

Power for Living
For Sinners Only*

* "saints" just won't get it – (read the second chapter and find out why).

Anonymous

Well, Here We Go Again (a bit about the author)

I've written several other short books, eight of which were under a pseudonym. All have been fairly well received, but two have been life changing to thousands of people literally all over the world. One of these latter two has been translated into several languages, even Polish, no less. These two "life changers" were written anonymously; I was "instructed" to write these two anonymously, as I am this one, and to give them away (period). For the record, I also write under my own name and I've been paid fairly well for it.

The subtitle "For Sinners Only" has a lot of significance for me. I had no idea I was going to use it until after I felt compelled to begin writing. I have no clear idea where this book is specifically headed. I asked if I were being "led" to write, or if this was some sort of delusional compulsion to give my somewhat mundane life some purpose. "For Sinners Only" helped confirm to me that I wasn't being crazy. I have a friend of over forty years, Jim, whom I intend to call when I finish the first few pages to read them to him. His encouragement over thirty years ago to write a book was the catalyst for me to begin a career in writing. "For Sinners Only" was a vision he had for a storefront "church" of sorts for discussions about Jesus, Bible study and so forth. He envisioned a sign on the window:

For Sinners Only

Jim's statement to anyone who had ears to hear it was, "I have one thing and only one thing to offer anyone, that is, Christ died for me, period." He also encouraged me as a friend through some of the toughest times I've had in my life; poor choices I've made along the way. Never judgmental, sometimes lovingly critical, Jim was my closest friend and the most meaningful person in my life for many years. I also like to trot out the fact that he has an M.D. at the end of his name – He's a medical doctor in the specialty of psychiatry. The point is, I'm not nuts, just ask my buddy, the psychiatrist! We shared many miracles together; he has enormous faith, an unalterable commitment to be in and do the will of God and knows how to pray to get results. He also understands at his depths exactly what Jesus meant when he said, "Why call me good? No man is good, only God."

When I call him I am going to offer to ghost-write any book he feels compelled to write. He has a story to tell and one that will be widely distributed. On a practical level I owe him plenty though he has never made me feel a moment of obligation, but I would like to do this for him, freely.

This isn't about Jim... this is to explain a couple of things about the author. Failed marriages (yes plural), failed businesses (yes plural), a screw up in so many ways it is pointless to enumerate them. But I also live in the presence and power of the One that referred to Himself as **I AM**. I sense this book is going to be about that – living in this duality of a sinner doing the things Jesus said anyone who believes *enough* will do. Therefore, I sense that it will be an encouragement to anyone who knows there's more to this life, but hasn't yet found the key to real...

Power for Living

Acknowledgments

There are so many fellow sojourners in Christ who have been so supportive and helpful recently that I think it would be just too cumbersome to name them all. Please forgive me, I love you all and you know who you are.

These three, however, simply must be acknowledged:

James Steeck, a friend for over thirty years, and fellow chief of sinners, his fancy title is Vice President of Consulting (or something) for the financial giant Citigroup. Without Jim's almost daily encouragement and prayer; and our joint commitment to be part of a mutual-ministry, faith community together, things would have been far more difficult. He's extremely busy but always willing to take time for me. His spiritual insights about my former writings have been enormously helpful. He will be among the first readers of the manuscript. He'll know when I am off track and not under the inspiration of our Father and will have ways to tell me without making me feel the need to be defensive.

Dennis Plies, PhD, also a close friend for over thirty years, critic (in the best sense of the word). Dennis' primary vocation is as a professor at a Christian college. He is a gifted counselor and a giant in so many areas both in and out of his professorial occupation. One of his avocations is also professional musician, both performer and teacher par excellence. He is considered a who's who among fellow professional musicians, a literal star in Jazz circles. Dennis is one of the chosen teachers. "Many are called, but few are chosen." He is a teacher of practical living for those of us who are privileged to be counted among his close friends who have "ears to hear" and from whom I've gleaned, oh, so much. Dennis has taught me the meaning of the word accountability both spiritually, and in this physical world in which we live. One of the many things I find so special about Dennis is his commitment to be a co-learner with both his students and his friends outside of academia.

Here's what Dennis wrote about another book "I" wrote *Super Computer*:

Super Computer shares deep insights, radical shifts of thinking, through a series of stories. The writer insists that we go directly to the Source rather than depend on other humans, signified as spiritual leaders. For such power and liberation the author points to the Author of Authors, recommending that we can live limitlessly as we remove ourselves from closed systems of authority. By communicating directly and boldly with our true Authority, and this becoming our lifestyle, we move beyond our intellect to spiritual wisdom. This reading is mesmerizing, for it flows and sustains a rhythm of dynamic, hopeful living.

Alan - - my son of 47 years, among my closest friends and my severest but also most helpful critic; he is a voracious reader of a wide variety of spiritual material and I trust him to simply give his honest opinion. He's among those that realize "I'm" not doing the writing. He talks to me about some points in *Super Computer* as a fellow reader. He's a brother and a close friend. What higher recognition can a father give (to and about) his son? He is also a spiritual mentor God sent to me and, as with Dennis and Jim above, a co-learner.

Foreword

In the two previous anonymously written books, *Unlocking the Treasure Chest of God's Gifts*, and *Super Computer*, the focus was on healing, spiritual warfare, and other supernatural phenomena. Both books were amazing in that the audiences were a curious mixture of people.

