

Steps to:

I AM CONSCIOUSNESS

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Where Wonders Never Cease

A Handbook for Walking in the Presence and Power of Holy Spirit

STEPS 1-12

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PREFACE

This is the beginning of a book that I believe will be less than one hundred pages long. As with a previous one, *Unlocking the Treasure Chest of God's Gifts*, I am writing it anonymously and I have just a small clue where this little journey will take us. Since I have a small, but rapidly growing e-mail list of readers that for the most part is made up of people that have "come out" of organized Christianity, I doubt that I will have the frustration *Treasure Chest* caused me.

That frustration ended when I finally decided to no longer respond to arguments from the professional clergy and, perhaps as a result, *Treasure Chest* "took off" miraculously. It is currently being translated into several languages (besides English) and has already been read by thousands of people.

Treasure Chest has never been formally published. I have e-mailed it free of charge as an attachment to hundreds of people that requested it literally from all over the globe. Many of those people have downloaded and printed out fifty and more copies and have mailed or handed them out to others at their own expense. Many that have received these printed copies have written to share the changes that little book has brought about in their lives.

I began writing *Treasure Chest* at the urging of several people that had received healing, deliverance and witnessed other signs and wonders as well as had their eyes opened to a simple truth, that is, just as Jesus said, "anyone that believes in me will do the very same things you have seen me do," because the Father in her or him will do those things and even greater things than Jesus did. The reason I wrote *Treasure Chest* anonymously was to focus the attention away from what "good" "bad," or who I am perceived to be "in the flesh" and onto the real Source of the miracles which isn't "me" anyway. "I" don't perform miracles, the Father in me, however, does perform miracles. The point is that, just as Jesus instructed, anyone that is willing to follow a few simple (not easy) steps can be in the same position to do the very same things in the presence and power of God's own Spirit that "he" did or "I" have done. Therefore, it makes no difference what name my earthly parents decided to place on this body bag I occupy anyway. Thus – *anonymous*.

Furthermore, I can say that "I" did not write this little book, the Father in me wrote it. Why on earth would I want to put my name on it and mess it all up?

I don't and I am not going to. Besides, the steps will be provided so anyone that has the desire can write their own little book anonymously. Get it?

I AM

FORWARD

There are three points I want to emphasize:

1. That Jesus clearly said anyone that truly believed in him (and in context did what he said to do) would perform the very same miracles that he performed. There are no qualifications that a person can receive from men (and from my point of view, academic preparation and qualifications from men are a detriment to the process) that will enable anyone to be and do what Jesus said we will be able to do. Being “good” from a human perspective is also not a prerequisite to our destiny and heritage. In fact being “good,” according to religious or humanistic standards, is probably also a detriment. We will examine why this is true farther along in the book. One thing Jesus said that is overlooked by religious teachers is, “Why do you call me good? Only one is good, God.”
2. That much of the “healing” which took place during Jesus’ “ministry” was primarily due to two factors. The “faith” of the individual receiving his or her healing and from the evil spirits or “demons” that were causing the problem being cast out of the individual. Certainly there is no instance in the Gospel records that Jesus “prayed” specifically for anyone to be healed and one of the stumbling blocks for people steeped in religion is that they believe they must “pray” for somebody to receive physical healing and are always puzzled by the dismal failure of their prayer (with rare exceptions) to get any results.
3. The primary preparation to becoming what Jesus was as a human being and doing what he did while on this plane is following his example and his instructions about how to “pray.” Further that fasting is an essential part of the preparation. His instructions are simple and to the point. The reason that his instructions are not easy to follow has to do with religious preconceptions caused in the main by the easily proven mistranslation into English from what he said in the original languages. The destiny Jesus proclaimed in the original language is that **ANYONE** wanting to pursue what it takes to **BE** (not imitate) Jesus can and will **BE** Jesus Christ incarnate. **ANYONE** can do the same kinds of things Jesus did because of the awareness of who and what we are. The process of becoming aware will be dealt with in Step One. Hint: It won’t happen if you don’t believe that it is possible.

For me it took much fasting and prayer as intimated in number 3 above to break through into that awareness. Some argue that neither fasting nor prayer is necessary and perhaps they are correct. However, I can truly say that nobody I know personally has ever broken into the awareness of **I AM** within and being able to say along with Jesus, “before there was an Abraham, **I AM**,” did so until they spent a significant amount of time praying and fasting. My retort to those who insist upon arguing that it isn’t necessary is this: If Jesus found fasting and prayer a necessary thing for him to do, how can we ignore it as a means to becoming him? I feel compelled to add however, “with God all things are possible.” I certainly do not want to be a stumbling block by saying that my experience is the only way, but I also feel compelled to share my own experiences and the experiences of others who walk in the miraculous. What I have said I have said and I am not open to further discussion or argument. If this isn’t for you, there is probably little value in reading any further.

Ready to take some steps toward **I AM** consciousness? Let’s move on.

STEP ONE

“A long journey begins with the first step” may be an old adage, but it is especially appropriate for the goal we’re going to call “**I AM** awareness.” The challenge in taking a first step is to make sure that step is in the direction *toward* the goal – not away from it. The next challenge is the recognition that “**I AM** awareness” is a goal on a horizontal plane NOT vertical.

The foregoing paragraph is far more important than we may realize at first glance. Because of religious preconception most of us unconsciously or subconsciously think about spiritual progress as a move “upward.”

Even Jesus declared that we are on a level playing field. Think about it. “Don’t let anyone call you by any title that implies spiritual superiority or authority. And don’t you refer to anyone else by any such title either. There is only one leader and teacher, the Christ. There is only one Father and he is in the unseen realm.”

Jesus then emphasized the foregoing by saying, “NO! Each of you is to minister to one another in the same equality as brothers and sisters are equal.”

It is so simple as to be mind boggling. We cannot take the first step along the path toward “**I AM** awareness” until we turn our back on religious hierarchy. Organized Christian churches and all facsimiles are all a direct violation of Jesus’ clear edict, notwithstanding some of “The Apostle” Paul’s statements that seem to be contrary and are interpreted and used by spiritual “leaders” to bolster their own positions. Positions, again, that Jesus said not to take.

Why should whatever Jesus said be so important? The answer to that question is quite simple and contained in his own words: “What is the point of referring to me as ‘Lord,’ if you don’t also do as I say?”

Stubborn arguments against what Jesus said on the basis of something Paul *seemed* to say relative to “apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers” – and that it is even a “good” thing to have ambition to be a church leader – are all conscious or unconscious rebellion against what Jesus clearly said.

What becomes truly amazing about the foregoing paragraph as we become aware of it is, if on the one hand someone proclaims that Jesus is “the Christ,” but on the other hand is in rebellion against his clear command, could we

not call such rebellion anti-Christ? If we dwell on that premise for a moment we can reasonably ask, what spirit is behind organized Christianity? Is it “going too far” to ask such questions?

If someone does not refer to Jesus the Christ as “Lord” – then following or even attempting to follow what he said is superfluous to everyday living anyway. That’s the point! *Being* what Jesus was and *doing* what Jesus did can hardly be termed in a practical sense as “everyday living.” Is it fair to say that some, or even many that are mired in organized Christianity do refer to Jesus the Christ as “Lord?” As Jesus himself said, what’s the point? This is not legalism over a minor point, but is basic to going beyond religion to living in the presence and power of God’s own Spirit.

In *Treasure Chest* I told the true story about a fellow that had been amazed to see some signs, wonders and dramatic healings take place and asked me why he couldn’t do these things. I had already received the revelation of his problem. I told him that it was because he was referring to some man as his “pastor.” His first step from where he was towards **I AM** awareness was a rather intriguing and loudly vocal prayer he uttered in a restaurant where we met. The catalyst was when I showed him Jesus’ words in his Bible. He closed his eyes and said, loudly, “Jesus Christ, from this day forward you are my only pastor!” He stopped and exclaimed, “Did you hear that? It was a huge whoosh like the sound of a huge blanket being ripped away from over my head!” That was the beginning of him and the man he had formerly referred to as “his pastor” moving in the miraculous, but only after they both left the large church to which he was an “elder.”

Am I suggesting that “coming out” from the organized church (and any facsimile that has a recognizable hierarchy) is the only prime prerequisite to living in the presence and power of God’s Spirit? Not at all, but it was the first step for me and for many others. The universal first step is declaring to our one and only Leader, Teacher and Father that we want to follow His leading and guidance in every situation. Then to continually ask Him, what next? For some that may be to stay in organized Christianity at God’s (not man’s) direction.

This becomes simple once we get past getting our advice from human beings (no matter how well intentioned and learned they may be). The first step to **I AM** awareness is getting in tune with **I AM** by declaration to **I AM** of wanting to be one with **I AM** and getting instructions from **I AM** alone.

Now then, for some of us it is a stretch to stop thinking of **I AM** being *outside* ourselves and to recognize that **I AM** dwells within.

To underscore the foregoing I feel compelled to visit a passage from the New Testament book of Acts. This passage was insidiously mistranslated originally by the translators of the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible. Many later translations have maintained the false tradition fostered by the KJV. What is the tradition? Let’s look at the English translation found in almost every translation since the KJV was first printed.

“For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Those assembled together, missing where Jesus was going with these words, asked, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

And he said to them,

“It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has placed in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and to the final days of the earth.”

What these words of Jesus are unmistakably saying in the original language is, “When you are immersed in the presence of Holy Spirit you will have miracle working power and others will see me because you will no longer be you, but me.” How did we get from this to the other? Some scholars suggest that the KJV translators were under duress by the threat of King James to maintain the Roman tradition and were afraid that they would lose their heads (literally) by order of the king) if they strayed from the traditions he favored. That tradition was that a baptism in/with/by Holy Spirit results in a person being enabled to talk about Jesus Christ, *i.e.*, “witness.”

NOT SO! The words in the original are strikingly clear. The word translated in the original as “witnesses” actually means to be taken over by another entity to the point that the person so overtaken loses his or her own identity and becomes the other entity – Jesus Christ – causing others to witness Jesus Christ operating over and over in others.

Now, let’s think about how silly it is for a bunch of Holy Spirit baptized people with their new identity of **BEING** Jesus with the very **SAME ABILITIES TO DO** what Jesus did (and even greater things than Jesus was able to do), sitting solemnly in pews taking part in meaningless rituals, listening to powerless men that have taken the positions of leadership that Jesus expressly said not to take.

Then let’s consider that those so baptized in Holy Spirit just sitting there, feeling restless because they sense something is not quite right, but because of religious tradition break away to start yet another assembly – carrying with them the very same spirit of religion and starting something that seems different, but is virtually the same thing!

I feel compelled to suggest that you not move into reading the subsequent steps until this chapter is read and prayed over several times. This chapter is the key to the complete understanding of the following chapters.

At the very least beginning to question religious tradition – “Daddy, am I on the right track, or do I need You to lead me in a different direction?” will begin the process to significant and dynamic changes in our lives.

STEP TWO

The second step is simple. Now that we have determined that we want to follow only one Leader, Teacher and Father we bring everything into question. Start with this book. It is true that I say that it is not I, but the Father in me that is writing this. Even though we are all equal as brothers and sisters our Father relates to each of us as individuals and takes us where we are. It is how we are able to minister to one another because we each have individual experiences with our one and only perfect Daddy and can share them with one another. Treat everything in this book the same way. Is this the next step for me, or do **YOU** have something that will work better for me in my desire to be one with you?

