to start emptying out, religious organizations are going to start throwing up their hands and giving up, and they are going to start running with the Church. But first the word has to increase, because when the word increases, faith increases.

Let's look at Acts 11:24 and see what the word says about Barnabas:

(Acts 11:24 KJV) For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

Barnabas was the disciple who interceded with the other disciples of the group when they didn't believe that Paul was a disciple (Acts 9:26-27). The disciples had heard about Paul's reputation and what kind of person he was, but Barnabas was full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and he told them Paul was a man of God and vouched for him.

I believe when faith starts working in our hearts like this, we are going to start protecting one another. If you walk in faith you have nothing to lose, because you are not walking in your reputation. You are not walking in your

name; you are walking in the name of Jesus Christ. You are a new creature, and lay it all on the line in faith. Everything you find written in the word of God, you can stand on that in faith and believe that the faithfulness of God will bring His promises to pass. Look at the following account regarding Paul.

(Acts 20:21 KJV) Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul was busy; he was working with Jews and also the Greeks, but he only had one message for them and it was repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. They had all kinds of gods. Mars hill was filled with them. Everywhere you went there was some kind of god or goddess; some kind of deity. There were groups everywhere, and He went everywhere preaching the message. It is becoming like that in our land today.

Leaders of the Church have to get a message and tell the people to quit hoping in themselves. Quit hoping in their own abilities. Quit hoping in what they can do, and begin to have faith in Jesus. Leaders have to have that faith first, faith toward Jesus Christ, then we won't be talking about one another anymore, because our faith is not toward that person who just fell, or had a weakness, or came up short in our sight. Our faith will be in Jesus Christ.

A lot of people are hurting today because their Ministers have fallen. The problem was that their faith was in the man. If your faith is in Jesus Christ, then if they fall you can love them and pray for them. You can ask God to forgive them and restore them back. If somebody falls, instead of their faith being toward Jesus, it was toward an individual or an organization, and that individual failed them.

It is dangerous to make gods out of men. It is dangerous to have faith in flesh. You had better have your faith in Jesus Christ, and that person that you had exalted will take on the right perspective. You will realize that he is just like the rest of us. Even if he is a minister, he has problems too. His flesh is as rotten as yours or anyone else. In our flesh there is no good thing.

Paul said they didn't despise his weakness because they got their faith off of him and toward the Lord. He could be weak; he could be himself. He didn't have to go around being charismatic, grinning from ear to ear twenty-four hours a day, flexing his super muscles. He could come in and say, "Pray for me. I am tired and worn out. I just got another whipping today." They would gather around and pray for him because Paul had continued to bring their faith toward Jesus Christ.

(Rom 1:5 KJV) By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

If you want to receive something from God, you have to be obedient to the faith. We talked earlier about the mystery of faith, and here Paul says that obedience to the faith brings reward. It simply means knowing the word of God and being obedient to that word, without question, and doubting, and compromising. God said to love our enemies so we should just say, "Lord, I am going to love my enemies. You are going to help me, and give me the strength. I am going to pray for those who spitefully use me. I am going to bless those who curse me. I will turn the other cheek." That is being obedient. Then the promise and the blessing of God comes.

The Church has to be able to look at obedient Leaders today. We should be obedient in every area of our lives. The word of God is something that we need to be obedient to, because it brings faith, and we will become obedient among all nations for His name. If you want your ministry to increase and the calling of God to increase in your life, you will have to be obedient to the faith.

(Rom 16:26 KJV) But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

We see that the obedience of faith makes things manifest. If God said to pray without doubt, and I pray with doubt, there won't be anything good manifested in my life. That is why Paul could honestly write things like this. He realized that he had been obedient to the faith. It cost him, but he was obedient; and wherever he went, it was manifested. Things began to happen. Churches were set in order. New Churches were started. People were saved by the thousands.

Our faith in this day and age should be in the same faithfulness of God as Paul's was back in those days. His obedience should be an example for our obedience. Our obedience must be in the faith of Jesus Christ. When we are obedient to the faith, it means that we don't question the word of God, we just obey it no matter what shape we are in. If God says give with a merry heart and we have a dollar in our pocket, we should have a merry heart and say, "Praise God. Here it is. I wish it was ten million."

You can get up and tell people that they need to tithe, but Paul laid some ground work on it. Obedience to faith means that God wants me to give out of a cheerful heart, not out of necessity trying to twist God's arm to get something back. It should be hilarious when we have offering times. I have been in Churches where they stood up and clapped when the offering was taken. I have been in others where they praised the Lord before the offering was taken. I have been in Churches where they danced while the offering was being taken. Then I have been in Churches where they sat down and said, "Oh, my! They have quenched the Spirit."

If taking an offering quenches your spirit, there is something wrong with your faith. God wants to take the wealth of the heathen and give it to the righteous. He is going to do that, and He says He gives it to those who are good in His sight. Those who are good in His sight are those who are obedient to the faith. They have a giving heart and a desirous motive to serve and to love Jesus, and things begin to be manifest in their lives. Don't give because you have to. If you want it to profit you, it had better be a faith that works by love.

(Rom 3:27 KJV) Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

When you get saved you do not become a lawless person. You have a law of life. You have the law here of faith. That means that faith works by principle. If there is a law, there is a principle that faith will work by. What I need to do then is find the principle. The principle is given to me in the word of God. If God said to do this or that, and I will do it by faith and believe it, and I begin to be obedient with a good heart toward that thing, it isn't long until what God has promised me will come to pass.

If God said, "If you will do this, I will do that" but I say, "All right I will do it. I don't want to do it, but I will go ahead and do it anyhow," there is nothing going to come to me except tiredness. I will be worn out. When you do it obedient to the faith, the faith that works by love under the law of faith, it causes a law of faith and there is a law of return. There is a law of sowing and a law of reaping. It is all through the word of God. As a man sows, so shall he reap. If you sow sparingly, you will reap sparingly.

God wants a cheerful giver who is sowing everywhere he can sow. A wise man sows beside all waters. God is saying there is a law of faith. Unfortunately many Leaders in the body of Christ don't even know there is a law of faith so they try to work in hope. Hope and faith are not the same. Faith believes he has it before he sees it; hope waits and then says he got it. The law of faith tells us to believe that you have that petition when you ask.

We must have Leaders who are walking under the laws of God, the laws of liberty in Christ Jesus. The law of the Spirit of life. Here is the law of faith. We are lined up in those things, so we begin to follow the Lord in these areas by faith. Let's look at Hebrews the 11th chapter. There are many examples of faith in this chapter.

(Heb 11:24 KJV) By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

Here we see a man of God making a decision by faith. A lot of our decisions as Leaders must be made by faith. We know what pleases God and what God's word says about it, but we have another group of people wanting us

to decide another way. We have to make that decision by faith. We also have to make ~~(Heb 11:25 KJV) by offering wrath to God to suffer affliction only with the people~~ but I want ~~to do that to enjoy the pleasure of sin forgoing to have to make faithful decisions.~~ Look at what happens when faith starts working. You start choosing right. *(Heb 11:26 KJV) Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*

He was able to make right choices and to discern true riches. Only by faith can you do that. Only by faith can you see the reward of Christ. Only by faith can you realize that He is a reward.