I am bringing this up to emphasize something vital. This book is absolutely free. It is copyrighted only to protect tampering with the content. You are encouraged to copy it and **prayerfully** give it to others as **Spirit leads you**.

Treasure Chest had (and continues to have) a curious effect on one certain group of readers, that is, professional clergy, primarily among Evangelicals. They are either threatened by it and resist it with attacks that could be considered slanderous, if you can slander someone that chooses to remain anonymous. Those relatively few (my best "guesstimate" is perhaps in the five percentile range) who readily grasp and accept the core message of the book, which is Jesus' command that we engage in mutual ministry as equals don't resist it on that basis alone. Jesus specifically tells us to avoid titles and trappings of human spiritual leadership. Such a command flies in the face of how organized Christianity operates. Instead of looking at Jesus' statement about this the majority of professional clergy responds by justifying their roles and positions of authority and superiority. They do this by using what Paul wrote about pastors and teachers.

The following true story should help put the matter in its true perspective. A complete version of *Treasure Chest* found its way onto the website of a ministry based in North Carolina. The fellow that operates the website was contacted by the pastor of two churches in adjacent cities in the New York area. He wanted to make fifty copies to give twenty-five out to selected members of each congregation as a study guide of sorts. The operator of the website asked me if I would be willing to have *Treasure Chest* copied and the outgrowth was that the pastor of these two churches and I began an e-mail exchange that lasted several months.

The book had such an impact on him and his wife that it changed their approach to ministry. After much prayerful consideration he felt he no longer wanted either congregation to refer to him as pastor, but merely a brother in mutual ministry with the other members. The way he operated in these two separate congregations was to conduct a worship service at the first church at 9:00 a.m. followed at 10:00 a.m. by several small groups of Sunday school sessions led by lay persons. He made the thirty-minute drive to the second church that started its Sunday school at 10:00 a.m. followed at 11:00 a.m. by worship upon his arrival.

He shared with me how well the midweek study sessions were going using *Treasure Chest* as the discussion medium. One church was on Wednesday evening and the other on Thursday. Healing and deliverance ministries developed out of these midweek sessions. His inner conviction grew that he and his wife should be a brother and sister among other

brothers and sisters. The idea grew among the midweek study participants. Sharing the book's thesis that the pastoral and teaching gifts were resident in the Spirit and different individuals would be anointed in both offices at differing times and the process would flow without any distinct human control. I was amazed and excited that this concept could function so well within an organized church. The midweek groups began meeting in homes and was growing rapidly, with full support and appreciation of the respective church boards.

A few months went by with our e-mails becoming more and more frequent as he shared with me how God was leading and the thrill of that awareness. In one e-mail he asked for my phone number – he still didn't know my name, just my e-mail "handle." I gave him my number and best times to call. A few days later we had an intriguing conversation. He had informed both church boards that as a matter of policy he was going to be obedient to Jesus and not allow anyone to refer to him as pastor.

Both boards were adamant in their refusal of this posture. They felt the growth and stability of their churches demanded the traditional role. He wanted my advice. He explained that he and his wife had three children and their home was furnished by the joint support of the two churches. He told me that the resistance was firm. I told him that I couldn't give him advice about what to do, but in my experience my only choice was to follow Jesus and come out of the organized church for that very reason. I told him that his predicament was being shared in several cities across the U.S. and literally all over the world.. I felt I needed to tell him that quite a few people in his position simply left voluntarily while others were fired. With loss of income, insurance and retirement benefits and housing it was a tough call. We prayed together over the phone, agreeing that we wanted God's will for the situation. I told him that I was amazed how far and long the situation had developed without resistance to the outworking and rather phenomenal growth of the midweek sessions; I said it would be a shame to disrupt that and maybe Spirit would provide him with a solution so that he wouldn't feel that it was necessary to leave.

He didn't get the chance for any such leading to develop. A few days later he called me to say that he had been fired without notice from both churches. He was told to vacate the parsonage immediately. He had a troubling several days. Several people in the midweek groups left with him. I thought he handled it wisely, lovingly and carefully.

Did it all work out? Oh yes! He now coordinates and plants in-home groups in several areas and still uses *Treasure Chest* as the introductory study medium. I tell my own story in *Super Computer*. All of us who have been obedient to what Jesus has called us to do share the same experience. That is, an increased sense of the presence and power of God's own Spirit upon us for mutual ministry among equals; which leads us *finally* to chapter one of ***Power for Living*** (For Sinners Only).

Chapter One

I was doing some marketing consulting for a small manufacturer just outside Las Vegas, Nevada. The owner of the company had made a computer and a desk available in a small supply room so I could have the privacy I required.

One morning I went to start up the computer and it wouldn't come on. I hated to bother the owner about something that mundane, so I first went to his receptionist and asked who in the plant could help me. She paged the man on site that did most of the work "in house" with computers if the problems were fairly simple. While we were waiting for him she explained that if he couldn't get it going she would call their outside technician. About that time, the owner walked up and asked what the problem was. I told him I couldn't get the computer to work.

"Let's go take a quick look," he said.

"Sorry to be such a bother," I said as we walked down the corridor.