A friend wrote to me recently that he didn't disagree with me, but he simply had too many things crowding his life that he wanted to do rather than fasting and praying about being closer to God. I told him that perhaps the question should be asked if it wasn't his one and only perfect Daddy's will that he be ultimately successful in what he wanted to do. And rather than avoid Dad on the basis of his preconception that God was separate from that part of his life focus his fasting and praying energies on questioning Dad about whether he should be pursuing it so he could be the best at what he wanted to do. In other words ask the question if he was running away from God because in his own mind God didn't want him to be so consumed by it, when perhaps God had the keys to making him more successful than his wildest dreams.

Begin questioning our preconceptions. Should I change my thinking about this, Dad?

Here is a for instance. My conscious entrance into the Kingdom of God came about by inviting Jesus Christ to come into my life and take it over. I was told at the time that by taking this step that I had "eternal" life and that after this physical body people think of as "me" went through "death" – I would go to heaven.

The English word "eternity" means without end or "infinity." The challenge to that definition is that it is not the meaning of the word in the original language. The word from which the King James translators rendered "eternal" not only means without ending, but actually means no beginning and no ending – it means **NOW!** Now in the realm of the unseen where it is realized that what we see with our physical eyes is the illusion (not the other way around. Once this distinction is realized, *i.e.*, that what we refer to "eternal life" has its substance in the NOW of this unique moment there are many, many passages in the Bible that are no longer a mystery. Questions that we heretofore thought were unanswerable are swallowed up in the revelation of WHAT IS in the now.

Eternity is now, this very moment, lived in the presence and power of God's own Spirit. Eternal life means being in the same realm with our Teacher, Leader and Father this very moment in the unseen realm where all things become new and the physical things we "see" are passed away into the revelation of just how insignificant they truly are.

Someone wrote to me the other day and to me it was rather obvious that he was "hung up" on some old theological concepts from his past that were still governing his life in a way that he was not aware. I wrote to him the following:

Hi _____

I was awakened by the memory this morning of how I finally got free of holding onto scads of meaningless documents. Your e-mail triggered the thought that I was supposed to share the memory with you.

I was a vice president of a corporation of three divisions and around six-hundred employees.

I decided to have my private secretary handle every piece of correspondence that came addressed to me including, and perhaps especially, those that were labeled "personal" or "confidential." I wanted nothing to get into my inbox unless she really felt incapable of answering it or at her discretion she felt I needed to personally answer for whatever reason. Those reasons could include obvious reasons of corporate politics. This included private memos from the president and other officers, within the company, all the way up to the Chairman of the Board.

I came to this conclusion because I was spending about three hours a day just opening mail and the remainder of the day either answering that mail or dealing with the issues raised by it. Obviously I trusted the woman completely. I had several months before decided to delegate to her the handling of all mail advertisements with the authority to either distribute them to the appropriate department head in operations, purchasing and etc., or put them into the waste basket. It was totally up to her. The only caveat was that she make sure that whatever she was distributing to others was not, in her judgment, a waste of their time.

That had been a huge weight lifted off my shoulders. Now I had time to deal with the "really important mail."

After my decision to have all my mail handled by her, I would have perhaps ten to at the most twenty pieces per day that she would place in my inbox. The time I spent was reduced from all day to perhaps a half an hour a day. Such a relief! At first, my anxiety level was quite high. Would I be missing some important correspondence that might create trouble? Then the sense of freedom took over as I could apply my time and energies to the goals and missions of the corporation -- plus the bonus of having more time to take care of personal issues.

A strange thing happened. After a few weeks of my newly found freedom to do the things I considered important, my secretary came to me asking if she could get an assistant as she was overwhelmed by the mail. My first inclination was to just say "sure." Instead, I questioned her at length. We finally came to the conclusion together that we were

allowing correspondence to dictate what we did with our day. We were being managed by the whims of others to write memos, letters or send advertisements.

I finally asked, "What if you had thrown every piece of correspondence that had come in last week into the garbage? I mean every piece!" That question led us to one very startling conclusion and a new system that I have never ever shared with anyone else prior to just writing this. If we threw away mail -- ALL mail -- the person that really needed my attention would make an urgent call wondering why I had not answered!

My answer to such inquiries was simple and truthful... "Sorry, it must have gotten inadvertently thrown out. What's up?" By doing so, whoever it was (including the Chairman of the Board who once remarked (with no little irritation) that I obviously should develop a better system for handling incoming mail) was forced to articulate exactly what he wanted accomplished. On the spot I could question the importance of the issue and develop, if possible, a plan to handle the matter together with the person calling. End of story. Well, not quite... what had been taking a person full time to handle was now relegated to one or two irritated people calling each week -- and whose irritation was quickly dissolved by handling the issue on the spot. My secretary quickly became acutely attuned to what mail needed to be handled and that which could be tossed out.

So, why am I now cluttering our minds with a longwinded memory from the past? Because I am being gently "nudged" to do so for spiritual reasons indicated by many e-mails I receive. Some people that write have no idea how clearly their writing indicates that they are being governed by religious teaching from which they thought they had turned away.

What I am also seeing in myself is old "memos" of past beliefs filed away in hundreds of tiny "file cabinets" in my mind. These are the equivalent of all the "important" mail I used to keep filed in a "to read" file that I would never get around to reading because my time was always being consumed by reading the mail opened the next morning and so on.

Today, instead of having a private secretary filter out all the "junk mail" thoughts that may barrage me from time to time I just turn them over to Spirit with a, "You deal with this. If you want me to do something with it show me and I will."

Once I got to that point I understood what being free in the Spirit meant -- at least for me. I am free from what I may have even previously thought was the most important belief system -- to realize that Holy Spirit will change my mind about any number of things I hold onto so desperately today if I delegate the chore to Him. Make any sense to you? Or was this journey down memory lane just so this old man can have something about which to wistfully reminisce? (I fear the latter is the case, oh well).

_____ (signed)

The man wrote back saying that this had a profound effect on him. I say: Question every preconceived idea -- especially if it is governing us because it is "good" or "bad." Not so much as to its validity generally, but as to its worth in this time and in this place specifically in this moment. This isn't a matter of "situation ethics," but rather beginning to allow the One Jesus said he was sending to guide us into all truth -- Ask Dad.

By the way, the words "Dad" and "Daddy" are the terms by which Jesus introduced us to God in the original language. The word translated in English as "Father" in the Aramaic was a very intimate word that a child would use. "Papa" and "Daddy" are the only equivalent words in our western culture.

To the religious mind the austere word "Father" seems far more appropriate. However it is another glaring example of the degree to which religious teaching and dogma have created huge obstacles to what was actually intended. How many other high sounding and logical doctrines lead us away from our ultimate goal rather than towards it?

STEP THREE

The first two steps are merely aimed at adjusting our thinking along the lines of getting away from trusting religious leaders for spiritual advice. Then we turn to learning to question each and every religious tradition that influences our lives and bring them to the Source, *i.e.*, our one and only perfect Teacher and Leader, to question their validity.

Remember this is a horizontal journey. While, as individuals, we may be at different distances from the goal, we can all start at the same place. This may seem contradictory, but it really isn't. For example I have walked in faith, written about faith, quoted Jesus' teaching about how to get MORE faith, exercised bunches of faith for many years and I will tell you that I need MORE faith. Here is a startling fact: The more results-getting-faith we have -- the more we need. Why this is true is not all that difficult to understand once we consider something vital. As we begin to walk in the kind of faith Jesus said we need in order to do the same things he did -- by the same kind of faith -- we get into situations that we simply are not prepared to handle. We'll take a look at a passage in just a moment that will illustrate this very thing happening to Jesus' disciples.

Another way of looking at why I say that I need more faith is because there are still things in my subconscious mind that I think are impossible. Jesus said nothing is impossible if we have enough of the kind of faith that gets results. I believe that intellectually on a conscious level.

I well remember stumbling across a passage in the Gospel of Mathew that ultimately changed my life. At the time it came crashing into my consciousness I was already walking in considerable faith, but there were some things that I

either watched others do or heard about others being able to do that I believed (intellectually) were possible, but I couldn't do them. My intellectual faith has grown to the point that I really do believe that all things are possible, and while I am able to access Dad's works in me to a considerable degree, I am still unable to watch Him accomplish some of the things I know will be done through me in the future.

Once I saw what Jesus was really saying was the key to getting more faith I decided to prove his words one way or the other. What he said proved to be absolutely true in my experience and subsequently in the lives of many others as well. I first proved this to be true while still involved in organized Christianity.

About fifteen years ago I was asked to speak at a missionary conference in Lewiston, Idaho. Many at that conference took hold of the message and there were some dramatic incidents of healing and deliverance. I was asked if I would address a group of church pastors at a Friday morning breakfast during the conference. It wasn't on the conference schedule, but the pastor of a church from a small town in western Oregon arranged it because of the enthusiastic acceptance of the message by several of his church members that had come to the conference with him.

As I shared the aforementioned passage, I was astonished because some of the pastors did not accept the fact that a perfunctory examination of the original language so clearly proved that Jesus said exactly what I was presenting. Instead of looking at it with any measure of objectivity they argued from a doctrinal position widely held in the denomination sponsoring the conference. I opened it up to a general discussion and bedlam almost took place. I prayed silently and was shown that their positions of ecclesiastical authority and superiority would be threatened if they accepted at face value what Jesus actually said. They began arguing with one another. In my view, it was actually quite a healthy argument, but was quickly brought to conclusion by a quite threatened conference leader on the basis that it might cause division.

Here's the passage from the original language just as I presented it that day:

*"A father brought his young son to Jesus and said, 'Please help my son for he has *epileptic-like seizures and falls into the water and even into fire. I brought him to your disciples, but they were unable to cure him.'*

*"Jesus said, '**You are a bunch of faithless perverts. How long do I have to put up with you?'** Jesus then rebuked the demon and it came out of him and the boy was immediately cured.*

"Later when the crowd was gone his disciples asked him, 'Why couldn't we cast it out?'

*"Jesus answered, '**Because you don't have enough faith. If you did have enough faith nothing would be impossible to you. However this kind does not go out unless you have prepared through much fasting and prayer.**'"*

Several of the pastors in attendance that morning argued that Jesus wasn't calling his disciples faithless, but that the statement was directed toward the crowd in general. Others saw immediately, just as I had seen, that Jesus was indeed upset with his disciples. Why was he upset? Because he had obviously expected them to be able to handle this highly difficult demon (yes, some are relatively easy to get rid of, some are extremely difficult). They also expected to be able to get rid of it, substantiated by the fact that they asked, "Why couldn't we get rid of it?" Jesus' answer was simple: **"Because you don't have enough faith."** This is a quite literal and an accurate portrayal from the original language. If we put his statement in the positive – "YOU NEED **MORE** FAITH!"

These disciples had already cast out many demons and had already seen God work many miracles through them. So, we are back at the point of seeing that no matter where we are on the path – we need MORE faith, and perhaps are ready now to drop our defensiveness and go onto the next step.

* The term "epileptic-like seizures" is a term of my own modification brought on by ecclesiastical pressure. Many modern translations, the New King James Version © 1992 by Thomas Nelson, Inc., (NKJV) just as one example, insist that the word in the original means "epilepsy." Just a few months prior to this conference, the president of that denomination had insisted upon pulling a piece that I had written for the denomination's monthly magazine in which I had used the NKJV "epilepsy." The president's reasoning: "Brother," he said, "we can't let this article go out – we'll just have to go with something else. We are one of the few if not the only denomination that allow epileptics to serve in the pulpit and on the mission field and we have a fair number serving. This article would cause uproar to say the least." My argument at the time, one I didn't pursue very vigorously, was "why not leave the article as-is so some of them can be delivered?" He actually agreed, but didn't want the political hassle he was sure such an article would create. The word in the original means simply "madness brought about by the changes in phases of the moon." The KJV correctly translated the word as "lunatic." We finally reached a compromise and I had to modify it to "epileptic-like" seizures.