(Heb 11:27 KJV) By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

He had power to forsake worldly associations without fear. One of the things I hear in the Church are Christians saying, "What are my friends going to think about it if I make this stand?" You had better start operating in this kind of faith, because it is the kind of faith that gives you the power to separate yourself from the world. It is able to see eternal things by an invisible eternal God. We begin to look then into the eternal ways of glory.

(Heb 11:28 KJV) Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

In Exo 12:21-23 they took the blood of the lamb, and they put it on the lintels and the doorposts, and God said, "When I pass through I will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto you." This had never happened before. This was the first passover. By faith they took the blood of that lamb, and they put it on the lintel and the doorposts, and when God saw that blood, He saw faith. The faith was what pleased God, not the blood. The blood was a type of Christ's blood, but that lamb's blood was powerless. If it had power it would have been able to forgive sin and Jesus would not have had to come. The blood of the lamb was the manifestation of faith, so when God saw their faith, He passed over them and did not suffer the destroyer to come into their house. Think about that.

(Heb 11:29 KJV) By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

We do things the world can not. All things are possible with God. All things are possible to him that believeth. Death had passed over them. The plagues were not a part of their life. The Red sea could not stop them. It was faith, faith, faith. They were seeing the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith. The more you walk with God, He doesn't look as much at the actions you are doing, He looks on the faith that motivates it.

(Heb 11:30 KJV) By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

We begin to see then by faith that it is by God's Spirit. This man Moses was a man who ran for his life and hid out. He married Jethro's daughter, began to take care of Jethro's sheep, and went into semi-retirement; but God knew where he was all the time. When God got ready to get a Leader, He got one that was busy. He was doing what he could. God will call some of you into great things if you will let Him.

Sometimes we give up and wonder what is the use. That isn't faith. Faith says to keep on keeping on. Realize that no matter how many valleys you go through, no matter how many defeats you suffer in your lifetime, you are going to get up again, and again and again, until finally you have pressed into Christ, and the victory of God is there.

Let's look at the 4th chapter of Romans. There are some tremendous things here. The Lord is bringing some words that we need out of the shadows into focus through faith.

(Rom 4:1 KJV) What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

(Rom 4:2 KJV) For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.

(Rom 4:3 KJV) For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Abraham believed God. Underline that and put your name in there. I, Don, believed God and it was counted unto me for righteousness. Righteousness was counted unto everyone of us who believed God. Hallelujah! Faith works there, doesn't it.

Abraham was a mighty man of God, but he had a few problems in his lifetime. He gave his wife away twice; at least that is all that is recorded. But she still called him Lord, and went right back to him. Wonderful woman. God uses her as an example for women, but men, don't go out and try it on your wives. Abraham was an ordinary person just like us. When God said, "I am going to give you a seed," he listened to his wife. Sarah said, "No, it isn't going to happen to us. You take my hand-maiden Hagar, and get a seed by her." Abraham said, "OK if you say so." I don't see him saying, "Oh no, that isn't God's plan." He probably thought, "Boy!" Looking at Abraham in the flesh, he wasn't a good example at all, but his faith was in the one that was faithful. That is what made him the father of the faithful.

When you expect an individual to be just perfect, and someone you can put up on a pedestal and say, "Man, that is a man or woman of God," you don't even know their life. You don't know how many times they have failed and messed up. You don't know how many times they have been on the bottom, scratching to get out to the top. But God was faithful enough to leave Abraham in here.

How many want a Leader like that? We can understand a little bit more clearly that God knows He is dealing with human beings, so He had to give us something beyond the human goodness, if there was any, to do the work of God. It was a thing called 'faith,' and that was the first thing we received through grace. Faith! It was a gift of God. By that faith you became a new creature.

There are a lot of times when I don't feel like a new creature. I want to be honest with you. I want to be a Leader who tells you the truth. There is weakness at times in my life, and I know where my weaknesses are. I cry out, "God, a new creature doesn't do or say that," but God reminds me that I am still wearing the old creature.

God is saying to us that we don't need to have a man or a woman substitute for God. We need to be a people who have faith in the faithfulness of God, then that is accounted to us for righteousness.

(Rom 4:4 KJV) Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

(Rom 4:5 KJV) But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

When you say that God can't save a certain person, your faith is not working right. God can save anybody. We have to quit telling God that it is a hopeless case, and He can't save this or that person. GOD SAYS, "WAIT A MINUTE. I CAN DO ANYTHING. WHY DON'T YOU START BELIEVING ME. WHY DON'T YOU START COUNTING ON MY FAITHFULNESS."

(Rom 4:6 KJV) Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

This is David back before the cross, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, before the coming of the Holy Ghost. He sees the blessing of God, doesn't he. He sees it by faith.

(Rom 4:7 KJV) Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

The blood of goats and bulls just pushed ahead to Calvary. That is why David said that his sin was always before him. I don't have to say that. My sin is

behind me. Your sin is behind you. David by faith looked, and he knew that one day when the Lord came, all the sin that he had trusted the Lord to forgive him of, would not be remembered. He would rise with the Lord Jesus Christ. That is faith. That is faith looking in the future.

(Rom 4:8 KJV) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

(Rom 4:9 KJV) Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

(Rom 4:10 KJV) How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

(Rom 4:11 KJV) And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

This was not to just that group of people who were called the Jewish nation or the Israelites. God looked down the road and He saw all of us and He said, "It is going to be accounted unto them too, as soon as they believe Me. They won't have to do some physical work." Abraham sealed that covenant with his own blood, but our covenant has been sealed in the blood of Jesus. There is no need any longer to shed blood.

(Rom 4:12 KJV) And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

So now there are steps of faith. The footsteps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord (Psalm 37:23). They are all steps of faith, and every time we take a step, the righteousness of God is revealed.

(Rom 4:13 KJV) For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Who is going to be the heir of the world? Not the worldly; the meek will inherit the earth. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth (Psalm 37:11). Quit trying to give it away. There is no way you can give it away; God already promised it to you. Paul would say the world is ours also, but to use it wisely.

(Rom 4:14 KJV) For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

(Rom 4:15 KJV) Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.

(Rom 4:16 KJV) Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to ALL the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

"The promise might be sure to ALL the seed." Put your name there.

(Rom 4:17 KJV) (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

We should start living in Christ where we belong, and be people that know all their need is taken care of. A people who realize that this world does not belong to the devil; it belongs to God.

(Rom 4:18 KJV) Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.

(Rom 4:19 KJV) And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

(Rom 4:20 KJV) He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;

Too many times we stagger because unbelief enters in. We don't see it the next moment even though God has promised it to us. In fact it took twenty-five years for that promise to come to pass for Abraham. It wasn't bad when he was seventy-five years old, but after awhile, it is looking pretty dim. That is why Sarah jumped in to help him out before he passed on. That is what we all do; we get us a bunch of Ishmaelites to contend with. We bring them in and have trouble with them all the time. You don't have to stagger at the promise of God through unbelief. You can wait on God. You can wait patiently upon the Lord.

Remember how Habakkuk wrote down the vision and he was told to wait; though the vision tarry it shall come to pass. Just wait on it. Get into the rest of God. God is saying that we need to come to a point in our walk as Leaders where our lives should be so exciting that other people want what we have. Not a bunch

of religion, but a mystery. You can't know that mystery until you come to Jesus. When Jesus was speaking to the multitudes, many times He spoke to them in parables. The disciples questioned why He did this, and He told the disciples:

(Mat 13:11 KJV) He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

(Mat 13:12 KJV) For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

(Mat 13:13 KJV) Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

(Mat 13:14 KJV) And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

(Mat 13:15 KJV) For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

(Mat 13:16 KJV) But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

(Mat 13:17 KJV) For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

It is given to us to know the mysteries of God. They are mysteries of faith. I would rather be able to unlock this than the atom bomb. This mystery brings life. How could a person hang on a cross dying, shedding His blood, giving His life, and erase my sins. That is a mystery. How could one who is dead raise again. That is a mystery. But I know because it is given to us to know the mysteries of the kingdom.