"Not at all," he said nonchalantly as he opened the door to my little cubbyhole. "I'm really anxious to see your proposal for increasing our market share in southern California, so we've got to keep you working."

He looked under the desk, crouched down and put the plug in the socket. On came the computer. Of course, to compound my embarrassment, the guy the receptionist had paged for me walked in right at that moment. We all had a laugh at my expense. I apologized profusely for being so stupid.

"Don't worry about it," the owner said with a chuckle, "we didn't hire you to do anything so highly technical."

That is rather typical of what I do when anything is outside my area of expertise. I don't even look to see if it might be something that simple, although I do admit that the power cord is now the first thing I look at, before I go get technical help. Something that is also outside my area of expertise is finding anything I have misplaced. I cannot tell you how many times I have been embarrassed after "looking all over the place" for mislaid keys, wallet, pen, calculator etc. only to ask someone if they've seen the missing article and they immediately find it by looking on or around my desk, leaving me feeling silly.

What's this got to do with "Power for Living?" We're getting there, just be patient.

At the other end of the spectrum is when something is well within my knowledge and somebody asks for my advice, I jump right in to help solve a problem that doesn't even exist! I used to get sucked into that bit of embarrassment all the time. Unlike the owner of the company who did two things: One, asked me what was wrong, "I couldn't get the computer to work." Two he checked the power outlet and put the plug all the way into the socket. I've finally learned to ask the person with the problem a few questions. Before I take any action I always ask the real Source of all information. The One Jesus said would guide us into all truth. That in a nutshell is *Power for Living*.

Put the plug in, dummy! Ah, so simple.

The challenge for many people is that they haven't yet learned how to access the Source. Your immediate response might be, "Oh, this is going to be another one of those things about prayer" – not at all. In fact, quite often when people come to me or call me and they believe their need is to be healed from some malady or another and ask me if I will pray for them, it will go something like this.

"I have asthma and so-and-so told me you have a gift for healing asthma. Will you pray for me?"

"I don't pray to get rid of asthma," is my somewhat stock answer. "What's going on?" I first query them to get their perspective of the cause, when was the origin, what they've been doing about it, how severe are the attacks, how long they've had it and if they believe they can be healed "supernaturally." Depending upon the answers I get from them, and the answer I get from the Source, I'll know what to do, but it won't be to *pray* in the usual sense of that word.

I had an exchange with someone recently who had been healed of diabetes just a few weeks before. "Would you pray for my shoulder, it hurts all the time? The pain is killing me!"

"Oh, I see," I said to him, "You want to make pronouncements with your mouth like that and then come to me to pray for the opposite result than what you are praying for."

"Wait a minute, I've been praying for God to heal it, what are you talking about?"

"In general terms, the word translated from the original language as 'prayer' means speaking toward God, that is, into the spirit realm or 'kingdom of heaven.' When you say that your shoulder is killing you, believe it or not, you are giving permission for the cause of the pain to hang around. By the way," I said softly, touching him on the top of his left shoulder, which he had indicated was the 'killing culprit,' "the pain is gone."

"Wow, what did you do? The pain is *completely* gone!"

"I didn't do anything," I said, "It really is your faith that took care of it."

Chapter Two

Our present circumstances (and pain) almost always have their roots in some experience we had in the past. Therefore, dealing with the present circumstance (including taking pills or treatment to dull the pain) will not result in a lasting cure.

-Anon-

My all time favorite narrative surrounding something Jesus said and did is in Matthew 17: 15-21.

Here's why:

1. It demonstrates our erroneous thinking when it comes to looking for a cure. A man came to Jesus to get his son healed from epileptic-like seizures. Jesus did ***not*** heal the boy. He got rid of the cause and, "poof," no more seizures.
2. His disciples understood the principle, but couldn't get rid of the cause. Jesus was quite irritated with them because they couldn't do

it. In other words both he and they expected them to be able to do it. He said words to the effect, "How long do I have to put up with you faithless perverts?"

3. When they were able to get him off by himself they asked him, "How come we couldn't do it?" His answer was simple, "Because you don't believe enough."
4. He went on to say that nothing would be impossible if we do believe enough.
5. He also provided instructions as to how to get to the point of believing enough.

We can get to the point of believing enough so that we can get rid of causes and thereby people are made whole. We can also get to the point of believing enough to heal. The key to ***Power for Living*** resides in our believing enough. If you don't believe everything in this paragraph, it is for one very simple reason – you don't believe the content in 4 and 5 above. Read them again. If you believe, but are not yet able to get rid of causes, and effect cures, it is because you have not followed Jesus' instructions, or you have not yet applied them.

If we can digest the foregoing paragraph, perhaps we're ready to chew on something else. Jesus' handpicked twelve disciples were unable to get rid of the cause in the boy, the result of which, to put it crudely, was that it pissed Jesus off. Why? Why indeed? Especially when we are so prone to make excuses for the same kinds of failures. We go even further; we hide behind silly doctrines and systems of unbelief that insist that demons or evil spirits don't even exist. Or we hide behind Paul's rhetorical question, "Are all able to wield miracles?" by turning his rhetoric into a doctrine that it is impossible for all to do the seeming miraculous such as getting rid of demons or healing – thereby contradicting Jesus' promise that NOTHING will be impossible to those who believe enough.