It has always amazed me how people will jump to the defense of a person inflicted by a disease that could easily be demonically induced. Why defend a demon when it can be removed along with the disease it is causing?

Regarding diseases within which the symptoms are being controlled by some prescription drug or another – and is cured by the removal of a spiritual entity – people often ask: "Is that disease always caused by demons?"

While I have often responded by repeating the same phrase that I learned from the man I first watched get rid of a demon, “I wouldn’t say that. I will say that whenever I cast a demon out of a person that has the disease – the disease goes too.”

It has just struck me with force, what difference does it make?

Having become a professing Christian (I know longer make such a profession – simply because the label means too many different things to too many different people) in a denomination that had a widely held belief that a demon cannot operate in a person that has “received Christ” or been “baptized in the Holy Spirit.” Well, as a matter of record I have had both experiences and had unconsciously adopted the aforementioned belief, until the night I cast demons out of a family suffering from asthma, allergies and arthritis.

Immediately afterwards when the entire family was symptom free – I was able to tightly close my hands in clenched fists for the first time in several years. My hands had been stiff, swollen and painful especially in cold weather due to an arthritis-like condition. The arthritis-like condition in me left while casting the demon causing the same condition out of another person! Why even get into the discussion of whether a demon is always behind the onset of disease?

If I have difficulty with habits, pains or whatever, I just know that the enemy wants me to be in bondage to the physical realm. Jesus provided a formula for getting rid of obstacles to acquiring more results-getting faith. Imaging, that is, picturing in our minds lifting over our heads and casting the obstacle (symptom of pain, disease or a spirit of unbelief) down into an imaginary ocean while saying, I lift you up and cast you down – over and over UNTIL it is gone -- so the instructions go.

Here is a needed comment about the foregoing paragraph. There is a word translated as “doubt” in the KJV and many other translations that actually creates all kinds of challenges for a person attempting to put Jesus’ instructions into practice. What he literally said was that if you keep on imaging and speaking emphatically to these obstacles (metaphorically “mountains”) without allowing contrary thoughts or spirits to cause you to waver from doing so – you will have whatever it is you continue to image and speak if you do so UNTIL it comes into existence in the physical realm – you WILL have those things you so image and speak.

We all have doubts. People are often dissuaded from continuing speaking and imaging because they are honest about having doubts. Jesus was simply saying don’t let the doubts stop you. Hint: The doubt could well be a spirit, cast it down too!

STEP FOUR

Before we get into the “meat” of the fourth step let’s take a half step backwards to take care of some unfinished business. I’ve been told perhaps a hundred or even more times that one story I emphasize that Jesus related has helped more than any single other thing that I have written.

I don’t know how many times in a speaking presentation that I have said I wake up almost every morning either filled with anxiety or feeling depressed. I almost never wake up in an exuberant mood. Although, by the time I’ve been up for an hour or so, I’m usually driving everyone a little crazy with my enthusiasm for the day.

Before I arrive at the point of enthusiasm, however, I have to go through quite a period of adjustment in my thinking, starting with my favorite exercise – beating on my chest and crying out to God for mercy. I’ve sometimes referred to it as the pathway to God’s own righteousness. Please note that I am saying this is my ritual. I am not implying that it is necessary for everyone in God’s scheme of things. I cannot tell you how many times, however, that many have said to me the equivalent of something a friend said to me recently, “my prayers seemed to go no farther than the ceiling until I tried this simple exercise of beating on my chest and crying out for God’s mercy. After that I knew I was getting through. It is absolutely amazing!”

It comes from the story Jesus told about the two men that went up to the Temple for prayer. One of these was the equivalent to today’s self righteous Christian. He prayed, “I thank You God that You have made me better than other men, especially that one over there” (referring to a Roman tax collector that was beating on his chest, crying out, “God have mercy on such a sinner as I”).

The “good Christian” continued on with a verbal list of his own goodness (for which he was thanking God, we must remember), “For I do not cheat in my business affairs, I fast twice each week and I give ten percent of all I own,” etc., etc.

The key to the power of this story is that Jesus said quite simply that the tax collector went home clothed in the righteousness of God INSTEAD of the “good Christian” because he recognized his own worthlessness in the sight of God.

For me, It could be said that I should not wake up depressed or anxious – but I often do. Therefore, part of my mental adjustment is to do the very same thing the tax collector did. Beat on my chest and cry out to God for being such a rank sinner. This according to Jesus is at least one pathway to God’s own righteousness.

Moving along --

Step Four is simply moving past the mundane of living powerlessly and into the presence and power of God’s own Spirit through, as Jesus put it, much fasting and prayer as a means by which to acquire MORE results-getting faith.

One stumbling block to certain religious mind sets is that fasting and prayer is a “works” thing to gain favor with God. IT IS NOT! The primary purpose is to have a breakthrough from the dependence we have on our physical senses.

Until we go without food for a period of time – we simply don't believe we can – and therefore believe that our very existence is dependent upon it. We will get into more practical detail and a few true stories to help us get past some of our preconceptions about fasting – particularly about the health issues – in Step Five.

One religious preconception we need to put aside here is the bugaboo about faith being a “gift.” It is. The challenge (a major point in *Unlocking The Treasure Chest of God's Gifts*) is in knowing where to find the gift of faith because it has been buried under a pile of religious preconceptions that have to be removed.

Remembering Jesus' words in response to his disciples' question, “why couldn't we cast out the demon?” “You couldn't cast out the demon because you don't have enough faith” and “you can't get this kind of faith without preparation through much fasting and prayer” – let's first look at what kind of prayer.

One of the most often sung songs and sonorously chanted themes is what we commonly refer to as “The Lord's Prayer.”

You know the one, “Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

How this “prayer” came to be recorded (in Luke's version –chapter 11, vs. 1-13) in the first place is that Jesus' twelve disciples confronted him one morning after his usual prayer time alone.

“How come you don't teach us to pray the way you pray? Your cousin John (The Baptist) teaches his followers how he prays.”

Three very important things should be noted:

First of all, the “prayer” as sung and chanted is only a brief introduction of what Jesus told them in response to their question – the “meat,” so to speak, is in the next several verses that follow this brief introduction.

Second, the introduction is so diluted and even warped due to religious tradition and mistranslation from the original language that we have dismissed it as being anything very important and have missed the dynamic mind changing and life changing power in it.

Third, is the fact that Jesus is sharing HOW HE PRAYED, in other words this is not merely instruction, but a model of the way he prayed. An important issue.

Before we get into the meat of the two thirds of what Jesus said following the introduction – let's discuss the second point about its dilution. Rather than go through a point-by-point, word-by-word dissection of the words in the original language, let's just provide a quite accurate rendering into American English.

“Our one and only perfect Daddy who is in the unseen realm within.” That will work for starters. The phrase “Hallowed be thy name” gets tricky only because our minds need to be shaken loose from all the religious tradition in which they are mired. The word in the original translated as “hallowed” simply means perfectly unique – the one and only.

The word “name” is merely in reference to the name Jesus was using to introduce God as being totally approachable. As stated earlier Dad, Daddy and Papa (“Mommy” would also be a literal rendering from the original) are far more suitable words to get across the childlike intimacy Jesus was articulating. Remember his words elsewhere? “No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he comes as a little child.”

Let's just take this introduction from the top:

“Our one and only perfect Daddy who is in the unseen realm within. I am speaking into existence on this physical plane what You have already decreed to be Your will in the unseen realm. I eat of the bread of Your own Spirit in this moment, now. I cast down all feelings of judgment, resentment, bitterness or criticism over the harm I perceive anyone has done to me, and by so doing I walk in the perfect light of forgiveness that You have already provided. Lead me away from all temptation to rely on anything but You. For You are the Source of everything. All this will be done for Your glory, for You have given me the authority to declare it!”

Before we move on to the “meat” of what Jesus continued to teach about prayer we need to understand a challenge of translation from one language to another.

Americans trying to learn a foreign language often have the greatest difficulty over the object being at the end of a sentence rather than the beginning as with English. Jesus explains for several verses how to acquire MORE of God's own Spirit, but the term “Holy Spirit” doesn't come until the end of the passage. What happens is that several things Jesus says get misconstrued and missed or misused because we miss the point. A difficulty even with modern translators who insist on the bogey of “word-for-word” and “word-by-word” translations which come out something akin to “Throw your mother from the train a kiss.” The American mind is conditioned to have the object of subject matter in a heading. Jesus' instruction and prayer model would be stated more like this:

How To Get More Into The Presence and Power of God's Own Spirit for Difficult Situations

“Whenever you are confronted by an unexpected situation for which you have no ready answer, go to God as you would your very best Friend. Knock on his door and keep knocking until you receive your answer. Tell Him in no uncertain terms that you need His own Spirit so as to know how to deal with this particular problem. If you don't get what you need right away, be impudently demanding just as a small child is when he wants something from his earthly daddy. Daddy, I want it, Daddy I want it. Because of your persistence and familiarity you will get all that you need. Keep it up UNTIL you

do receive. For everyone that keeps on knocking and demanding in this childlike manner will receive if they don't stop UNTIL they receive. You earthly parents, even though you are less than perfect, when your child demands food, do you give him stones to eat? If he wants an egg, do you give him a poisonous insect? Of course you don't. So if you need your one and only perfect Daddy's Spirit to solve your problem, do you think He won't make sure you get it if you don't stop knocking and demanding until you do get it? Don't stop knocking and childlike demanding and be assured that you will see what you have been demanding come into existence."

Let's close this chapter with a challenge. Spend the next several days physically knocking on the floor, a desktop, a wall, a tree trunk – whatever – while telling our one and only, perfect Daddy that we want more of His own Spirit for understanding whatever happens to be a puzzle in our lives. Start with Jesus' "introduction" back on the middle of the previous page. Put it to memory and recite it several times a day. It was provided for our benefit. If we hide it in our hearts we will find our consciousness being shifted toward our one and only perfect Dad within. Remember that Jesus did this many times throughout the day so that he could get past the distractions of what we see in the physical realm.

It is not uncommon when doing this that doctrinal "voices" will attempt to deter us from keeping on until we have a breakthrough to insight and clarity. It is best to do this in absolute privacy for this reason. Some of these voices will come from well meaning people saying that pursuing God is somehow dangerous. They will try to tell us that we already have everything we need, or that we need to depend upon the "grace of God," etc. I heard one time that following the example and teaching of Jesus in this manner was practicing witchcraft! Can you imagine? This particular example of a doctrinal voice from a Christian leader discounting the clear teaching of Jesus, this time on the basis of it being "witchcraft." Yikes! Jesus' words again come to mind, "What is the point of calling me 'Lord' if you don't also do what I tell you to do?"

STEP FIVE

Several times I have had people tell me that they finally decided to try fasting and they became nauseated, had severe headaches or other health challenges associated with going without food for the first time.

Most admit in their first stab at fasting that they did have a small breakthrough, but they just couldn't get past the physical discomfort so quit after just a few hours. In each case I have encouraged them to check in with Dad to see if they should fast and if they get a green light to try again.

Most of the time, usually weeks later, I get an e-mail saying they finally fasted and got through three or four days and that it really increased their faith or gave them some kind of spiritual breakthrough or even healing. I tell most of them that the most significant things relative to a huge increase in results-getting-faith happen after ten days to two weeks of continual fasting.

Once we have been able to go for these longer periods without food we realize how dependent we believe we are on the physical. I've told the story before about how my psychiatrist friend would schedule times for me to talk with patients either as a group or during an individual session. When the subject of fasting would come up he would sometimes interrupt and ask if I really thought fasting was necessary. He finally told me that he had hypoglycemia and a heart condition, and that another physician had told him that fasting could be life threatening for him.