(Heb 4:1 KJV) Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

(Heb 4:2 KJV) For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

It is not enough to just hear somebody preach. You have to have faith mixed with that word until that word becomes spirit and life. Remember Jesus said in John 6:63: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." That is what faith does when it hears the word of God. It makes it into spirit and into life, but because they would not hear the word with faith but were disobedient and rebelled against God, the word did not profit them.

We want the word of God to be profitable to us, don't we. It has to be mixed with faith, and then it is not just ink and paper that somebody is reading, but it becomes life. It becomes food for your spirit. The flesh doesn't profit anything, so forget about that. It is the spirit that quickeneth. Hebrews chapter 4 is called the 'rest chapter' and they entered not into His rest because of unbelief. We don't want to fall after the same example. We are to have faith and that is the mystery of faith.

It is a mystery how faith can just touch these words and they become spirit and life. A believer and a sinner can read the same Bible and to the sinner it is just a lot of words; but the believer can read the same passage and it becomes spirit and life to him. That is the mystery of faith. Leaders should be excited about knowing that faith needs to be mixed with the word of God, the gospel, so that it becomes spirit and life. We are a spirit. We live in a house that is seen but is only temporary, but that which is not seen is eternal. There is a natural man and he does not receive the things of the Spirit of God because they are foolishness to him. These things are spiritual and must be spiritually discerned or known.

There is a mystery of faith here. How can God give us the faith to make that word become spirit and life? Before I was saved, I couldn't do that. Before I was saved, the Bible was just a nice book that told about Jesus and God, but it didn't bring any life. It didn't bring me any rest. It didn't bring me any peace until the Holy Spirit came in. Jesus saved me and washed me by the blood, then He opened the mystery of faith. When I started reading this precious word of God, that faith began to cause that word to become spirit and life.

In John 6:50-66 when Jesus started preaching that unless they ate of His flesh and drank of His blood, they would have no part in Him, they said, "This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?" Many of His disciples turned and followed Him no more, because they were listening with the flesh. There was no faith in them. They were working on Jesus' faith, so when He started talking like that, it sounded crazy to them. Faith explains it, doesn't it. Faith makes what Jesus said there alive to us. We are partakers in His death, His burial, and His resurrection. We were crucified with Christ, and now we are alive with Him. The mystery of faith is working in there. Leaders should be excited. They can understand the mystery of faith. Back in Hebrews 4:2 it says the gospel was preached to them,

but one ingredient was missing, and that was faith, and the word that was preached did not profit them. Faith is what makes the words become spirit and life.

A lot of times when we hear the word of God preached that we are more than conquerors, it doesn't profit us at all and we are still overcome. We are in trouble, because we are not believing what is written there. There is no faith in what has just been spoken. You got saved because faith got hold of something, and it brought spirit and life for the first time into your being. Everything from that time on, in order to profit you, has to be quickened to you by faith, the Spirit of God working with that faith in your life.

Now let's go to Hebrews the 11th chapter again, and we will start with the first verse.

(Heb 11:1 KJV) Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

It is something solid, isn't it. It has substance and evidence. When David came against Goliath did he have any substance in what he was saying? Yes! He had evidence too, because he didn't start walking toward Goliath. He started running at him (1 Sam 17:48). He had already made his confession and it was solid. What he said, he was believing and he was living. When he took care of Goliath it was because he believed that God would actually deliver Goliath into his hands.

People who truly live by faith, trusting God in every area of their lives, will have peace in their lives. They have joy when they shouldn't have joy. They have peace when they shouldn't have peace. They had faith working in their hearts, and it quickened the words of Jesus. They become spirit and life, and they become more solid than what we can see in the natural, because what is solid in God's eyes is not what is solid in our eyes. We look at things and say, "That is a solid wall." God would say, "No, it is temporary." There is nothing solid in this world, and even the world is not solid.

I want to fasten my faith in something that is solid. I want to take that established truth, put my faith in it, and then see it manifested in my life. That is what David did. He hooked his faith on God, telling Goliath that God would deliver him into his hands that very day, and he took off after Goliath. He was solid and he had evidence because he was acting what he said. Our faith has substance, it has evidence when we act what we say. If I get up in Church and say, "Listen, I have overcome the world through Jesus Christ" and then the world overcomes me, my faith wasn't very solid, was it. Faith is what overcomes the world.

(Heb 11:2 KJV) For by it (faith) the elders obtained a good report.

Abraham believed God and he had faith in what God told him, and by that he obtained righteousness. So when faith is moving in your heart, and it is God's faith, motivated by love, you will have a good report. That is really the only way you can obtain a good report. God looks at you and sees whether you are obedient or disobedient, and only those who have faith can be obedient. Those who do not have faith are disobedient. He said that the elders obtained a good report by faith.

Your walk will be a steadfast walk, and a committed walk has to be by faith. No matter what comes or goes, if I have committed my life to Christ, I have to believe that everything that is happening is working together for my good. I may have thought I had it good before, but when God sees that thing and it falls apart because of conditions or circumstances, if I just keep going on with God, He will give me beauty for ashes. It will be a trial of my faith which is tried by fire. Everything burned away, yet before long God has given me beauty for ashes. The oil of joy.

(Isa 61:3 KJV) To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

Look at Heb 11:3:

(Heb 11:3 KJV) 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.

The world studies on evolution, by it is not through faith in God and His word that they do that; they try to prove it by evidence. The Christian does not even have to think about that stuff, because we know how the worlds were formed. We can look through faith at God's word, and we know that is how it happened. We get so upset that we lose our peace and our joy because of the corruptness that is going on in the world. Corrupt men are running it, so it has to be corrupt. If men in darkness can do the good deeds of God, then we have a problem.

I don't know why we get so upset trying to get sinners to believe that God created the world. They can't even believe you for salvation, so how could they believe that God created the world. Let the Lord witness Christ through your life to sinners. Tell them about Jesus. Don't contend with them about how the world was made. They don't see through faith the way we do.

I never try to convince people that God created the world. That is a mystery of faith and they don't have faith so they can't understand a mystery like

that. All I have to do by faith is look at the word of God, and through that faith, understanding comes. It was done just like God said. God the Father spoke it through Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost carried out the orders. That is all it took.

Some scientists are saying there was a big explosion,; the big 'bang' theory. They say there had to be somebody in charge of this thing. Through faith I know who is in charge. The same one who made it is the same one who is going to set it on fire one day.

We get a funny picture of God, don't we. Somehow we think that we have to take the seventh day off because God was tired and He rested in it. The word resting in the Hebrew Conc. #7673 means "to cease and celebrate." He ceased from His work, and He celebrated. What God wants us to do is come into His celebration, but because of unbelief we don't enter into His rest. We still try to take care of a little area of our lives that we think we are in control of. After it becomes a total disaster, then we cry to God for help. If I had given it to God in the first place it would have turned out the way He wanted it to be.