Now hear this: I did not just say that Paul contradicted what Jesus said. Paul was stating an obvious fact that not everyone is able to perform miracles. He was not crossing every "t" or dotting every "i" of why they cannot. Unbelieving men have devised doctrines that contradict what Jesus said. So here's an appropriate question, the answer to which provides the first step to acquiring ***Power for Living***.

Do I want to follow Jesus' instructions or the doctrines of men?

If we want to live in the presence and power of God's own Spirit, we must walk away from our doctrinal excuses and follow the instructions of Jesus. Where can they be found? We'll get to that, but first, let's face something else Jesus said head-on. If we do, we might be motivated to follow His instructions. Any individual who believes enough will perform the same miracles He performed and more. If you want to argue with that, take it up with Jesus.

Any individual, that's you, that's me. I can do these things because I have applied the instructions of Jesus and can affirm that they work. But this isn't about me; this is about any individual that believes enough. That means you too can be a worker of miracles. Now then, we get to the crux of ***Power for Living***: If we are going to be and do what Jesus did and more, doesn't it register in our innermost beings that we ought to do it the way Jesus did it? Hold on to your hat! We're about ready to go on a roller coaster ride.

Jesus did not perform any miracles. The Father ***in him*** did the "works." So the second step to believing enough to do what Jesus did is to acquire the same consciousness that Jesus possessed. He provided instructions for that as well. Have you ever heard the term "Christ-like?" It is a rather intriguing religious term because what is usually meant by it is being pretty much what Jesus was not. Jesus had some pretty choice words for the religious of his day especially for those that wanted to impose their particular religious views on others. He called them the "children of snakes;" "painted over grave markers" and other niceties. He also told them that they had nullified God's commands with their many traditions and petty religious doctrines. He ate and drank in taverns with sinners. Some of whom went on to become followers and workers of miracles.

It is at this auspicious point that I will explain the asterisk on the title page making reference to the fact that this book is "for sinners only" and that "saints just won't get it." Here's why. What I mean by a sinner is taken from the root word in the original languages. The word "sin" means basically and merely to ignore, disregard and otherwise not get God involved in any particular area of our lives. Our Roman Catholic heritage carried over into protestant theology, "sin" has been categorized and listed as any number of activities, which may or may not be missing God at all, depending upon the individual. The problem is that people with a certain doctrinal bent want to take issue with my use of the term "sinner." I am chosen ("many are called but few are chosen," we'll get to the distinction between those two terms later if I am led to come back to them), not to come to the "saints," but to fellow sinners. I understand the term as I am using it.

Those of you who will get something out of ***Power for Living*** will be brought into the faith and consciousness of Jesus and begin living in the

presence and power of God's own Spirit. You know at your depths that you are fellow sinners. Rather than get into doctrinal discussions about our "positional righteousness," please just keep reading. Part of the growing awareness you will have is to understand that the faith and consciousness of Jesus is **HIM LIVING HIS LIFE IN YOU**. Holding that out as a doctrine, however, does not raise the dead, does not heal diverse diseases, does not do anything but get into meaningless religious discussion by whatever other term. At some point you will get it. If you already had this consciousness you would not be wasting your time reading this book.

NOW HEAR THIS: I am growing daily in this faith and conscious-ness of Jesus because I am applying Jesus' instructions daily. Since I am growing daily in it, it should be obvious that I am not ***always*** walking in it. Therefore, even though in the positional sense, because Christ is in me, I AM. I spend no little time missing God. This little digression is primarily for those who want to take issue with me because I say, "I am a sinner." But to you who know you are my fellow sinners, and I am led to say this, it is ***Power for Living***. Got it? I hope so. Moving on...

Chapter Three

How Can I know If I Am Getting Through to God?

The question assumes that I really want to get through to God. The answer is simple, but hardly satisfactory unless I *really* want to get through to God – and for what purpose?

Because of what I write, and what the ONE Teacher teaches through me, I often get calls and letters about how to approach God for healing some physical problem or another. Those who make such inquiries, of course, believe in God or they wouldn't be asking. The first question you might want to ask is, "Do I really believe, or do I just *want* to believe that God can/will heal me?"

The first bit of encouragement that is going to come *through* me (I'm not the Source) is that if you want to believe in God badly enough you will. If you want to believe in God ***enough*** to be healed you will believe enough *and* you will be healed. Don't rush past the foregoing two sentences or you will miss the one condition for being healed: Believing ***enough!***

Skeptics often refer to the foregoing as the "liability insurance policy of faith healers" (if somebody doesn't get healed it is because that person didn't have enough faith). Jesus certainly used this "insurance policy" and if you believe the accounts about him, portrayed in the New Testament books, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus was the heavy-duty faith healer of all times. Whoa, let's stop right here! Are you aware that Jesus said ***any individual*** that believes ***enough*** would do the very same things that he did

and more? Any individual, that's you, that's me. Yep, and thousands today are raising the dead, giving eyesight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and healing all sorts of "incurable" diseases, because they believe enough.