I do not remember what the catalyst was for him going on his first fast, but it was for three or four days. Pure water was the only thing he took in his mouth. No supplements, no coffee, tea – nothing. He hadn't told me ahead of time that he intended to do it. He called me on the phone afterward exclaiming that he no longer had hypoglycemia!

Shortly after his first fast he went on another one for over ten days. He had his first real breakthrough afterwards into walking in the miraculous. Prior to that second fast he would always let me do most of the talking when we "presented" to a group. Now he would move in the power and presence of God's Spirit when he felt moved.

He would periodically host small groups of people at the seacoast resort he owned for what we dubbed "prayer and faith workshops." Typically these sessions would last from Friday evening until late Sunday afternoon. This particular time was a short period after his first prolonged fast. A woman in her sixties that had been told by her doctor that the lung cancer for which she had undergone chemotherapy was terminal and there was nothing more that could be done. She had just a few weeks at best to live.

On Sunday morning after much discussion about medicine in general and how people were hooked in dependence upon doctors (he was an M.D. and she had planned her entire life around living in close proximity to "her doctor"), he looked at her – sitting on a sofa next to her husband, wheezing, barely able to breathe, talk or even sit up – and told her, "You are healed." She stammered, "really?"

I laughed and told her, "There, you've heard from a doctor that you are healed."

Within two hours she was walking briskly, able to sit up straight and breathe and talk normally. She had looked a deathly pale gray, but now her skin was a glowing pink and she looked the picture of radiant health.

There were many side stories to this particular incident, but there is one with which I want to digress to underscore the tragedies brought about by doctrinal and religious "voices."

Her and her husband called their son and daughter-in-law in San Jose, California to tell them the good news – that they had invited Jesus Christ into their lives and that she had been healed. Instead of receiving the news with the joy they thought the call would precipitate – the son and daughter-in-law were heavily involved in one of the mainstream

evangelical Christian denominational churches and had previously “witnessed” to his parents – they spoke to their “pastor” about his mother being healed and he immediately told them to warn his mother and father that they were obviously involved in a cult and should run not walk away.

That caused some conflicts to say the least. The pastor actually made the comment that “she would be better off dead than to be involved in a cult that would cause her to lose her salvation.” Mind you that my psychiatrist friend had been a lifelong member of the same denomination and still believed in the basic theological tenets with the exception of the general rejection in that denomination of healing and other phenomena of the Spirit. He shrugged the comment off saying that he fully understood the mindset of the pastor and had previously been somewhat sympathetic to that kind of thinking.

We helped her through the conflicts, but the son and daughter-in-law remained cool and distant.

That was a rather long digression. The point is that my psychiatrist friend didn’t move in the kind of faith, which he now moves prior to his elongated fast.

I have seen people with diabetes, asthma, arthritis and other diseases completely cured simply as a result of going on a fast while making a concentrated prayer effort, as described in the previous chapter, to breakthrough into a greater sense of the presence and power of God’s own Spirit.

If you are under the care of a physician and your faith dictates the need for continued healthcare under a physician’s supervision for your health – ask her or him about the advisability of going on a fast. I feel the urge to say, of course, if the “good doctor” has already pronounced you “terminal” as in the case of the woman in the aforementioned story – what do you have to lose?

Two other caveats are in order:

First, make sure you don’t fast half way. Ingest nothing except purified water. A slight headache, dizziness or a bit of nausea during the first few hours is somewhat typical during the first fast. Most people learn how to ward off these minor discomforts during subsequent fasts by understanding them as tricks perpetrated by agents of the enemy and realizing the enemy’s purposes are best served by us not fasting. Getting rid of them is amazingly simple and a great discipline to gaining faith. Tell them, “GET OUT!” What if it doesn’t work at first? It is simply proof that your faith and awareness of your authority over them has not grown to that point as yet. It will if you persist.

Second, FAST IN ABSOLUTE SECRECY. TELL NO ONE. If you are in a situation where immediate family members have to know – urge them to tell no one. For whatever reason, a “public” fast greatly minimizes the effect. Jesus did say to fast in private and that our Dad’s reward would be given in private. I have found that to be quite true.

STEP SIX

One of the obstacles to getting into I AM consciousness is our religious fixation on the “duality” of man. That is, that man is a mammal and subject to animal forces, or a “lower nature,” but has another “higher” side called “spirit.” There are those that promote the idea that man is made up of three parts: Body, soul and spirit. You can certainly make the case from taking one perspective of the Scriptures that man does have three parts to his makeup.

Another obstacle has to do with the religious idea of how to convert the inner man into a “quickenings” or spiritual awakening, or as Jesus put it, being “born again.” It centers primarily on being a human being with a separate inner part, the “spirit.”

Here is a different perspective: Some of us, at least, are spirits that have chosen to occupy human bodies to experience things on this physical plane. I received this revelation in a rather startling way while fasting and praying to prepare for a meeting with several people that had already been healed and had invited me to come to be with them because they had invited a woman dying of bone cancer – a type of leukemia. Their faith for her healing was quite high. One of them was a man in his seventies who had been legally blind and now had vision that measured better than 20/20. Another, a woman in her sixties, had been healed of a life threatening heart condition.

While lying on the floor, praying about going to be with this small group of people, I “heard” what certainly seemed to be an audible voice saying something to the effect that I needed to understand my true identity. After going through a process I had been shown much earlier to “test the spirits to know whether they are of God” I felt assured that I was about to be given some information that was new to me. Because of my orientation I like to have a reasonable “proof text” from the Bible to back up what I am saying or writing.

Years previously, also while lying face down on the floor, praying to prepare for a meeting of businessmen at which I was scheduled to speak; I received a verse in the Bible. The verse I received was Jeremiah 29:13 (“You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart”) which resulted in some dramatically changed lives (including mine) of some of the men present. So I said, “I want a passage that will show me this identity.” After a few minutes I heard, “Look at Genesis 6.”

I got up and went to my desk. Reading the first six verses of Chapter Six in a KJV didn’t make any sense to me. I picked up an old copy of Kenneth Taylor’s “Living Bible” and “saw” it. I was hooked and wanted to do a word study from the original language to see if what I was getting could be confirmed. This passage indicates that the Lord had become

totally disappointed that he had ever formed mankind because of their proclivity toward evil. It had begun apparently when beings, “the sons of God,” from the spirit realm entered men (in the lineage of Adam) in order to induce them to have sexual intercourse with the “daughters of men” (in the lineage of Adam) that the spirits were attracted to because of their beauty. The Lord made the declaration that His Spirit would no longer live in men and that their life span would be shortened to one hundred and twenty days.

“What does that have to do with my identity?” I stammered out loud. I immediately saw for the first time that I was not a man. I was a spirit that had entered this physical plane to occupy a man. Wow! Talk about being an “alien!” For the next hour I was shown many things and understood for the first time the how and why of many things that had happened to me over the span of “my” life. Completely reinforced was the revelation and understanding I had been given about one of the words translated as “salvation” meaning being joined together AGAIN with God.

What does this have to do with meeting this small group of people and especially regarding this woman that was dying of leukemia in her bones and for whom I had been specifically praying? It didn’t matter. I was to go only with the realization of who I really was, again, a spirit occupying the body of a man.

The question before us is, can we transcend or move beyond this dual or tripartite view of who we are into an awareness of oneness with God? The answer is a definitive yes. The challenge is getting there. One of the words (there are more than one) translated into English as “salvation” actually means joined together again, i.e., rejoined. It is what demonstrates our origin. Elohiym one of the several Hebrew words rendered merely as “God” by the KJV translators actually means plurality of God or “Gods.” Some have taken the word to mean “family of God.” The stretch is in using it as a basis for the Trinity (Father Son and Holy Spirit). I hasten to say that I am not an anti-Trinitarian. I’m just saying this isn’t the word with which to stake a claim about the Trinity. An argument can easily be made from the Bible for the Trinity. An argument can just as easily be made from the Bible against the concept of the Trinity. I am not getting into the argument. It is superfluous religious conjecture that can easily keep us from being empowered by God’s own Spirit and a relationship with our Dad and with our Elder Brother.

It is no stretch linguistically or conceptually to understand that “Salvation” literally means joined together again into the family of God.

Back in Step One we looked at the fact Jesus said, in the original language, that the phenomenon that takes place when we are baptized in/with/by God’s own Spirit is that we actually lose our identity and become Jesus. The baptism in Holy Spirit Jesus spoke of (contrary to the two predominant religious schools of thought), is neither for the purpose of enabling a believer to talk (“witness”) to others about Jesus Christ, nor is it to enable us to speak in languages (“tongues”) not learned by natural means. While certainly both tongues and personal evangelism do occur as a by-product, but the primary purpose of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, according to Jesus, is that we lose the identity imposed upon us by the body bags we occupy. We become one with the Father -- just as Jesus was one with the Father - - because we are now Jesus! It is one thing to understand this intellectually, it is a far different thing to live and experience this consciousness in a continuum.

Becoming and remaining conscious of that which we actually are -- in the midst of the barrage of stuff that continually beats on the minds of the bodies we occupy -- is the challenge. Some of us don’t want to walk away from “sensory perception,” that is, depending upon our five senses for our understanding of reality, because of pleasure. Others that experience continual pain do want to walk away, but find it difficult because the pain they are experiencing anchors them to a focus on the physical body. Both perceived pain and pleasure hinder the process of transcending into continuous I AM awareness.

Let’s now focus on something Jesus said that, in the light of the foregoing paragraph, will be far better understood “He that loves his life shall lose it.” Get it?

A change of perspective is the necessary step from living our lives as if we are the identity of the body bags we occupy, you know, teachers, truck drivers, students, doctors, salespeople, lawyers, laborers, etc., etc. If I can begin to divorce myself from thinking that what the body bag I occupy does or the name given to this body bag is “me” – and move into the truth that I am a spirit that lives in this physical container and not the other way around, my perspective has shifted and I am ready to take on some disciplines to get this body bag under control.

We need not only fast and pray in the physical sense, but we need to take control over the minds of these body bags we occupy, by continually changing our perspective to being from the position of I AM in us. I realize that the foregoing sentence is a syntax nightmare, and if I knew a better way to articulate the concept I would – live with it! Remember that Jesus did not take any credit for whom and what he was as a man. The Father in him – the Father in him – the Father in him – Paul had a glimpse of this and wrote, “It is no longer I that lives, but Christ lives in me.” “It is no longer I, but Christ” – no longer I, but Christ – no longer I, but Christ – no longer I, but Christ – we too must change our speaking habits.

I often (perhaps too often?) tell the story about going through a checkout counter at a supermarket.

The young lady greeted me with the perfunctory, “Good evening sir, how are you?”

“Perfect,” I answered, “How are you?”

She responded with a frown, “Don’t ask.”

“Why not,” I returned.

She came back with, “Well I can certainly tell you that I am not perfect.”

To which came out of my mouth, “Oh, who lives inside of you?”
She squared her shoulders and looked at me intently, “Jesus Christ!”
I answered with, “Then why don’t you let him do the talking?”

Her perspective was immediately shifted and she saw with clarity the truth of what I had just said. Her awakening was rather amazing. She readily understood the truth of what followed, that is, my comment that “we allow the enemy to do our talking continually rather than the One we say that lives within.”

In reality we are perfect. The enemy wants us to focus on the deficiencies of the body bags we occupy and which are certainly not perfect. The “flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God is a biblical premise.” Why do we continually allow it to govern us?