Heb 11:3 says "Through faith we understand." That is the only way we can understand; through faith. We don't look through the natural; we look through faith. When God said it, He didn't have to explain how He did it. All He had to say was, "Let there be"and there was. That is all He has to tell me and it is good enough for me. He doesn't have to tell me how He made that beautiful new heavenly city that is coming down. I just know that it is there. It is a mystery of faith and I look through faith and I know that it is real.

Scientists think they have finally found something new. They are saying that the human body is held together by little invisible protons, neutrons, and electronic systems. The word of God says that God made man out of dust, and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life.

(Gen 2:7 KJV) And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

(Gen 2:21 KJV) And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

(Gen 2:22 KJV) And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

(Gen 2:23 KJV) And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

I am not interested in what the scientists say. I just know that I have to wear this body for a little while, and one of these days I am getting out of it. It can go back to being whatever God wants it to be. I am getting a new body just like His body, and I love it. If you want to understand the mysteries of God, read 2 Cor. the 4th and 5th chapters. There is a house in heaven made for us and it is eternal. It is not made with hands. So through faith I can understand those things. I don't have to go to college for four years, and then to masters college eight more years to find out how the worlds were made, and then get frustrated because I can't prove it. I can prove this. God said it; that settles it.

(Heb 11:4 KJV) By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

The reason that Abel's sacrifice was accepted was because it was made by faith. His testimony hasn't ended yet, has it. Every time you hear someone talk about the Bible, one of the accounts they give is that Cain slew Abel because Abel was righteous. His testimony is still going on. I wonder how long our testimony will last after we pass on. I want to live it by faith so it will hang around for awhile, so my grandchildren and great-grandchildren can remember it. After you leave this body doesn't mean that you quit speaking. It means that the life you lived is speaking more clearly than it ever did when you were alive.

(Heb 11:5 KJV) By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. So faith was back there also, and these men who were living righteously were living by faith. They were offering sacrifices by faith. They were walking with God by faith. Talk about translation power. Enoch was just walking along with God one day, and that was it. Probably people were out looking for him, and they would imagine all kind of things; but he just walked on home with the Lord.

It takes that same kind of faith for us to walk with God. It takes that same kind of faith for us to please God. It takes that same kind of faith for us to be a people who will not see death, for we have been translated; we have passed from death unto life. I am alive now. When they lay this body in the ground or burn it, or whatever they do with it, I don't care. That doesn't bother me. That isn't death; that is a door and I am going out shouting.

Every believer should go out with a real joy in his heart. I don't know if you have seen Christians pass beyond this world, but they don't struggle to stay. They want to go. But a sinner will fight and hold on, bawling and squalling to get one more breath. We want to live in such a way by the faith that God has given

us that when we leave this body it is not death. Hallelujah! It is victory. Death is swallowed up, and the grave has no victory.

(Heb 11:6 KJV) But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

People say, "I come to Church all the time and it doesn't mean anything to God. I gave a million dollars a year, and it doesn't mean a thing to God." It is how you did it. Was your gift given like Abel's gift? Were you walking with God like Enoch? I believe that when people really get saved, the place they want to be is in Church, but if they make excuses to lay out all the time, there is something wrong. Then they want God to bless them. God can't bless them because their commitment is nothing. They are not walking by faith. They are not giving by faith. They are not loving by faith. They are not moving in the realm of God that God wants them to. God wants a people who will walk by faith, live by faith, and think by faith, so when they do anything at all, it is by faith. It is that faith that worketh by love.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Believe that He is; believe that He wants to reward me; believe that He will answer my prayer. He said when you pray, believe that you have received the petition you have asked of Him and you shall have it. Before you go to prayer, thank Him for it, because He has already given it to you if you by faith asked Him for it. Leaders have to be a people who are offering up by faith. They have to be a people who are walking with the Lord by faith. They have to be a people moved by faith.

(Heb 11:7 KJV) By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Faith brings the fear of God. If God ever really speaks to you, you will know it. You will know it is the Holy Spirit. You won't have to say, "I think that is God. I hope..." When God spoke to Noah, it moved him, didn't it. Fear got hold of him, but it was a godly fear. He said, "I had better get busy, because God said there was going to be a flood, and when God says something, it is as good as done. The only way I am going to escape with my family is that we had better do what God tells us to do. We had better be obedient to God and when we do that we are going to see God do something in our lives."

That faith brings the fear of God; it brings salvation. It also brings us into the heirship of righteousness. We have been made righteous. 2 Cor 5:21 says "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Sometimes I ask in Church how many

righteous people we have in there, and people start looking around to see if others are raising their hands before they raise theirs. Faith tells me already that I am righteous, but it is in Christ that I am righteous.

I don't mind saying that. I don't mind telling people that there is a righteous being living in me, because the blood of Jesus has been applied, and the precious Holy Spirit of God lives in me, and there is a new creature in me. If we don't really believe that, then we don't want to start confessing it. Only the righteous can come to the throne of grace by boldness. We are righteous because of His righteousness. We are not worthy of it, but He gives it because He loves us. This is the mystery of faith.

Years ago I made a radio broadcast with a precious brother who followed right behind me, and I wore a tie and a tie-tac and a wristwatch and ring. He was a precious brother, but he wasn't wearing a tie-tac or watch or rings, and He said to me, "Brother Krider, I need to talk to you for awhile." He wanted to talk about me wearing those things. He wouldn't even wear a wedding ring. He would hang around and try to get me converted, but in the end I got him. I said, "Well, brother, I'll listen to you. I want to be right. If there is anything wrong with my ministry or my preaching the word of God like I do, I want you to tell me and you can help me out." He said, "Well, no. You preach good. You preach good (like he couldn't understand how I could preach good with a tie-tac on, or a wristwatch on my arm, or a ring on my finger.)"

We try through our own efforts to make ourselves acceptable unto God by something we either wear or don't wear. Something we either drink or don't drink; or eat or don't eat. A day we keep or don't keep. That doesn't make you acceptable unto God, and it doesn't make you righteous. What makes you righteous is that you have faith in the righteousness of Christ. You believe God and that is accounted unto you for righteousness. Leaders have to wake up until all they are bringing forth is Christ.

(Heb 11:8 KJV) By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

This sounds just like Ruth to me. The commitment was made by faith. The Lord said it, and Abraham did it. He obeyed God, so faith brings obedience. When you have real faith in your heart, you will be obedient. I am not talking about "talking faith." I am talking about living faith, the kind you live by. It brings obedience.

(Heb 11:9 KJV) By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

This promise wasn't to the Jews, because there weren't any Jews yet. The promise was made to Abraham and his seed, and I am part of the seed. The word doesn't say 'seeds'. It says 'seed'; one body, one Lord, one faith. I am of the promise of Abraham. He had to get it by faith. How do I get that same promise? By faith, but the more that faith grows in me, the more of that promise I can enjoy. You don't have to tell me or try to persuade me that it belongs to me. I know it belongs to me. I am already enjoying it.

Before the Jews were, the promise came to Abraham. It is amazing. God brought forth a nation to bring forth a seed to bring forth a nation. He brought forth the nation of Israel to bring forth Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ brought forth the holy nation (1 Peter 2:9). Faith brings the knowledge that we are sojourners here, just passing through. We are heirs of the same promise. We should start enjoying it. It would be terrible to be an heir and have it laying all around me, and I couldn't get hold of it.