One of the most startling accounts of Jesus' use of, "because you didn't have enough faith - liability insurance" was when his disciples had failed to cast out an evil spirit causing seizures in a small boy. Accurately translated from the original language he literally called his disciples "a bunch of faithless perverts" because of their failure. When they later asked him why they had been unable to do it he told them simply that they couldn't do it because they didn't believe enough. He went on to tell them that if they did believe enough they would have so much faith that nothing would be impossible to them. Then he explained to them that the particular spirit they had been unable to cast out was so powerful that they needed the kind of strong faith that comes only as a result of preparation by much fasting and prayer. Because of my frequent use of this passage, some people get the idea that I believe all illnesses are caused by evil spirits or "demons." When asked if I believe that a particular disease that was erased as a result of my casting out a spirit (yes I do this, and yes you too will do it once you believe enough) is always caused by an evil spirit, my stock answer is no. I do know that every time I cast an evil spirit out of somebody with that particular disease the disease is gone as well.

I refuse to get into arguments about whether the existence of demons is true. I can and do tell a few factual stories that can be corroborated by eyewitnesses and you can draw your own conclusions. Here's one that can be corroborated by a psychiatrist friend of mine about one of his former patients.

He called me one evening and asked if I was available and would I bring my Bible to his office and talk with a patient that had been coming to him for therapy for several years. As I recall, she had been diagnosed as having "clinical depression" (whatever that means). He had just given his stock speech to her that he had this "kook friend (me) who believes some emotional/mental illnesses are caused by demons" and asked her if she wanted to meet with me. They continued their discussion after the brief introduction during which he explained to me that she was beginning to remember some things from her childhood that made her realize that her problems might have a spiritual source and she was ready to discuss that. I sat and listened, occasionally taking notes.

After about twenty minutes he asked me if I "was getting something." I answered in the affirmative and he asked somewhat impatiently why I was taking notes and not interrupting. I said that I didn't want to interrupt their

session... and he said with a light note of exasperation, that he hadn't invited me to listen to them, but to see if I could help her.

He then went into an explanation about what was surfacing in her memory about some incidents involving her grandmother when she was a small child. Two rather bizarre episodes are embedded in my memory. One, her grandmother took her to a "Satanist church" and the priest cut her heel with a razor blade so as to make a blood sacrifice to Satan! Two, her grandmother gave her enemas daily for what was obviously her own (the grandmother's) sexual gratification.

They waited for me to say something. When I finally had clarity, I asked her if she wanted God's will for her life, no matter what that meant. Without hesitation she agreed that she did.

"Are you ready to take responsibility for your part in your grandmother's involvement?" I asked.

"What?!?" she exploded; "She's the one that abused me!"

"I understand, but the question is, are you willing to take the responsibility for your part in it?"

"Good question," the psychiatrist silently mouthed.

She and I verbally wrestled with the concept that she was deriving pleasure from the abuse and therefore was a willing participant. I assured her that I wasn't blaming her for it – but that I was being led to show her something. That is, we couldn't do anything about her grandmother since she had long since passed away and in order to effectively get rid of the spirits of anger and bitterness that were causing her emotional problems she had to do two things. One was to take responsibility for her part in the abusive relationship and the other to forgive her grandmother.

"I'm not spouting religious principles," I explained, "I'm being shown how to get you free from spiritual bondage. I can't begin to explain it to you; I simply know that is what I'm being shown. That is, that you need to forgive your grandmother for her part in it... that's taking responsibility. Are you willing to forgive her?"

"But she abused me and took advantage of me. I was just a little girl..."

"Do you want to be free? Do you want to be well?" I pressed.

She turned to the psychiatrist and said, "Dr. _____ is this right?"

I held up my hand and said, "Don't answer that." To her I said, "Are you ready to stop calling him doctor? He's your brother; just refer to him by his first name."

"Is that all right, Dr. Jim?"

"Of course," he said with a grin.

"Don't call him 'Dr. Jim,' either, just 'Jim,'" I gently insisted, "This is very important spiritually."

"Will I still be able to continue my visits?" she asked almost in a wail.

"You can visit me anytime you want as your brother. You can call me anytime you want just as your friend and brother. This guy," he said with a wave of his hand toward me, "is going to put me out of business."

I told her to use her grandmother's name and tell her aloud that she totally forgave her and that she loved her. She wept as she talked for several minutes completely releasing her grandmother from all blame. We then got rid of several spirits. The three of us agreed to get together the next day socially.

What she described the next day was truly amazing. After the session, she drove home. When she entered her home she turned on the light switch and was immediately engulfed in the sound of loud music. She had to run over to her entertainment center to turn the volume several levels lower! She explained that her hearing had been about 40% impaired for several years and she had worn a hearing aid, which she now no longer needed. On her way to work (she was the Dean of Women at a college), she had to take off her glasses because she could no longer see with them. Her vision was now perfect without any correction needed. She told us she had prayed about it and felt free to throw away all her medication.

She said with a laugh, "I was only slightly tempted to call 'the doctor,'" she said in light sarcasm, "and ask if it was okay – but I *was* going to call you, Jim," she quickly assured us both, with a lopsided grin. "I now understand what Jesus meant when he said, "You shall know the truth and it will set you free."

The dynamics of her healing involved getting rid of evil spirits which were obviously the cause of more things than emotional problems, among which was her eyesight, hearing and so on. The spirits had a legal right to mess with her because she was harboring resentment and bitterness toward her abusive grandmother. Once that was gone and she firmly stated that she wanted God's will no matter what, their legal right to harass her was ended.