Paul’s lament, “Why is it that I can’t seem to do the things I know I should be doing? Why do I always find myself doing the things I don’t want to do?” Was followed by his statement of victory: “I thank God there is a way out through Jesus Christ!” Are we willing to see and follow the way out that Jesus provided?

Jesus taught that by continually speaking the truth (of what God has already proclaimed as His will in the spirit realm) will bring His desires and purposes into existence on earth, if we continue to speak them UNTIL they become reality on the physical plane. “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Let’s bring up a harsh reality. I have people writing to me daily that smugly say they know “who they are” as a backdrop to saying that we don’t need to focus on performing miracles and healing. They do this only to confess later to all kinds of maladies and problems from which the body bags they occupy need deliverance and are causing them deep personal distress.

Transcending is a work in progress. It cannot even begin until we have the desire to transcend into I AM awareness. Once the desire is sparked, we have the power and authority to kindle and fan the flames.

I thank God there is a way out through Jesus Christ. Not just a euphemistic, ethereal, spiritual concept, but the practicality of praying the way he prayed and taught and fasting the way he fasted.

STEP SEVEN

Leaving unconsciousness behind and moving into consciousness.

Just this morning I received the following in an e-mail:

“In some ways I know I can write the same book you are writing. Nothing is new and yet you are making so much sense that I am receiving in a new way. At first I reacted negatively to the title, Steps to I AM Consciousness.

“I was going to write you about that and tell you that the awareness just “came to me” and that you were doing a disservice to people by insisting on a formula. Then I got the surprise of my life! I asked for help in writing the note to you. Did I ever receive help with a capital “H!” In a flash I was shown the steps that I have gone through to become aware of I AM and I have to tell you the truth, “your” book Unlocking the Treasure Chest of God’s Gifts was a huge step in helping me past some stumbling blocks. Thank you so much for continuing to be an instrument through which God can do His wonders in my own life. But then what else should I expect from I AM in you.”

I responded, with my somewhat usual, “And Christ in me salutes Christ in you.”

The exciting thing to me about her e-mail is that she went to the Source within and got her own answer for her – not that she agreed with me. She was shown by the Source that she had gone through a process to get where she is. To further emphasize the point, I would have been just as excited if she had been shown that she hadn’t gone through a process – the issue is only that she went to the Source and got an answer entirely different from what she had expected and that it was directly from the Source!

Luke’s narrative in the New Testament book “The Acts” about Saul being converted to “Paul” on the road to Damascus is a wonderful case in point. Paul’s steps to I AM consciousness are perfect for review (if you aren’t familiar with the passage it might be worthwhile to read the entire ninth chapter of Acts). The point is that the experience was unique to Paul. Further that each one of us will have our own unique set of steps.

As I pointed out in the Preface and the Foreword, what is important for each of us is to pursue God not to take the same steps that Paul or anyone else took to find Him. In fact, one of the pieces of evidence, at least in my mind, that point to organized Christianity being so far off the track is that it insists that Paul is something special to the point of putting the words he wrote in a position above the words of Jesus recorded in the Gospels.

If we must take Paul’s words seriously, and I for one believe that they are worth taking seriously, let’s abide by these: “There is contentiousness among you to the point that you are each taking ridiculous positions. Some of you say that you are followers of Paul. Others say that they are followers of Peter, or Apollos. Some say, ‘I am a follower of Christ,’ as if to say that the others are not. Is Christ divided? Did Paul suffer and die for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?”

To which I would add: “**GET A LIFE!**”

If we make the claim that Jesus is “Lord,” then isn’t it possibly useful to follow his instructions and example? Particularly when he said we would be what he was as a man and do the very same things he did if we did do what he said to do.

I was given some words by revelation several years ago. They have been useful to me to get beyond being unconscious about who lives within me and become aware of the presence of I AM. I share them just as an example of my own journey and a suggestion to go to the Source to find out if they might be useful to others.

I was in the middle of some significant personal and business turmoil about eight years ago. I simply did not know what to do about several issues that were facing me. I was pounding on His door, saying that I wanted His answers not my own and the following words were given to me. I was shown that I needed to repeat them often throughout the day. I still do.

“I am in and of the will of God. Your presence and power are upon me. I want and have nothing else and no other thought or feeling shall have a permanent place in me. I AM.”

I have shared these words with many people. Some have reported dramatic breakthroughs after repeating these words until they were burned into their consciousness.

For those of you that insist (as I often do) on being able to confirm everything in the Bible -- these words are a perfect model of what Jesus said to do – “If you will continue to demand when speaking toward God and do not be divided in your thinking or let a spirit cause you to waver, but continue speaking and have a picture in your mind of what you are speaking, you will have it.”

What higher purpose can we have in our “prayers” than to hold the picture in our minds of being totally conscious of the One within and, according to Jesus’ instructions, speak it continually until it comes into being?

It came to me while I was speaking at a Sunday evening church service in Alaska about fourteen years ago to ask two questions of the congregation and wait for their answers.

1. Who is Jesus Christ?
2. Where is Jesus Christ right now?

The answers were typical.

“The Son of God” and “At the right hand of the Father.”

I told them that those answers were Biblical, but then asked them what “The Son of God” really meant? I showed them from the Bible who Jesus Christ is/was. Then I showed them where Jesus Christ is NOW.

I told them (I was on the floor walking among them) that they would be sitting there in their pews playing church forever and not move into the presence and power of God’s own Spirit until they are able to answer these two questions.

I showed them from the Bible WHO Jesus Christ is and was: He is the Spirit that created the entire universe and everything in it who later BECAME a human being. The answer to WHERE Jesus Christ is now: In YOU! Amazingly the English words rendered by the KJV translators as “at the right hand” in the original language simply mean “at the accessible side.”

I will provide chapter and verse to anyone wanting to “square” what I have written here with the specifics from the original language.

Again, the original language quite clearly says that the very same Spirit, that later became the man Jesus Christ, created the entire universe and everything in it – including Satan and the angels that followed him in rebellion (this latter an important point in order to understand our authority over all the negative works of the enemy and his agents). Again, that this Jesus Christ, “The same who is the same yesterday, today and forever,” lives in YOU!”

Let’s close this chapter with a thought contained in several recent e-mails. Many have written that it seems as though I am insisting that the miraculous be the precursor to I AM consciousness.

On the contrary – the miraculous simply goes with the territory. What territory? The territory of being Jesus Christ.

As I related to one friend who cited the problems in certain groups of Christians that had a tendency, in his view, to go overboard in seeking signs and wonders and thus opening themselves up to the mimicry of the enemy. When I AM sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh with His own message accompanied by signs and wonders – the signs and wonders were mimicked by the Pharaoh’s court magicians.

Jesus said that we would receive power to perform miracles when Holy Spirit descended upon us. He said that we would lose our own identify and people would actually see Jesus instead of us. Are we to back away from this promised destiny on the basis that the enemy will ape us?

Hopefully we are now in the position to resist such an idea, or at the very least to question its origin.

STEP EIGHT

In an earlier chapter I said that I needed more faith. There are those that argue that I am being inconsistent. Here’s the crux of their argument: If the Father within me does all the works and not “I” it is His faith anyway and not mine.

Conceptually that argument is absolutely valid.

Walking around in this human container has a deleterious affect on my “I AM consciousness.” The fact that I say, my I AM Consciousness gives further weight to their argument.

So what do I do with this “earthly” identity I’ve taken on that keeps me focused on the physical? The primary point of a previous chapter is that I need to do the very same thing that Jesus did with his physical body bag. He brought it unto submission to the Father within by continually speaking to Him and breaking out of his human consciousness by fasting.

Some religious folks have been so completely indoctrinated on the “grace” side of the old argument between “grace” and “works” that they have missed the part about “working out one’s own salvation.” Before we allow the forgoing sentence to be misconstrued, let’s review again that the meaning of one of the words introduced into our minds by the KJV translators as “salvation” actually means “joined together again (with God) and thus completed.” Paul wrote that it was a gift of God not of works so that no man could make any boast about having attained it through any measure of “works.” Quite true, no argument! So when I am talking about “working” it out, it should be construed only as meaning changing my perspective from a focus on the physical trappings to a focus on the spiritual. My definition of “spiritual” is simply “unseen” but totally real. When we are faced continually with all kinds of visual and auditory “realities” we should begin to see the enormity of the obstacle that we need to overcome.

The following e-mail came to me last night from a man in the Southeastern section of the U.S. who at first struggled with fasting. His breakthroughs in the past several months have been dramatic to say the least. What he says is so simple and so pure that I felt compelled to paste it here.

I like your new book.

I experienced all that tough stuff when I first started fasting, YOU ARE CORRECT, it is best not to take anything but water. I have two comments, see what you think.

But here is the comment I feel compelled to tell some people.....don't let guilt get you if you fail the first few times, keep trying YOU WILL GET SOMETHING FOR TRYING.

Here is the second comment I feel compelled to share. Start out not eating things you are addicted to...most of us are addicted to sugar, caffeine and alcohol, to some degree. Getting rid of these things is fasting! THEN, when these things are beat, giving up everyday food is an easier thing.

I have had several e-mails that I’ve asked permission to use and will use at a later time, but here are two more for right now that rank among the simple and pure and will strike a chord in many people:

A man in British Columbia wrote:

Hey,

S-o-o-o-o..... I fasted. After two days, out of curiosity I asked Dad, how long He would have me fast? He said, "I never told you to fast so it's up to you". Somewhat taken aback I asked, well what am I supposed to be doing? To which He replied "come to me through meditation and prayer, fasting is for another time".

I was reminded of when I used to fast more frequently and how much easier it was when He said to fast. I think sometimes I read your material and forget that Dad has a route planned for me and any attempt to short cut usually produces nothing. I am confident now that He wants me to focus on certain things and fasting is not on the short term agenda. So I have decided to not feel guilty or less than, when I read your essays.

Thanks,

Love you.

My response:

Perfect! At the outset I said the purpose is to seek Him and not listen to anyone else. It doesn't bother me a bit if anyone doesn't fast. You will see this e-mail in the next chapter -- due out tomorrow. It makes the point better than I could hope to. GO TO HIM!

Thanks!

Then there was this one from a woman in Idaho:

Every chapter gets better! I heard something on TV last night that seems to me to fit in with fasting. A physician was saying that our bodies are designed to heal themselves. Most of the chemical concoctions called “prescription drugs” are designed to combat symptoms. But they interfere with the body’s own healing mechanism.

After reading Treasure Chest I decided to fast. I had a terrible time with a headache that simply wouldn’t go away until well into the second day. I was on a medication at the time to reduce high blood pressure and I was following your suggestion not to take any supplements or anything but water. So I quit taking the medication as well. That was a few months ago and I have never taken it again and I quit going to that doctor. I used to have headaches all the time and I was told they were most likely due to the elevated blood pressure. Then listening to that other doctor last night on TV it all kind of clicked. Taking that medication had actually been blocking my body from healing itself.

Fasting that first time made me realize that I needed to change my eating habits and start doing a better job of exercising. I have a Doctor. He lives within me. I just needed to start cooperating with Him and quit messing up my body’s

own healing system. By the way, you may not remember it, but during my first fast several months ago, I wrote you telling about my headache. You told me to get plenty of bottled water and force myself into drinking lots of it. Somebody suggested to me that just drinking a lot of water would have healthful effects. Anyway, thanks for what you continue to do.

Breaking through from unconsciousness to consciousness of our one and only perfect Daddy within is by all means a work of grace. It is already a fact and done from His side of things. Jesus' method for completing the transition into consciousness of the fact was SPEAKING IT INTO EXISTENCE and continuing to speak it several times daily until the blanket of unconsciousness was lifted EACH DAY. It is by the grace of God that Jesus gave us the formula and by the grace of God that we can begin to say a resounding NO to religious nonsense and be busy about Dad's business. We'll never know what God's business is for each of us individually until we breakthrough into the continual consciousness of His presence and power. Frankly, the e-mail from the man in British Columbia referenced earlier is a case in point. He mentioned many previous fasts and already is obviously well aware of His Dad's presence within.