(Heb 11:10 KJV) For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

When faith comes, you get a new vision. Paul calls it a heavenly vision. Abraham has a heavenly vision; not only is God going to bless him in the natural, but God has promised to bless him forever. God cares about us. He cares about food for us. He cares about clothes for us. He cares about our transportation. He is not preoccupied with it, and He has already made it available to us. He has already given us all things that pertain to life and godliness, but faith is the key that unlocks all of those things to me. You start looking for eternal things when faith starts moving in your heart.

(Heb 11:11 KJV) Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

That is what faith does for you; it judges Him faithful. You no longer try to work in your faithfulness. You start working in His faithfulness. He is faithful who promised. If He promised you that your household will be saved, you might as well relax. You might as well start serving God with all your heart, and shouting the victory and rejoicing in the Lord, because it is done if we are faithful. Our problem is that we believe God said that, but somehow we think we have to work it out so it will work.

If someone gave you a million dollars and put it in the bank with your name on it, and all you have to do is go down to the bank and get it, you would be down there tonight, waiting for the bank to open in the morning. You have the letter, it is notarized, the person's signature is on it, you know the man personally, and he has promised that to you. You would believe that he was faithful to put that money in there, wouldn't you. I don't believe you would sit around and say, "Oh, I

am not worthy of that million dollars. He is a nice fellow and I really love him, but I can't take that money because I am not worthy."

Isn't that the way we act with God. "Who am I that God would save my children?" Well, I am the seed of the righteous. The same faithful that promised Abraham, is the same faithful that promised me, and I don't care what it looks like, what it sounds like, what it feels like, when God spoke it, it was an established truth and it will be manifested in due season. God's storehouse is always open, twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, because He that keeps you neither sleeps or slumbers. He is just waiting for your call. Waiting for you to ask. And when you ask, believe that you have received the petition that you asked of Him.

You can get into a rest with God if you want to. Not only do you count Him faithful, but impossible things become possible with faith. That is what happens when faith comes. With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. I can all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Is that just words or is that faith talking? If that is faith talking, then that is alive to me.

(Heb 11:12 KJV) Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.

"...him as good as dead." He was already one hundred years old, but multiplication begins to happen when we have faith. On the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out, Peter got up under the anointing of the Holy Spirit and began to speak and preach a message. He preached like he had never preached before, and the Holy Ghost began to flow out of him like rivers of living water, and three thousand men asked him what they must do to be saved.

Multiplication happens when we start speaking words of faith, living the life of faith, seeing through the eye of faith, and it is no longer just little us, it is the big body of Christ. I thank God that He is going to put together whomsoever pleases Him. It is not a decreasing in the sense of the Spirit. It is an increasing.

(Heb 11:13 KJV) These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

When faith comes, persuasion comes, embracing the things of God comes, and confession of the things of God becomes a reality. Then people can see by the things that you say and the life that you live, the things which you are plainly seeking. We need to be that people as Leaders who declare our faith. The three Hebrew young men faced certain death unless they would compromise and bow down and worship the image, but their testimony was not that they were afraid,

but that their God was able to deliver them. Because of their faith, the Lord God appeared with fire and a lion, and He helped Daniel. He was probably the only person in the land who slept good that night. I can see him fluffing up one lion and putting it under his head, and fluffing up another lion and putting it over him. It makes a difference and brings persuasion that your God is able. Lions and fire don't mean anything; it doesn't make any difference what is going on, my God is able to deliver me. But whether He delivers me this way or that way, one thing is for sure, He is going to deliver me out of the enemies hands.

(Heb 11:14 KJV) For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

(Heb 11:15 KJV) And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

Paul said, "Forgetting those things which are behind." You can't go forward always remembering what it could have been, or 'what if'; or if I had one more chance; if I could do it over again. You can't go forward thinking that way. Whatever has been done up to this day, is done. Forget those things behind. Don't even be mindful of it any more. Start pressing forward, reaching onward. Start reaching into the things of God, pressing into the kingdom of God, and saying hallelujah, yesterday is gone and I can't change it, but today I can live for God and reach into the promises of God, and I can see things recreated anew for me. Amen!

(Heb 11:16 KJV) But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

A change takes place, doesn't it. Heavenly vision begins to take place. Heavenly things begin to occupy your mind. God hath prepared for them a city. We find in Rev 21:2 that John saw that city as a bride prepared for her bridegroom. That city was just as real in their minds and hearts as any city they had ever been in. Their whole life now was in a journey; everything about them was on a journey forward. Everything behind them was gone. Everything was new in front of them. So by their lifestyle and the way they spoke, it was plain to see that they were looking for a better country; a heavenly country. God is not ashamed to be called their God and He prepared a city. Look what Jesus said in John 14:1-3:

(John 14:1 KJV) Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

(John 14:2 KJV) In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

(John 14:3 KJV) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

So God is a God that prepares, isn't He. God is a God that makes provision. One of the names of God is a God who provides. He is a provider. So God wants us to realize that there is not anything going to happen in our lives that God hasn't already prepared a provision for. We say, "Boy, was I lucky. Look how good fortune smiled on me." It wasn't that at all. God prepared it for you. 1 Cor 10:13 says:

(1 Cor 10:13 KJV) There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

God will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, and will also make a way to escape.

(Heb 11:17 KJV) By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.

Faith brings you to the place where you offer up everything to God. You offer up your family. You offer up your business. You offer up your livelihood. You give it all to God and let Him make the best decisions. I know that Abraham knew he was coming back with Isaac because he said, "You servants wait here. The lad and I are going up here to worship God, and WE shall return" (Gen 22:5). He didn't know how God was going to do it; that wasn't his business. How God was going to restore wasn't going to be a real problem because He had given Isaac to him when he was past age anyway. Everything you have gotten from God, you have gotten it because of His grace, not because you earned it. It was a mystery of faith that we even got saved.

(Heb 11:18 KJV) Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

That is an amazing thing. He was going to have to kill Isaac, but God had already given him a promise regarding his seed, and that seed was Isaac.

(Gen 13:14 KJV) And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

(Gen 13:15 KJV) For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

(Gen 13:16 KJV) And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

Abraham knew that Isaac had a place in God's plan. We also have a place in God's plan. Remember Romans 8:28: "All things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to His purpose." God has a purpose and a plan for your life. No matter what is going on, faith tells us that God has a plan and that plan is going to be perfect. If God has promised you something, you can rest on it. It will come to pass just exactly and as surely as God has said it.

I don't care what anybody else does, but when God said this to you, "I have made a promise and this is what is going to happen," you might as well just go ahead and march on. Everything may fall apart one hundred times before you get there, but just keep going on. The trouble is that we stop where it falls apart, and we get busy trying to put it back together. When we think we succeeded we found out that we had part B joined to part Z . We had to take it all apart and put it together again.

Did you ever put a model airplane together for the kids? My son was little and he said, "Dad, would you help me build an airplane." I said, "There is nothing to it." We got the kit and he said, "Dad, here are the instructions." I said, "No problem. I don't need them. I've built a thousand of them." I did a good job on that thing. I was really proud of myself. We got the cockpit and glued it on, and I got everything put together, and my little son came in and he said, "What is that part, Dad?" "What part?" "That little man there." "That's the pilot." He said, "How do you get him in there, Dad?" Good question! You take it apart; that's how you get it in there. He wasn't satisfied until I got the pilot in there. When I got through with it, it looked horrible.