A legitimate question could be asked... would she have been healed just by forgiveness and stating she wanted God's will? In other words, did we really have to cast out a demon?

I don't know and I don't really care. Do you? I will tell you that the psychiatrist and I both believed it was necessary.

Now then back to the question, "How Can I know If I Am Getting Through to God?"

It's a bit like digging for gold... you'll know your digging got results when you find gold. We get the hint from God speaking through the Jewish prophet Jeremiah:

"You will seek me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."

Don't forget the story about the prodigal son. Dad ran out to meet him when he was still a long way away. It's like that.

Chapter Four

Let's first review something we've already covered, but from a slightly different perspective. Then we'll look at something most people have never even heard of before.

One challenge for some people to acquiring supernatural power for living is they tend to *pray* about things (for which God has already provided answers) as something they have to leave up to God to do.. We have been given the authority by God to overcome any number of things and yet we "wait upon" or "trust" that God will provide the answer when He has already given us authority to handle these challenges.

I operate on the premise that Jesus' statement, "Nothing is impossible for any individual who believes enough," is the truth. If anything *is* possible and the only thing I need to do is believe enough, then the solution is at hand.

One issue is: How do I get to the point of believing enough?

Another important issue, "Father, let me see this from Your perspective."

Let's look at why looking at the problem from a different perspective may be important. In the context of why and how Jesus made the "nothing is impossible" statement – several dynamics were going on.

First dynamic, a man was looking for a cure for his son's epileptic-like seizures.

Second dynamic, "Healing" or a "cure," in the normal order of things wasn't necessary, getting rid of the cause of the seizures was all that was required. Jesus took care of the cause and, "poof," the seizures were gone. A "cure" was no longer necessary.

Third dynamic, Jesus was irritated at his disciples for not being able to get rid of the cause; we probably ought to understand why he was irritated with them, in order to understand the rest of the story.

Fourth dynamic, the disciples were perplexed at why they hadn't been able to get rid of the cause, so when they got Jesus off by himself they asked, "How come we couldn't do it?" He told them, because they didn't believe enough.

Fifth dynamic, He went on to tell them that if they did believe enough nothing would be impossible to them.

Sixth dynamic, He then went on to tell them the secret of getting to the point of believing enough.

In addition to approaching a perceived problem from the stand-point that it needs to be fixed and that I need to have more faith to fix it, I may want to also ask for wisdom and discernment so that I can see the cause and get rid of that. I may even see that the problem doesn't really exist.

Now then, let's go through a faith-stretching exercise. It is not an overstatement to say that most people, including those that refer to themselves as Christians, believe that "Eternal Life" means entering our respective reward after this physical body we occupy experiences death. The words in the original language that have been translated into the term "eternal life" literally mean the life that is ongoing right now in the spirit or unseen realm that has no beginning as well as no ending. Eternal Life begins NOW, this very moment. It doesn't come *after* death, eternal life eliminates death altogether! Outlandish? You bet and a marvelous truth.

Few people realize that Jesus said anyone that believes in him would never die. Because so few people experience not dying we have distorted that promise to mean our *spirits* never die. We have invested an enormous amount of intellectual and emotional energy believing in the impossibility of getting out of this plane alive. But hang on; are you willing to begin believing in the possibility? In the original language it is quite clear that Jesus was talking about *both* spirit and body.

The Bible reveals:

"Because of his faith Enoch avoided death."

Enoch lived in fellowship with God. He *stayed* in fellowship with God **INSTEAD** OF DYING! I didn't say that, the writers of Hebrews and Genesis said that. In the eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews, *immediately* following this rather astonishing statement about Enoch, we find:

"Without faith it is impossible to please God."

In other words, in context, the kind of faith that pleases God is Enoch's "not-dying" example.

The word "please" is translated from a word in the original language that has the flavor of accessing or being in alignment with God more than it does "pleasing" in the sense we use that word today. Therefore, and again, in context, this whole business about having the same kind of faith and fellowship of Enoch is exercising a kind of *faith* that is far beyond our common use of the word "faith." Obviously, if we use this passage as a benchmark, one way of "pleasing" God with our faith is to refuse to die – **now hear this** – *instead* of dying be taken up to be with God – body and all. Again, **I** didn't say that, both Enoch and Elijah are Bible characters and neither died, but were taken up to be with God. Why do we find it so easy to believe it about them, but not in the possibility for ourselves? Yet again, Jesus literally said if we believe enough we do not have to experience physical death.

Some people equate faith with an intellectual system of belief *about* or *in* God. Jesus' half brother James wrote:

“So you say you believe in the one God – and you think that is good? I'm telling you that so do the demons believe that very same thing and they tremble in fear because they know their destiny!”

If we use James' words as the barometer of our *faith* it could be correctly and fairly stated that if we believe *in* God – we have the belief level just the same as demons – that is, we have the faith of demons!

This is in the Bible and it is real. Jesus said nothing is impossible if we believe enough. The enemy has us in bondage to religious superstition and fear. We can live in power – want to hear more? We are not talking about false signs and wonders; we are talking about the real thing – straight from the mouth of Jesus, accurately translated from the original language.

This is our destiny, if we believe enough. That is, performing the same miracles Jesus performed and more – plus never dying.