The point at which the challenge arises is when we are distracted by pain or pleasure by the physical realm or the unseen agents of the enemy. The reality of God within becomes quite dim. Jesus' disciples' question, "How come we couldn't get rid of it?" awaits the same answer today as it did two thousand years ago: "BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH FAITH! If you did have enough faith nothing would be impossible to you. However this kind of obstacle (demon, whatever) leaves only when you have adequately prepared through much fasting and prayer."

What is interesting to me is those religious voices that insist that much fasting and prayer is so burdensome and to them unnecessary, are the same voices that lament over a person dying from some terminal disease because they are powerless to do anything about it. Remember the incident about the little girl that had died? Jesus had been asked to come to see her. His first statement that was met by much scoffing was that she wasn't dead but only sleeping. Next he got rid of all the religious mourners. Then he told her to get up. She did. The end of that story.

The beginning of our story in walking in the authority and miracle working power of the Father within is to admit that we are not there yet, in conscious reality, but that we are willing and want to be transformed into His image and likeness. How? By doing what Jesus said to do.

Doing what Jesus said to do is not "works" or "legalism." It is simply following the recipe given by the Master Chef.

If we don't want to prepare this particular "dish" then there is no point in following the recipe. On the other hand, isn't it a bit silly to complain about not being able to arrive at the results provided by the recipe all the while arguing that following the recipe isn't necessary?

STEP NINE

So now what do we do? How far do we take this I AM consciousness? My answer is that we take it to the point of oneness. ONENESS -- this is where our thoughts and words are the thoughts of I AM in us -- creative, healing and powerful in a never ending continuum.

I wrote a three part series some time ago called Transcending. I believe that this is a perfect place to insert it in this and the next two chapters.

PART ONE TRANSCENDING

Just a few definitions of transcending: "going beyond" -- "rising above" -- "surpassing" -- "exceeding" (whatever was prior).

Basically, therefore, to transcend means to breakthrough any existing level, position or barrier. For many years, the baseball standard set by George Herman ("Babe") Ruth of 60 home runs (forgetting for a moment, Roger Maris with 61 homers marred by an asterisk in the record books that indicated he achieved the mark during more games) in a single season was thought by many experts (who provided several logical and conclusive reasons) to have been an unbreakable record. Consider that once the record was broken by Hank Aaron, the greater consciousness in the game is that it was now possible to break. Several men have now gone beyond Babe Ruth's magical 60 -- with the current record at 72 (I think... I don't follow sports all that much -- so it could be a hundred by now). Meditate on this for a moment, the possibility had to happen in the mind first -- it had to be believed in order to have been achieved.

Some "Eastern" religions and people in "New Age thought" use the term transcending to mean going beyond life in the physical realm without experiencing the event called "death." The indications or evidence of this possibility are so compelling (to me at least) that I want to explore them. I believe the possibility exists -for anyone that aggressively pursues the concept- to transcend "death." I certainly intend, by the grace of God, to go there.

For those that cling to the Bible as their primary source of truth... consider Elijah, Ezekiel, Enoch and other significant characters, all recorded in the Bible, that did not die, but rather transcended.

NOTE: To learn more about Enoch, Just write to bradculen33316@yahoo.com and write ENOCH in the subject line... It will be sent to you as an attachment.

Consider that Jesus said, "He that believes in me shall never die." Many, if not the majority of people that say they "believe in Jesus Christ" twist the phrase (again), "He that believes in me shall never die" -- to mean that once they've gone through a painful death they will then spend eternal life in heaven. We'll come back in a moment to take a different (transcending) look at this thinking as well.

Let's move onto another statement attributed to Jesus: "Nothing is impossible to him that believes." Since accepting that thought at face value is an enormous leap for most of us... grasping and holding onto it could be the first step in transcending. Is it possible to avoid physical death entirely and simply move into the spirit realm without experiencing what we have come to consider as inevitable -- along with taxes?

It seems curious to me that just as fundamentalist Muslim extremists are killing themselves while killing their enemies, in order to get their reward in heaven... a whole passel of virgins to boot... that fundamentalist Christians are doing the very same thing to Jesus' promises, i.e., killing them!

Consider that Jesus also promised that those who believe in him will perform the very same miracles he performed and even greater miracles, while some fundamentalists firmly state that Jesus was the only one that could do them. But that's another story for another time, or is it? It shouldn't be (for another time)... since it is certainly going beyond (transcending) the belief systems of many people that say they believe in Jesus.

Most of us are caught in the conceptual "you have to learn to crawl before you can learn to walk." With regard to transcending beyond this life without going through death and that we can become "miracle" workers (literal promises made by Jesus) many Christian fundamentalists would have us believe that it is impossible to walk and that we are only meant to crawl.

This writer and several (admittedly all too few) others understand and know how to perform some of the miracles Jesus performed because we've followed the explicit instructions he provided for anyone willing to follow them. In that, and so far, we've transcended.

I promised to revisit "eternal life." The words in the original language translated into English as "eternal life" -- literally mean the realm in which there is no beginning and (as well as) no ending. Eternal life in the original language isn't speaking of an after-this-physical-life -- the words mean NOW. That is, going beyond the limitations of the "seen" or life on this physical plane into the spiritual realm NOW.

Want to move beyond? It takes a whole new, different and exciting focus. And it is possible... remember? "Nothing is impossible to them that believe!"

Get the free book *Unlocking the Treasure Chest of God's Gifts* just write to me at my e-mail address below... and you'll receive it as an attachment. *Treasure Chest* is just a beginning, but after all, one does have to crawl before one can walk... isn't that true? I don't know... I just know that what I can do now I couldn't do UNTIL I began to take what Jesus said seriously. Remember that he said, "What is the point of calling me, 'Lord,' if you don't also do what I say?" Please remember also, I didn't say that -- Jesus did.

The foregoing was the end of part one. I feel nudged to make a note about Enoch and to tell a true story.

I was challenged by a professional clergyman when I wrote the *Transcending* series early this year to show him one passage in the (written) "Word of God" that would back up my claim for it to be a possibility that we do not have to go through death in the usual sense of the word.

I prayed at length before answering his challenge. He had called me a "charlatan" and a "con man" that was intent on misleading the "sheep." I was shown that no matter what I told him he would argue more and that I should just let it go. I pounded on the door for a different answer -- one that would help me understand more fully why organized Christianity is so mired in false doctrine and, quite frankly, lies.

I was led to write the man and ask him one simple question. If I showed him one passage (I had already referenced several) would he acknowledge that it indeed was a biblical concept and not something hatched out of a con man's brain?

We "danced" around my challenge to him. I was amazed! No matter what I wrote he kept saying the same thing, i.e., that there are no verses in Scripture that would back up my claim and that I was a con man. I finally wrote to him and told him that I felt it would better for him if he didn't write any more and that I was deleting him from my e-mail list -- which he took as proof that he had won the argument.

In wrapping up this chapter I felt it might be useful to some to see the one passage I had intended to provide the clergyman if he would indeed acknowledge that I had provided "just one." Hebrews 11: 5

By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and was not found, because God had taken him; for before he was taken he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

Look at the very next verse!

For without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewards those who diligently seek Him.

That verse (Hebrews 11:6) has been burned into my consciousness for years. But I didn't realize the context until just this moment! By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death!

The question I hope that is burning in every reader's mind (it has long been settled for me) is why, why, why do those that refer to themselves as teachers and pastors within organized Christianity not only spurn the concept of going past (transcending) physical death, but look down their long noses of those that point to the Scriptural possibility?

As Jesus said, "ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE TO THEM THAT BELIEVE."

STEP TEN

As I copied the article I had written some months ago, Transcending, off the website (www.ministryofspirit.com), I stopped by the "Dear Brad" section and noticed the following posting by a reader.

"I was just rambling in an email to Brad about the subject of the state of the dead, having recently lost my husband, so I thought I would join this forum and see if anyone wanted to share their thoughts or beliefs.

"Until I know better, I have speculated that since there is no time in eternity when we all must enter it at the same time, like punching through a panorama wall of time, decades or centuries or millennia apart. That may sound confusing, but I know what I mean, LOL.

Any help will be appreciated!"

In the third paragraph of the article, "More on Transcending," below, are these words: "Transcendence begins with the renewing of our minds. Transcending means moving from dependence upon anything that happens on this planet including, but certainly not limited to holding onto the thought that physical death is the gateway to the "kingdom of heaven." Moving beyond thinking that our own physical death is the beginning of "eternal life" begins with the renewing of our minds."

Also we need to remember the word in the original language translated as "eternity" refers to a timeless arena in which there is no beginning and no ending, thus a fair rendering can be "this moment" or "NOW!" In other words, the above referenced posting speculating about the timing of entrance into "eternity" is brilliant logic, but is flawed on the basis of our traditional view of the word "eternity" as meaning after death. Again, the word in the original refers to a timeless realm of no beginning and no ending. Thus the answer to the timing of entrance has to do with when we have a breakthrough back into that realm by a decision to do so – not by the enemy's reaching what Jesus said is his primary goal, i.e., to kill and destroy us.

The answer that works for me to the reader's above referenced question about the "state of the dead" is THERE IS NO "STATE OF THE DEAD!" Let's take a couple of quotes of Jesus and see if a small slice of the truth begins to seep through.

The first quote is: "Anyone that believes on me shall never see death."

From the context in which the quote is set, Jesus is simply saying that by "believing on him" we have already passed from death into eternal life. Before we go to the next quote, we do need to ask what he meant by "whoever believes on me" (?). It would seem to be a good time for each of us to probe that question because quite obviously a lot is riding on whatever HIS answer is to it. The traditional religious answer is flawed.

In the second quote (to a young man who wanted to follow Jesus, but was caught in the Jewish family responsibility of the oldest son taking care of the details of his father's death), he said: "Let the dead bury the dead! You come and follow me."

In context Jesus was saying that as long as we are focused on the body bags we occupy as "our reality," and the seeming important responsibilities they impose upon us, we have a hard time getting into I AM consciousness. My old pastoral instincts of being sensitive to woman's grief over her husband's recent passing are warring with the truth that there is no "death." Death has been abolished! I didn't say that, JESUS SAID IT! Consider the question prayerfully, Holy Spirit give me your light!

Now then:

PART TWO MORE ON TRANSCENDING...

Where do we start with this transcending business? ...this going beyond the trappings of the one Jesus referred to as the "god" or "chief ruling spirit" of this planet. We simply cannot get to the point of receiving what Jesus said about anything until we get beyond the trap of listening to the wisdom of men, and into the demonstration of the presence and power of God's own Spirit.

Paul, in his first letter to some converts, in the area of Corinth, to his message about Jesus Christ, made an amazing statement, in the original language, "We who are spiritual actually have the mind of Christ."

Transcendence begins with the renewing of our minds. Transcending means moving from dependence upon anything that happens on this planet including, but certainly not limited to holding onto the thought that physical death is the gateway to the kingdom of heaven. Moving beyond thinking that our own physical death is the beginning of "eternal life," begins with the renewing of our minds.

Because what I write is so troubling to those stuck in traditional Christian thought... I feel the need to say one thing before going on. If we are going to take the above quote of Paul seriously, i.e., "We who are spiritual actually have the mind of Christ" we have to take it in the context of his stated lynchpin – "I did not come to you with enticing words of

man's wisdom, I came to you determined that you understand one basic thing... that is, Jesus Christ and his tortuous death."