That is what we do with our life. We don't take the instruction by faith that it is all working together for our good; we are going to help God piece it together. About the time we get the last two pieces together, we find out that we forgot to put the first piece in, so we spend all our life tearing down and building up. Now when it falls apart I just leave it there and say, "God, make out of it whatever You want to. I have things to do for You," and I just go on down the road. God is saying that He is looking for Leaders who can live by faith, who will walk by faith, think by faith, and be motivated by the faith of God.

(Heb 11:19 KJV) Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

We need to have resurrection thinking. We need to have life thoughts. We need to have in our hearts those thoughts that are life orientated. This man of God realized that he received this promised son after he was already one hundred years old. The impossible had become possible, but when God said it, he believed it. He never even staggered at the weakness of his own body or considered it, but he counted Him as being faithful who promised.

We need Leaders today who are not looking at their strength or their ability, but they are looking at Him who is faithful, He that promised. I don't care how old or how weak or how feeble you seem to be, it is going to be God who fulfils the promise in your life.

*(Heb 11:20 KJV) **By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.***

We find out that the blessing is really imparted by faith. Sometimes you look at your children and it doesn't look like they are going in the right direction. It doesn't look like everything is really working out the right way, but faith says bless them. Let the blessing of God be upon them, for by faith you can begin to impart blessing to your family.

*(Heb 11:21 KJV) **By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.***

Blessing and worship even in old age, comes by faith. You need to go back and read all of these accounts because they are tremendous. The last thing he wanted to do was to worship the Lord, not complain about his physical being or his weakness. He is blessing and praising God. That is what faith does. Faith doesn't look at the weakness of our body, but it looks at God, and believes that God is blessed when we worship and honor Him. So we need to begin to realize that.

*(Heb 11:22 KJV) **By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.***

By faith there is an assurance that there is better place. He didn't want to be buried down there in Egypt, because the resurrection was going to happen in Jerusalem. He wanted to be buried in the promised land. He wanted to be buried where the blessing of God was. So by faith, he looked for something better. He wanted to be buried where the resurrection would take place. Even though he was dead and his bones were bleached, they carried his bones out of Egypt.

Our problem is that we don't see beyond what we call death. We need to begin to live by faith and see beyond death. See beyond to what God has prepared for us; then we can go on and begin to say, "I am looking for something better. I have a better place in God than this."

(Heb 11:23 KJV) By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

Faith delivers you from fear. That is why the enemy doesn't want you in the word of God. The hearing of the word brings faith, and as that faith grows in your life, soon there is no longer fear in there. When it tries to get hold of you, you will say as David did, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in the Lord." If a bad report comes, you don't even listen to it. You just start trusting in the Lord. Faith will bring a deliverance from fear. We need this especially in Leadership. Money can't do it. Position can't do it. Nothing in the world can do it but faith. When that faith works in there, fear has no room to work. We need our whole life saturated with faith. Now let's look at Heb 11:31:

(Heb 11:31 KJV) By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

So faith also delivers from death. The Bible tells us that in the last days men's hearts would fail them from fear of the things that are coming upon the earth. Fear has torment. It can lead you into stress. It can lead you into a heart attack. It can lead you into ulcers. It can lead you into all kinds of things, but faith leads you into deliverance and healing. It leads you into a place where you are walking in the abundance of God. It comes by faith. The harlot Rahab believed, didn't she. Look at Romans 4:21-25. This is speaking of Abraham again:

(Rom 4:21 KJV) And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

He believed that what God had promised He was able to perform. It wasn't in his strength so he had to rely on God. He just settled into faith and said, "OK, I'll just wait until it happens.

(Rom 4:22 KJV) And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

(Rom 4:23 KJV) Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him;

(Rom 4:24 KJV) But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

If you believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, it is imputed to you, isn't it.

(Rom 4:25 KJV) Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

(Rom 10:8 KJV) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

(Rom 5:1 KJV) Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

I wasn't justified by works; I was justified by faith. The moment you believed in the finished work of Jesus Christ, He justified you because you believed. He justified those before the cross by the resurrection, glory to God, and that same justification works for us.

(Rom 5:2 KJV) By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

We find out that we are justified by faith, we have peace with God, we have access into His grace, we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

(Acts 16:5 KJV) And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

If the Church is going to be established, it cannot be established in men's wisdom, men's doctrines, men's intellect, men's emotions, men's feelings. It is going to have to be established in the faith. When that takes place, it will increase in number daily. Let's look at Galatians 3:22-29:

(Gal 3:22 KJV) But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Every one of us who is saved, started off even. Every man had sinned and come short of the glory of God, so God had concluded all of us under sin that salvation would come through faith.

(Gal 3:23 KJV) But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

There was a time when the Bible said there was no open vision any more (1 Sam 3:1). Isn't that something. The law had come, and that was it. It was just words to keep from getting destroyed, because all the law could work was wrath.

If you sinned, you had to bring in an offering. If you sinned the wrong sin, they took a bunch of rocks and stoned you to death. So there wasn't any justification in that, was there. The faith was kept until Jesus Christ came, because He is the author and the finisher of our faith. I am glad that some guy didn't just write this; I am glad God had Jesus Christ be the author and finisher of it. They couldn't be made perfect without us.

(Gal 3:24 KJV) Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

(Gal 3:25 KJV) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

(Gal 3:26 KJV) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

I love that, don't you? Aren't you glad there are no dues that you have to come up with, like belonging to some union, where you have to come up with some dues every month? Even when you are not working, you still have to pay dues. It is kind of like the law. You had to perform it even when you couldn't.

(Gal 3:27 KJV) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

(Gal 3:28 KJV) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

(Gal 3:29 KJV) And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Look what he does here. He brings everything in the Spirit that God is going to work through. It is in the Spirit and not the flesh. We wear a male or female body, but in Christ we are a new creature, and God can use either of us. If we are available in Christ, He dissolves all of that away and He makes us ONE in Christ. Then we become one of the many members in the body. God can use any member that is available for Him to use.

If we are Christ's then we are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. No longer was it through a certain tribe; Levi, or Judah, or any of these other tribes. This was not going to be the way that you came into the covenant relationship with God. You would come through the blood of Jesus by faith. When you did, you entered into an eternal relationship with Christ.

Somebody asked me how old I was, and I said I didn't know. I was born in my Father's heart before the foundation of the world, so you can reckon it from there. I just woke up to it one day. So did you. He chose you in Christ from before the foundation of the world. He has a purpose for your life.

(Gal 5:6 KJV) For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

(Phil 1:25 KJV) And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

Do you mean that faith has joy? Oh yes! When you ask in faith believing, joy enters into your heart. When you know that you are doing what God wants you to do, there is a joy in your heart. Hallelujah! No matter what the situation may look like, there is a joy, and that joy is your strength.

(Phil 1:26 KJV) That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

(Phil 1:27 KJV) Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

The faith! Not many faiths. The faith of the gospel. There is only one way, one faith, one Saviour, and He is Jesus Christ the Lord. That gospel brings faith, because it is the hearing of the word of God that bringeth faith. We should rejoice. Without the gospel coming to you, you have no faith.

(2 Th 1:11 KJV) Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power;

When that faith starts working, it couples together with a thing called power. Faith is not dead. Faith is not idle; faith is not something that is just dormant. Faith is alive and moving continually in our hearts, because we live by that faith now. Paul says in Gal 2:20, "I am crucified, nevertheless I live, yet not I. It is Christ that liveth in me, and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live it by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God."