There is a free, six part seminar called **SNAP** which stands for **S**uper **N**atural **A**wareness & **P**ower. It is designed to take anyone step by step through the instructions of Jesus, accurately translated from the original language, for acquiring the very same faith and conscious-ness he possessed. All materials are free and everyone that participates in the seminar is being trained to effectively share the materials with others. Ask the person who gave you this book to tell you how to enroll. It is guaranteed to change your perspective.

Chapter Five

It is difficult to move into operating in the faith and conscious-ness of Jesus from a place of living “normally” by simply reading a book, including the Bible. That’s the reason for including the little “advertising blurb” about SNAP at the end of the previous chapter. **Part V** of the seminar is called “Expecting and Experiencing the Supernatural – Miracles NOW.” Participants become involved in healing and other supernatural phenomena as we depend upon Spirit to do His work through each of us. A setting in which we learn to put our faith into action, becoming “doers and not hearers only.” Participants also get to experience mutual ministry among equals, something we discussed earlier that Matthew quoted Jesus as actually commanding.

Simply “assembling ourselves together” does not produce *Power for Living*. It does little good to come out of that building in which we were spectators to a powerless ritual, if we carry the same religious spirits into wherever we go and practice the same things.

If we are going to live in the presence and power of God’s own Spirit and do what Jesus did and said we would do (if we believe enough), we first need to have our belief systems adjusted to fit what Jesus is telling us to do today. The Author and Finisher of our faith is ready and willing to enter our lives NOW, this very moment. John gave us the image of Jesus always standing at the door knocking. If we will open the door he will come in and share an intimate time with us NOW. Remember, the doorknob is on the inside; he will not force his way in. We have to open it!

I remember how I first applied this truth to my life over forty years ago. I was sitting in an assembly of delegates at a denomination conference in North Hollywood, California. The theme of the conference was “Revival.” The speaker was sharing from this very passage in Revelation; according to John, Jesus was talking about the remedy for getting past being lukewarm. The speaker explained that the metaphor in the passage was about highly alkaline and foul tasting water that, when neither hot nor cold, caused involuntary vomiting. When we are lukewarm we make Jesus sick! I began to realize that I needed revival personally. I was lukewarm! A personal visitation by Jesus is the remedy. Jesus said so. It was the beginning of my own first step to *Power for Living*.

While the speaker was still talking I began to see myself back in my motel room kneeling by the bed, opening the door for Jesus to come. Then it dawned on me, right there where I was sitting, among all the other delegates, I could quietly open the door. I did so right then and realized I’d just been given the key to daily revival and eliminating my religious, powerless state forever. I do so now. Jesus, I don’t want this to be some dried up version of whatever, promoting my ideas. I want an infusion of YOU, right NOW!

He's assuring me that I'm on the right track for those who have ears to hear this particular message. If you are not getting anything out of this little book, give it away to somebody who might. You needn't feel uncomfortable about it; it simply means that it is not for you. What *is* for you is that the Author and Finisher of YOUR faith is inside you waiting for you to open the door to ever-deeper levels of your own consciousness.

Back in chapter four we looked at the real meaning of the words translated as "eternal life" as being that ongoing life in the spirit realm that has no beginning and no ending and starts NOW! Call it "Kingdom Living" or whatever you like, but it begins and ends with HIM living his life through us. "I am no longer 'I,' but Christ!"

If we stop and think about it, isn't it just a little silly for a bunch of empowered people who are not only "no longer themselves, but Christ," sitting on pews listening to powerless drivel? Or, perhaps worse, delivering powerless drivel from behind the pulpit. We need to get a life! HIS life.

Eternal Life means that quality of life in and with the Spirit of God that has no beginning and no ending... it means NOW.

Eternal Life begins NOW, this very moment. It doesn't begin at death -
- eternal life eliminates death!

Chapter Six

Jesus introduced God to us as our one and only perfect Dad, Daddy or Papa. The word in the Aramaic was very intimate. Our Dad wants to have

intimacy with us right this moment – Now. This is another important facet of ***Power for Living***.

He wants the intimacy of a child coming to sit on Daddy's lap; a child unafraid to ask for anything because he or she knows that Dad will provide it.

Some religions, including Christianity, emphasize maturity. It is interesting that Jesus said unless we come as little children we cannot enter into the kingdom. He also used as an example that we cannot receive the gifts of faith for doing the miraculous and overcoming the struggles of living on this plane unless we approach our one and only perfect Dad in the same way an impudent, trusting, demanding child comes to an indulgent mother or father in the physical realm. That is, persistently impudently and relentlessly, "Daddy, Daddy, I want, I want."

The first rule of intimacy with Dad is to show up, just come home. Remember the wayward son that collected his inheritance and went off and blew it in debauchery? He wound up with nothing and could only eat by getting a job tending pigs and eating pig food. He finally woke up to the fact that he could eat much better and live more comfortably as a slave, back at his dad's place. So he makes up his mind to go home and grovel and beg his dad to let him eat the scraps off the slaves' table. Instead his dad saw him coming and ran out to meet him, ordered new clothing and shoes to be immediately put on him. He put a new cygnet ring on his son's finger to indicate complete restoration back into the family with all the inherent rights of a son. Then threw a huge banquet in his honor with live music with dancing and his dad required nothing of him. No apologies required, no groveling required.