For those that have a basic understanding of Christian history, the following question may be in order: Is it possible that all the correction Paul felt compelled to utter in his letters to these folks in Corinth over their immaturity and continual stumbling, have to do with his concentration on the basics and never allowing them to move beyond?

The writer of the book of Hebrews admonishes some Jewish Christians to get past the principles of Christ and to move onto spiritual maturity. "Stop laying over and over these basic principles about Christ and move on!" was this writer's plea.

I want to say two things and then move on. First is this: Receiving the fact that Jesus Christ died so that we can have that quality of life referred to as "eternal" is basic and, for me, settled. It does not have to be repeated over and over again. Second, is that there is sufficient Biblical admonition to get beyond it and move onto the "eternal" scheme of things.

Are we ready? Some are... some are not. If you are not ready, go back and sit in some pew and listen to a variation of the same thing spewed over and over again. To the rest of us, let us move on into the renewal and ENERGY of the presence and power of the living God. Living here and now... the true meaning of the word translated as "eternal life."

Here and now... no beginning and no end.

Here is the proposition and here is the foundation for moving on. Jesus said, I will send Holy Spirit and He will guide you into all truth.

That's it. I could make this go on for at least five or six more pages. What for?

Stop right now – stop arguing, stop listening to the rattling on of any man, stop fiddling around with writings -- no matter how holy sounding.

Holy Spirit of God, You are present and with me... I want to focus only on You and what You have already determined is the best thing I can do in this eternal moment of the NOW.

I want more of You... Jesus promised that if I knocked and knocked and demanded to have more of You, I would get more. I do not have enough I want to have more, more, more and yet more.

I am tired of arguing and writing – I want for my brothers and sisters to have the desire for more of You as well. Build that desire, instill it in us. Consume us with Your presence and power so that we move beyond the pale of our own minds and into the Kingdom where You live... HERE AND NOW!

Transcendence... what a simple and pure thing... cluttered by the mind of mankind.

Write me... delight me by sharing with me your learning experience at the hand of our one and only Leader, Teacher and Guide.

STEP ELEVEN

A recent e-mail from a lady began, "I disagree with you. I prefer to think..."

I have said something repeatedly that bears repeating yet one more time. Who am "I" to disagree with anyway? One of the things I have seen for a long time is that what I write is truth, but just a small slice of the truth.

My thoughts just went to the Hebrew prophet Amos. Amos had spoken what God had given him to speak over Israel. He was told in no uncertain terms by certain chief priests that they disagreed with him. He finally retorted: "You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel, and don't spout against the house of Isaac.' Therefore here is what the Lord says: 'Your wife shall be a harlot in the city; Your sons and daughters shall fall by the sword; Your land shall be divided by survey line; You shall die in a defiled land; And Israel shall surely be led away captive from his own land.'"

The question is: To which slice of truth do we want to listen? You needn't disagree with what I have written. A better strategy is to ask, "Father, is this for me? If it is listen. If it is not turn a deaf ear because it isn't for you at this time.

If God's own Spirit has anointed me to write what I've written, then with whom was the lady disagreeing?

I'll never forget the time a church pastor, attending a conference at which I was one of the speakers, came to me and quite enthusiastically said he was enjoying what I had to say. He then asked if I would be willing to schedule a time when I could come and speak at his church. I told him that I had recently made the decision that I would only speak to groups whose acknowledged leader gave me permission to speak freely whatever the Spirit of God was giving me at the time.

He said, "I was wondering about that because my people just aren't ready to hear some of the things I've heard you say here."

"I'm not sure they are supposed to hear what I said here anyway," I said. The issue is whether you will you give me full reign to say what Holy Spirit gives me to say at the time I am at your church?"

"I'd have to pray about that," he said somberly.

"Did you hear what I just asked you?" I asked I'm sure with the amazement I felt fully and readily showing in my voice.

"Yes," he said with forced evenness, "I heard *exactly* what you just said. Who are you to determine what my flock needs?"

This is exactly what Amos faced. But let's not rush to judgment. Those priests were given authority over the folks at Bethel and they told Amos to get lost because "their people" weren't ready to hear what a prophet sent by God had to say. Hey – they didn't know Amos was a prophet sent by God. It was their responsibility to test the prophets as to whether they were to be allowed to speak. The standard they used to test was faulty only by hindsight. "Pastoral authority" is a scary thing considering the outcome of that particular exchange.

As to the above referenced pastor. How was he to know whether I should speak to his congregation? After all, he did say he was going to pray about it. I hadn't asked about going either, I merely had shared with him a recent decision I had made related to one criterion I had adopted with which to make the decision whether to accept an invitation to speak at some church or group.

I remember the (to me) audible voice I "heard" once while walking up to a lectern to speak to a large crowd of teenagers assembled at a gymnasium. What I heard was, "Deciding to be a spokesman for God is an awesome responsibility."

Fortunately the thought or voice startled me enough so I stopped in my tracks and listened. I wasn't supposed to speak at all. I swallowed hard and spent the next almost two hours or so facilitating the varied messages God spoke through a number of the teenagers present – a dynamic and dramatic time it was.

When the assembly was over the principal of the church sponsored school (he was also an associate pastor of the sponsoring church) came up to me and said, "Well you still owe us a visit to speak. Do you do that very often?" (Making reference to the fact that the entire assembly time during which I was scheduled to speak was taken up by students sharing one by one what God was giving them). I explained what had happened and then commented on the level of spiritual maturity evident in the student body made up of some two hundred teenagers.

He laughed, "Spiritual maturity, baloney! This is a bunch of rowdy kids with continual discipline problems – what we both witnessed here was a miracle. I'm just glad you were obedient to the Holy Spirit."

With that, here is the final segment of the Transcending articles:

PART THREE TRANSCENDING [CON'T]

PROPER COMPARISONS...

Elisha and Elijah –

Almost everyone has heard of the great Hebrew prophet Elijah. Less well known is Elisha. Elisha is the guy that Elijah kept trying to get rid of, but Elisha just wouldn't go away. "Look, kid," Elijah would say, "I've got to go" (here or there), "so please just stay here and quit following me around."

Just as often as Elijah would tell Elisha to get lost... Elisha would answer, "No way! As God lives and as your spirit lives, I'm not leaving you."

Elijah in exasperation finally asked, "WHAT DO YOU WANT? -- ALREADY!!!"

Elisha replied, "I want DOUBLE the amount of your spirit!"

Elijah exclaimed, "Whoa... you've asked for a hard thing, kid. But I'll tell you what. You stick so close to me that when I am taken up to be with the Lord that you see me go. If you see me go... it's a done deal. You will have what you ask."

A little research in First and Second Kings will demonstrate an amazing fact... Elisha performed just about double or twice the amount of miracles that Elijah was recorded as performing! Yet most of us can barely remember hearing about Elisha.

The same kind of comparison is available to us. Everybody has heard of Jesus "the Christ." Regardless what anyone believes about Jesus, just about everyone is well acquainted with his name and that he performed "miracles" such as healing all kinds of diverse diseases, casting out demons, giving sight and/or hearing even to those that had been born blind and/or deaf, etc...

Much less known is the fact that Jesus said, "Anyone that believes in me will perform the very same miracles you have watched me perform, and even greater miracles!"

Now, this isn't about "miracles" per se. I continually get e-mails telling me that miracles aren't all that important. I've never said they were... but can't we at least begin to see and acknowledge something? Brad Cullen didn't say it. Brad Cullen is just quoting what Jesus said. People even get angry with me for bringing that Jesus said this particular thing up. Why do they get so angry? Well, let's not get off on that... because that is *really* unimportant! Hmmm, maybe it isn't so unimportant.

If we don't want to follow Jesus around (and the Bible assures us that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever) – and the enemy will most certainly attempt to dissuade us from doing so – we will be just like Elisha **WOULD HAVE BEEN** had he *not* watched Elijah so closely that he was the lone witness to Elijah being "taken up."

Elisha compared himself with Elijah and knew that Elijah was so powerful that there was no way Elisha could come close to the feats of Elijah unless he was endowed with twice the same spirit that was in Elijah.

It seems to me that I have wasted much of my life making comparisons with other people... either in simple admiration or ridiculous envy. When the "ultimate man on earth," at least in my view, Jesus Christ, said we could be just like HIM and do the same things that HE did while walking this plane as a man. Why would I waste my time on coming up on the short end of my comparison exercise with anyone other than Jesus Christ? The Bible says that he was the first born among many. We are the many -- if we will take the promises seriously.

Religious tradition has rendered a comparison between Jesus and any of us as individuals as a horrid and forbidden thing. Pure Sacrilege. Religion has done this by making Jesus an object of worship rather than an example.

Make no mistake... The Scriptures make it clear that Jesus in his preexistence created the universe and everything in it. It is my view (only my view) that part of the "believing in Jesus Christ" sufficiently enough to have double the amount of Holy Spirit in him -- in order to do the greater things that he said that anyone that believes would do even greater than he was able to do -- (let that digest for a moment) is the understanding that not only did he create the entire universe and everything in it... but this Creator lives in YOU!

Praying trite, unbelieving prayers ending with, "In the name of Jesus, amen," and wondering why we cannot do what Jesus said we would do -- begins in the ignorance of what the word translated as "name" means. Jesus said, "Whatever you ask in my name you shall have."

The foregoing statement needs a little understanding. The word translated as "ask" actually means "demand" because it is due... Let's ask ourselves, "Why is it due?" It is due *because he promised it!*

The word translated as "name" actually means "depicting the character and authority." What is the character and authority of Jesus? Jesus' character as a man was demonstrated by the fact that he only wanted his Father's will, that is, his Father's desires and purposes.

What is the authority of Jesus? He created everything... both seen and unseen... including the angels that "fell from heaven" led by none other than Satan himself. That's right, according to the Bible, Jesus created Satan, before he rebelled and became the enemy, taking a third of those angels with him, so the Scriptures assert. I didn't just dream this stuff out of the air... these statements are all in the Bible. If you insist on believing what the Bible says.

To be what Jesus was as a man and to do what he did... requires us to prepare in the same way that Jesus prepared. It is mind boggling to me that people want to argue about Jesus being part and parcel of the Godhead and yet refuse to even consider doing what he said was necessary to do and what he expects us to do, if we are going to do the same things he did.

Transcending is no mysterious word. It simply means going beyond. Beginning to crawl is an amazing feat for an infant. Taking that first step toward what we refer to as walking. Speaking the first word... then stringing words together in a sentence and on and on and on with all the exciting things of watching an infant develop. These are all part of an infant transcending from a helpless baby into a self-propelling, talking child.

Transcending begins with confidence-building baby steps.

Try this interesting little ditty on for size... "If God wants me to perform miracles... then God will give me the ability." God has already provided everything... people are just so restricted by the religious lies they've been told, inspired by the father of lies, they simply cannot see or hear the truth. As Jesus said, "even if somebody was raised from the dead they wouldn't believe."

What is amazing to me is that those who have no trouble getting their minds around Jesus' resurrection... absolutely refuse to believe what he said about any individual believer's destiny. Miracle workers. Further mind boggling comes from religious leaders that want to protect their flocks from such "lies."

One of my favorite stories has to do with the little boy that Jesus' disciples failed to have any effect upon. The boy's father brought him to Jesus explaining that his disciples hadn't been able to cure him. Jesus voiced his exasperation with his own hand-picked crew, no less, by calling them (literally) a bunch of faithless perverts! He called them that because he was frustrated with them for not doing what they needed to do in preparation for what it takes... for this particular demon and others like him. By the way, "bunch of faithless perverts" is exactly what the words mean in the original language.