When that faith begins to work in your heart, it is coupled together with power. When you pray the prayer of faith, that is a work. Paul said, "I labored in prayer and fasting." He labored because it was faith inspiring him to pray because he knew that God heard him. There is no sense praying if you don't believe that God hears you. Let's look at 1 Tim:

(1 Tim 1:1 KJV) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;

(1 Tim 1:2 KJV) Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Leaders, we need to be producing children in the faith. Paul identified with this man, Timothy, as his own son in the faith.

(1 Tim 1:3 KJV) As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

(1 Tim 1:4 KJV) Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

I can't edify you unless I am doing it in faith. I can entertain you and tickle your ears, but I cannot edify you unless it is done by faith, because it takes faith in your heart to receive what the faith in my heart is saying to you. He told Timothy not to spend all of his time with this other stuff.

(1 Tim 1:5 KJV) Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

Faith unfeigned: solid faith, true faith. Not fake faith. Not faith that is there one moment and gone the next. Real faith!

(2 Tim 1:5 KJV) When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Paul is calling to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in Timothy; that solid faith, true faith. You pass on whatever is in you. Timothy is ready to quit. He is afraid of what people are saying about him. He is backing off from his calling. He is receiving accusations against elders, and all manner of things. So Paul wrote him this letter and begins to exhort him to stir up the gift that is in him. He reminds him that he knows what is in him because it was in his grandmother and mother. It is in your children and your grandchildren. That is why the word of God says that your seeds seed shall be blessed upon the earth. Get excited about that. Don't worry about passing on something else, but you can pass on faith.

(1 Tim 1:6 KJV) From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

(1 Tim 1:7 KJV) Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

They are turning from that faith, aren't they.

(1 Tim 1:8 KJV) But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

(1 Tim 1:9 KJV) Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

(1 Tim 1:10 KJV) For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

(1 Tim 1:11 KJV) According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

I have to be righteous or I fall in one of these categories. I truly believe that when the book is opened at the white throne judgment, the law will be there. It is fulfilled for us because God brought us out from under the curse of the law. But a man that has never accepted Christ is still under the curse of the law.

(1 Tim 1:12 KJV) And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

God put Paul into the ministry because He found Paul faithful.

(1 Tim 1:13 KJV) Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

(1 Tim 1:14 KJV) And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

There is an exceeding abundance when faith comes into your life. When that faith is coupled together with love, then you begin to understand the exceeding abundance of God.

(1 Tim 1:15 KJV) This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

(1 Tim 1:16 KJV) Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

(1 Tim 1:17 KJV) Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

(1 Tim 1:18 KJV) This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

(1 Tim 1:19 KJV) Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

The only way you are going to be able to fight a good warfare is by holding faith and a good conscience. You can't go out here and fight the enemy on your own abilities. You can't just quote a bunch of scriptures to him because if there is no spirit and life in them the enemy recognizes that. He can quote scripture but there is no spirit or life in it (Matt 4:6). But when Jesus spoke those words, "It is written," He wasn't just quoting them. He was bringing them alive. When you speak those scriptures, if the Holy Ghost is in there and you are walking in faith, they are made alive the minute you speak it. "Which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"

(1 Tim 1:20 KJV) Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

This is three people that I know of according to scripture, that Paul has turned over to Satan. He turned these two men over that they may learn not to blaspheme.

(1 Tim 3:9 KJV) Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

(1 Tim 4:6 KJV) If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

There is nourishment in the words of faith. When you get down you should start reading the word of God. Don't start telling people how bad it is; just get in there and read the word of God. Words of faith will begin to nourish you and wash over you, and soon you will feel your strength being renewed. We have to have ministries that are doing that.

(1 Tim 6:12 KJV) Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Fight the good fight of faith. It is a warfare, isn't it. You can look and see when things are seemingly adverse to you, or you can hear a report of things going bad. That is when you have to fight the good fight of faith. When you are going along and nothing is pressuring you and nothing coming against you, you just go along with the flow. You know you are saved and on your way to heaven, so hallelujah!

All of a sudden everything comes apart, and you can see it and hear it and feel it. What are you going to do? Are you going to give into that, or are you going to fight a good fight of faith. When you do that what happens? Let's read on:

(2 Tim 4:7 KJV) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

Paul was in a fight and he knew it, but it was a good fight. It was a fight that he won. You always win when you fight in faith. The devil says, "I'll tell you how it is going to be" and you need to say, "I am not talking to you. God knows how it is going to be, and that settles it."

(Heb 4:2 KJV) For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

We spoke on that earlier, but I wanted to show you that the gospel can be preached but if there is no faith in there, it will not profit you. You can sit in Church every Sunday morning and not be changed, but when you sit where the word of God is preached or taught or read with faith mixed with that, it will profit you. I want to be in the profit ledger with God. I want to be in the abundance side.

(Heb 10:22 KJV) Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

The only way you can draw near to God is in full assurance of faith. You have to believe that He wants you to do that. The enemy says, "Look how bad you are. God doesn't want to hear you. You blew it and you are awful." That is the time when you need the full assurance of faith. That is the time when you need to know the word of God. In my flesh there dwelleth no good thing, but God wants me to draw nigh unto Him and resist the devil and he will flee far from me. Hallelujah! So God wants us to draw near to Him, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

(Heb 10:23 KJV) Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

We need to say, "Yes, this is what the word says, and that is it. I don't need to debate it with you or turn it over and examine it. **IT MEANS WHAT IT SAYS, FOR HE IS FAITHFUL THAT PROMISED.**" That is why we can hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. Our faith has connected us to His faithfulness. I am not saved by my ability. There are times when I get up that I don't feel saved, and I have to remind myself. Then that profession begins to happen in my heart that I am a child of God, no matter how I feel. On my worst day He loves me as much as on my best day. Praise God!

(Heb 12:2 KJV) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

JESUS IS THE AUTHOR AND THE FINISHER OF OUR FAITH.

(Heb 13:7 KJV) Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

How can I follow your faith? If you have spoken the word of God in faith, believing it is truth, it is very easy to follow you because your faith will line up with the word of God.

(James 2:1 KJV) My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

In other words, this faith is to be a faith like the love of God without dissimulation of persons. It doesn't make any difference what their aspect in life is.

(James 2:2 KJV) For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

(James 2:3 KJV) And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

(James 2:4 KJV) Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

(James 2:5 KJV) Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

I am rich and an heir of the kingdom. Praise God. You can't look on the outward man and see it.

(James 2:6 KJV) But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

(James 2:7 KJV) Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

(James 2:8 KJV) If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

(James 2:9 KJV) But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

(James 2:10 KJV) For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

(James 2:11 KJV) For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

(James 2:12 KJV) So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

We are not judged then by the law! We are judged by the law of liberty. But if I start going back over here and bringing people under that law, I will become a respecter of persons and I will be judged by that same law. I would rather be justified by faith, wouldn't you, so we must speak and do as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

(James 2:13 KJV) For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

(James 2:14 KJV) What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

(James 2:15 KJV) If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

(James 2:16 KJV) And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

(James 2:17 KJV) Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

Faith is not dormant, so bragging about having faith will not get the job done.

(James 2:18 KJV) Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.

(James 2:19 KJV) Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

(James 2:20 KJV) But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

(James 2:21 KJV) Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

(James 2:22 KJV) Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

He had faith wrought with his works, and his faith was made perfect. Complete, entire. We can say, "I love you," but if we can stand by and see a brother or a sister in need and spend our substance on ourselves or others who don't need it, then we become partial. God wants a people in Leadership who have real faith, motivated by love and producing the works of faith, not the works of flesh. You don't have to produce works to prove your love for God. Faith will produce those works. If faith is in your heart, sooner or later it will produce the works.

(James 5:15 KJV) And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

So there is a prayer of faith. This word says the prayer of faith SHALL SAVE the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. Also his sins shall be forgiven him.

(2 Pet 1:1 KJV) Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

The only way he got that precious faith was through the righteousness of God and Jesus Christ. God didn't give you faith because you looked good or you had position. God made you a partaker of His divine grace and faith, because you said, "Yes, Lord. I believe, Lord." Now that faith needs to grow. It needs to be nurtured by the washing of the water of the word until it grows.

(1 John 5:4 KJV) For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

We say, "Oh, things are bad. If I just had a little more, I could make it." No, all we need is a little more faith. All we need is that pure faith, that faith that attaches us to the faithfulness of God. I like how Jesus simply said to them: "If you had a little faith." He spoke to them a lot of times about having just a little faith, and that would be enough, because that little faith would attach you to the great faith, the fulness of God. It takes pure faith to touch a pure God. Unfeigned faith is what we need, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." We are born of God; we are born from above (John 1:12-13).

(John 1:12 KJV) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

(John 1:13 KJV) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

We are born of the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh (continues to overcome) the world. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It is not our position, not our ministry; it is OUR FAITH, because our faith is coupled together with His FAITHFULNESS. That is unshakable. When the faithfulness of God moves on a situation, it is all over with.

(Jude 1:3 KJV) Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

Sometimes we have to contend for that faith. Everything else comes into our life and moves into our being and into our way, and what are we supposed to contend for. We are supposed to contend for the faith. It is THE FAITH! It is not faiths, plural. God wants us to realize that He wants us to come to a place where this faith is alive in our hearts, and we begin to contend for that faith EARNESTLY.

It is the earnestly that God is looking at in our hearts. Situations come into our lives, and you have two choices, but you have to choose one. One choice says to believe what you see and give up and hope for a better day. The other choice tells you to get hold of faith, and release your faith and let go. Move into faith. Connect up with the faithfulness of God, because God is getting ready to do something in your life.

It is usually when you are having the hardest battles that your faith seems to get way out from you. You get all wrapped up in the battle, don't you. Thank God, His faithfulness is still there just waiting for you to connect. When you look at the circumstances and you say to this mountain, "Be removed," that is where that faith connects with His faithfulness. I have to contend for that at times. It is easy to believe when nothing is going on. It is easy to believe for healing when I am healthy. It is easy to believe for a slice of baloney when I have ten pounds of it in the refrigerator. When I go to the refrigerator and I don't have any money or even a slice of baloney, that is when I have to connect with His faithfulness. I have to quit looking at an empty refrigerator and begin to look at a God who said, "I WILL SUPPLY YOUR NEED ACCORDING TO MY RICHES IN GLORY BY CHRIST JESUS."

Connect up with that. Contend for that faith. Contend for that word. Contend for that power that is in that faith to connect you up with God. "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." It has been delivered. It is not yet to come; it is here now. It was delivered to the saints, and that is their property. It belongs to them. God gave that to us also, because it was delivered to the saints, and that includes us.

(Jude 1:20 KJV) But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

If you want to have big muscles and a slim body, you have to commit to building up your body, don't you. You exercise faithfully and diet. You are committed to get slim and you spend time doing that. It is like that in the spirit for us. We have to spend time with God. We have to spend time in the exercise room with the Lord. We have to spend time not only contending for the faith, but building ourselves up. Confessing the word of God. Believing the word of God. Stirring up the gift that is in you. We are prone to get lazy as Christians. It is easy to just say, "The Lord is coming; let's just kick back and take our ease." Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion (Amos 6:1).

God wants a strong army, a powerful army, and the backbone of that army is going to be faith through the Holy Spirit. They will receive their orders from headquarters and their faith is going to link up with the faithfulness of God, and God will say, "Go forth in the name of the Lord." But those who have not exercised themselves, those who haven't built themselves up on their holy faith, are going to have some problems.

"Praying in the Holy Ghost." You may not have the gift of tongues, but he is not only talking about praying in tongues here. Paul said, "I pray in my spirit, and I pray with understanding." Jesus spoke plainly and said, "Father, I know that you always hear me." He is talking about living, walking in the Spirit of God, where your thoughts are consumed by Him, for the words of your mouth are Spirit words. Then you are talking in the Holy Ghost. I believe in praying in tongues, and I love it. But there is a time that you need to realize that God wants you to walk in the Spirit, so when you pray with understanding it will still be the Holy Ghost doing the praying.

We just don't want to build up ourselves in the Lord. It is too much work. We don't want prayer meetings. "What are you calling a prayer meeting for. Is somebody dying or something?" We need to call a prayer meeting to build ourselves up. Leaders have to be able to build themselves up in the faith. That holy faith has to be your foundation, but you have to build on that faith. You have to learn. It is going to take time to labor in prayer.

When I was in the service, I had a friend who lifted weights. When it came six o'clock in the evening you couldn't even talk to him. He was in the gymnasium. We didn't have all of that fancy stuff. He just had the big barbells, and dumb-bells, but you couldn't talk to him from six o'clock until eight o'clock. That was the time he set apart to build his physical body up. How much time do we set apart to build on our most Holy Faith?

God wants to force us to be built up strong in the Lord. I pray that you will feel that you have profited by this message, and that things are starting to be manifested in your life. We need to be a people that know we are called and we have a vision. We have knowledge of God, God knowledge, and we are speaking the truth in love and living and walking in faith. Wouldn't you like to be in Leadership when the revival comes? The only qualifications are those we have learned in this study. If you take it to heart and begin to practice it, begin to see God move in your life, you will see God do some wonderful things for you. I want to be one of those who live and move, and have my being in Christ Jesus (Acts 17:28); where I speak to the Lord and He hears me. If you have a little faith, that is enough for right now, but it must be pure faith, moved by love. Connect up with the faithfulness of God. Heaven and earth are at your beckoning when you connect up with the faithfulness of God.

Father, we thank You. Lord, we love You and we thank You. Our desire as Leaders is to really become a family, to work together in unity and harmony, so we can teach the weak ones who are in need of help; being able to succour them Father, even as You did for us. We thank You for being our Teacher. You have given us so much, so many good and wonderful truths that you have given into all our lives where we can be

Leaders who can lead others. People who can be trusted to be used of You. It isn't by power or might. I am sure we all know that, but we are also ever mindful that without faith it is impossible to please You.

We have the opportunity now from this moment on to build on that most Holy Faith. We have the opportunity to begin to build in such a way that You can be glorified in our hearts and lives and in our minds. Lord, we want to be good and faithful stewards. We want to live in the faith, walk in the faith, speak words of faith, think thoughts of faith, and by that we continually overcome the world, for we are born of God and our faith overcometh the world.

We are excited about the signs of Your coming. We are excited about the signs of a great revival. Lord, we want to be found faithful doing what You have bid us to do. God, strengthen us; help us to become good Leaders, so we can encourage others. In Jesus mighty name we pray. Amen!