Immediately after Jesus expressed himself so eloquently, the narrative indicates that he merely "rebuked" the spirit and he went out of the boy and he was cured. What I like about this story is the fact that Jesus' disciples later went to Jesus privately and asked, "What's the deal? Why were we unable to cast that demon out of the boy?"

Point being, we don't ask him, "Hey, how come if you said any individual believer can do these things... why can't I?" We just make up ridiculous excuses why we cannot do it and further, ridicule those who are at least trying to grow into what Jesus said any individual would do... if he or she believed.

Jesus told them (and us) explicitly why... they didn't have enough faith. Then he told them what was necessary to do to get adequate faith. Trust me, the antidote for a lack of enough faith to do what Jesus said we could do... doesn't come with the assertion of "faith," "If God wants me to have XXXXXX then He'll just have to give it to me."

Listen, the truth is, the gift has already been given. It is nicely wrapped with a ribbon around it... waiting for anyone to go where it is stored. The problem is that the gift is buried under a bunch of religious doctrine better referred to as unbelief.

TRANSCEND! The process begins with confidence (faith) building baby steps. It doesn't begin with a baby lying in his crib saying... "I'll never be able to do that." Nor does the process continue if the baby, at his first step, stumbles and never gets up again!

To take that metaphor a bit farther... it takes mothers, daddies, relatives and others encouraging the baby with... "c'mon, you can do it" as he takes those first little steps.

Those that would "protect" the baby from ever transcending beyond being a baby are merely delaying things to meet their own emotional needs. Think about that... those of you who insist on ministering in less than the power and presence of God's own Spirit.

STEP TWELVE

In Conclusion --

Over the course of the three weeks it has taken to write and send the previous (first eleven) chapters I have received many e-mails. Most of these have been in the flavor, variety and form of encouragement. Some have been encouraging simply because they have been dramatic evidence of people wanting to move beyond – transcend – religious traditions especially when those traditions have very limited or no scriptural basis, and move onto a path paved with a steady growth of faith based on experience and guidance by God's own Spirit into a deeper understanding of Truth.

Other e-mails have been downright illuminating and inspiring. One such was from a man that had requested the information I had compiled on the Book of Enoch. He wrote saying that I was obviously interested in the "afterlife" and suggested a website for me to look at www.afterlife-knowledge.com which is introduced on that site as, "dedicated to sharing what engineer, author and lecturer, Bruce Moen, has found, hoping it will reduce fear and uncertainty about death and help you increase your Afterlife Knowledge..."

I am in no way promoting the website, Mr. Moen's techniques or observations, but I found it to be a worthwhile exercise to surf around a bit. This is my response to the man that forwarded the link to me:

Hi _____,

The focus on death as the only means to experiencing the "afterlife" is intriguing to me. Since you have apparently dabbled a bit, I'd like your reactions to something.

As you have probably gathered, I don't believe we have to experience death to live in the "Eternal" realm, a term by the way, I prefer to "afterlife."

I find Bruce Moen to be quite incisive, in fact delightfully so, I especially like that he seems to share from a position of "here is my experience, if your experience is different, wonderful!"

The following is an excerpt from his prologue to "Voyages into the Afterlife" –

The fear of death we carry is erased by Knowledge of what lies beyond our physical world's horizon. I want you to know you don't have to take anyone else's word for what the Afterlife is. You can explore There yourself and learn from your own direct experience. There you might discover not just hope, but knowledge. The one message I want to be sure to deliver before I die is that when you board your ship for the Afterlife, as we all someday must, there's an opportunity to live in complete freedom.

What I'm focusing on here are two of Moen's statements:

The first: "The fear of death we carry is erased by knowledge of what lies beyond our physical world's horizon."

The second: "The one message I want to be sure to deliver before I die is that when you board your ship for the afterlife, as we all someday must, there's an opportunity to live in complete freedom."

My response to both these statements in one nutshell is that we can erase the fear of death by understanding that death has been done away as a "done deal" and that there is a way to avoid experiencing it if we desire (why would anyone not want to avoid experiencing death) which means we don't have to board the ship of death in order to experience eternal life.

This added note just came to me and was not included in my e-mail: I feel the need to stop here to underline something prevalent in our thinking. Someone could make the argument about my question in parenthesis in the above paragraph in this way: What if someone is in horrible pain from disease so that the only escape is death? My emphatic answer to that is I have seen enough people declared terminally ill by physicians who were healed and delivered from both their pain of disease and from physical death to realize that argument is brewed in the pit of hell! Now, the scriptural, "Death where is thy sting?" takes on a whole new meaning – but only if we believe it and take action against it to make sure that it doesn't "sting" us. Is that possible, or was Jesus not serious when he said NOTHING is impossible to them that believe? I will add a bit more after the remainder of my e-mail response below.

"Eternal life" exists NOW and in many ways Moen agrees by saying we can visit the "afterlife" anytime we like. Yep. Where I take his thought a bit further is in the fact that Jesus said that death is abolished. The writer to some Jewish Christians or Hebrews said, "By faith Enoch was taken away so that he did not see death, and could not be found."

Why "die" when we can get to the other side without dying? Jesus said nothing is impossible to them that believe.

The further question in my mind is why is this line of probing so unpalatable to those who say they believe in Jesus Christ?

Brad

My added note to the insertion above: If someone has already lost a loved one to death, the tendency to cling to the supposition that it was inevitable is easy to understand, but hardly profitable. The following is a true story:

I was traveling alone by automobile and felt an almost urgent need to stop to take a walk. I walked a couple of blocks away from the highway on a beautiful tree lined street. I was wondering why I felt such an urgency to take this short walk. I saw a pretty white church steeple in the distance rising above a hedge, thick shrubbery and stand of pine trees all of which was almost completely hiding the main part of the church building.

As I approached the church I saw an elderly man sitting on the steps. I immediately knew that I he was the reason that I had felt the urge to stop and take a walk.

He startled me by calling out, "Are you the one that was sent to me?"

After recovering from the initial shock, I walked up the narrow little stone pathway to where he was sitting. We had not so much as said hello to one another let alone introduced ourselves. I said, "Well, I was driving through down on the highway and felt an urge to stop and take a walk. I was a bit preoccupied so I'm afraid I wasn't listening very carefully. What's up?"

"I was praying this morning," he began, "for some answers as to what to do about my ministry and this church. I had I guess what you might call a vision during which the Lord told me that He would send a man to tell me all things."

He went on to tell me that he and his wife had felt led to come from Chicago to this small town and build this church. They had ministered here for many years and the congregation had grown considerably. His wife had recently succumbed to cancer and he said he was at a loss as to how to carry on. He continued probably for about an hour and a half with a narrative that included how he and his wife were called to start a church here.

He stopped abruptly. I had not said a word, but for the entire time had just sat on the steps with him and listened. We still had not introduced ourselves. Nothing was said for several seconds. He looked at me intently and said, "You don't think Emily needed to die, do you?"

I prayed silently and finally said, "Well, it doesn't really matter what I think, but you already know the answer. She didn't have to suffer or die."

Tears streamed down his face as he said, "I didn't know it until I asked the question. I had never given it any thought. She had such a horrible time of it I looked at her death as a blessing. I just realized that is a lie!"

We finally exchanged our names and he asked a few questions about me. I told him that I was on my way to speak at an adult retreat and was actually a day early. He asked me if I would mind sharing at their midweek service that night. After I agreed we spent several hours talking together, during which I shared many things that God had been showing me.

When the service started he told the congregation that he had several things to tell them and that there would be a meeting of the Board directly after the service. "First of all, I want to tell you that I have learned that Emily did not have to die. I have learned how the cancer could have been removed. Second, I want to tell you that from this day forward this church has a new pastor, I am resigning."

I was seated in the front pew sitting sideways with my arm across the back and was able to see the crowd's immediate reaction, which was that everyone turned their head to look at me, obviously thinking that I was to be the new church leader.

He said, with a laugh, "Oh no, not him. He'll be sharing with us in a few minutes. God sent him to me this morning to tell me some things. Our new pastor will be Jesus Christ."

He went on to share several passages that I had shown him earlier that so clearly indicate that we are to have only one Leader and Teacher and the rest of us are to minister to one another in the same equality as brothers and sisters are equal. He had their attention! The rest of the meeting was eventful but it doesn't add anything here. My point of telling the story seem obvious to me. He faced the truth and was a bit sad that his wife could have been delivered and healed, but was able to face the future with courage and a new conviction of what the ministry of the church would be.

Back to the e-mail exchange:

The man did send his reaction and his response was nothing short of brilliant. My lack of brilliance is seen in the fact that I filed it somewhere to include in this chapter and cannot for the life of me find it. Sorry about that.

A friend of mine of many years is a Native American, on a wall in his home on the Kona Coast of the "Big Island" of Hawaii, is a replica of an outrigger canoe with the caption in calligraphy painted on the wall: "You can never discover new lands until you lose sight of the shore."

Paul writing to a group of believers in the district of Corinth was summarizing what he was saying about operating in certain Holy Spirit derived gifts while assembling together, "What then brethren," or as the New King James Version puts it, "What is the conclusion then?"

He had just urged them to earnestly desire spiritual gifts especially that they prophesy without neglecting speaking in languages they hadn't learned. In fact he told them that he was glad that he spoke in "tongues" more than them all and that he wished they all spoke in tongues. Now he says, "I will pray with the spirit without understanding and I

will also pray with understanding. I will sing with the spirit without understanding and I will also sing with words everyone understands.”

As my above referenced Native American friend, a deeply spiritual man, said, “The trouble with most Christians is that they are afraid to get into the boat – never mind ever losing sight of the shore.”

Jesus said that he was sending Holy Spirit, “the Helper” to guide us into all truth. We needn’t live in fear nor be afraid to question every belief and doctrine we hold onto. We have a God-sent Helper ready to guide us into many safe, but oh so exciting ports in new lands. Discovery time: WONDERS NEVER CEASE, but first you gotta get in the boat.

I responded to an e-mail last night from a woman that was experiencing heart trouble. She had written, “My heart problems and my asthma keep me in a constant turmoil. I know what you write is the truth, but can you help me get past my focus on these things?”

I told her very simply to give up ownership. It isn’t “her” body and it isn’t “her” asthma. Transcendence, that is, living our lives in full awareness that “it is no longer ‘I’ but Christ” begins when we consciously choose different words to express what is going on.

The body I occupy is not who I am. I am an eternal and integral part of the Father who lives in this body with me. Agents of the enemy continually attack this body with fiery darts of fear, pride, anxiety, anger, bitterness, confusion, sorrow, pain, symptoms of disease, etc., ad infinitum.

I have been given authority over every work of the enemy and so have you. We exercise this authority by speaking it. One e-mail correspondent that has become a friend in recent months wrote: “I am so glad you decided to write this new book. I’ll never forget the time I wrote to you after reading Unlocking The Treasure Chest that I asked you what to do about strong negative thoughts that occurred while I was praying. You told me to tell them to get out. You have no idea the consternation that created when I was praying aloud with my wife shortly afterward and I said a loud ‘GET OUT’ right in the middle of praying over a financial problem. My wife thought I was losing my mind even after I explained it to her. The thought had crossed my mind that her spending habits were a major part of the problem. I knew it was the Accuser working overtime. When I said ‘get out’ the thought disappeared just like magic and I had a sense of the authority we actually have and prayed with increased vigor knowing that what I was saying was the will of God. All this to say, keep up the good work. You are helping thousands of people just like us begin to walk in the authority that Jesus said he had given us.”

Well, I do appreciate the encouragement people send, but then I realize that “I” can’t “keep up the good work.” It is the Father within me.

I AM

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