Meanwhile the older, "mature" son grumbled that his dad had never thrown a party in *his* honor so he wouldn't even make an appearance at his younger brother's feast. His dad told him, "Hey, you can have a party anytime you want, just ask. My son who was lost has come home; I just had to throw him a party." The mature one just continued to grumble and missed out.

A big party awaits each of us and is thrown in our honor for just coming home. The really good news is that he awaits each one of us and as soon as we approach home, our Dad sees us from a long way off and runs toward us. We not only get a party, but new shoes and clothes. What are we waiting for?

That's all there is to it. Jesus' story about the prodigal son amply illustrates the fact that our Dad is always waiting for us to wake up and get out of the place where we are feeding the pigs and eating their food. "Dad, I'm coming home to you" – He's always way ahead of me and is waiting to give me new clothes and new shoes. He puts the signet ring on my finger indicating that I am fully restored to the family with full status as heir. Then he throws a huge banquet in my honor with live music, dancing and singing.

He's waiting. We don't have to grovel; we just have to come home to Him here and NOW.

The amazing thing about this process is that I am not required to do anything. Now that I am a fully restored son or daughter, restored fully back into the family of God I begin just naturally sharing with others that they too can come back to the family and have their own huge party.

We might want to identify what pig food is and where the pigpen is. Pig food can be work, pastimes, or even the things we consider "good" such as ministry, going to church or even praying and reading the Bible!

To be sure, our preconceptions about these latter are difficult to compare with the kinds of debauchery Jesus described in his tale about the wayward son. Missing God can be a tricky thing at times because of our preconceived notions, but Jesus did say that a study of the scriptures if it didn't lead to him led nowhere. Jesus did say that the One he referred to variously as *Spirit, Counselor, Teacher, Spirit of Truth, Holy Spirit, God's own Spirit* and so forth, would lead us into all truth. It should be obvious to anyone that I read the Bible probably more than most folks. So what? Yes, one of the tools Spirit uses to lead me into all truth is the Bible. He has also shown me truth in the Qu'ran, The Book of Mormon, The Course of Miracles and other works considered sacred by the religious. He can lead me with a still small voice. I've even been scared into "testing the spirits" (ala John's formula, beginning with, "Beloved, test the spirits") when the voice wasn't "still."

It looks like I am being permitted to write one more chapter and that's it, and it has to do with preconceptions.

Chapter Seven

For about five years I wrote articles under the pseudonym, "Brad Cullen," which I've decided to stop hiding behind. Being anonymous is far simpler. It reduced the volume of arguments via e-mail from about fifty to seventy-five each day, over something I'd said in an article, to zero. I just now pulled up one of the articles out of the archives and with my favorite line for an ending of a sermon, "with this I close."

This article was originally written in April of 2004 while I was on a project in East/Central Africa:

"The scientist makes use of a whole arsenal of concepts which he imbibed practically with his mother's milk; and seldom if ever is he aware of the eternally problematic character of his concepts. He uses this conceptual material, or, speaking more exactly, these conceptual tools of thought, as something obviously, immutably given something having an objective value of truth, which is hardly even, and in any case not seriously, to be doubted.

"In the interests of science it is necessary over and over again to engage in the critique of these fundamental concepts, in order that we may not unconsciously be ruled by them."

-- Albert Einstein

Frankly, I had to read the foregoing two paragraphs several times before I could digest exactly what Einstein was saying. Here, one of the greatest intellects ever to make his presence known, at least in the realm of science, is insisting that the only way the methods of science for finding truth can be effective is to continually bring fundamental concepts into question to avoid being UNCONSCIOUSLY ruled by them.

One of the things that never ceases to amaze me is the parallel between science and religion with regard to the truth that both are governed by men that (using the words of Einstein here) "fail to critique fundamental concepts and therefore are ruled by them rather than getting to objective truth."

I have been responding to literally hundreds of e-mails recently that, to me at least, clearly indicate a plethora of bias that needs to be examined and critiqued by those writing to me. I realize this may sound terribly arrogant, but please hear me out. For my responses to these e-mails have not been argumentative, but rather have one basis: Suggesting that perhaps the respondent should look at his or her preconceptions. Further I have shared the fact that my life has been dramatically and dynamically changed via one simple prayer... "Father, remove any preconceived ideas that keep me from being ever increasingly controlled by Your own Spirit."

That simple utterance has been the basis for my questioning everything. Scooping up, so to speak, all the interpretations I have placed on any number of what I previously considered to be fundamental and unalterable principles and placing them before my one and only perfect Dad for His examination and correction.

My challenge to readers therefore, has not been to "buy in" to my pet doctrines, but to place their own pet theologies in front of Spirit for His examination and critique. Life has become far simpler. Instead of mentally wrangling over some obscure passage that some reader has sent me as a "proof text" to under-gird his or her point, or to fire back with my own proof text... I simply realize that my Father has all the answers and that I can come to Him in "Spirit and Truth" because He is always available. That's it. Amen anyone? (End of the article).

Now then, and finally, I return to the “sin” and “sinner” comments I made at the opening and felt led to use in the subtitle. There are several passages in the Bible that give me equilibrium, whether they are for you, I share them, because they “work for me.” One of these in particular is, I John, 1:8, 9.

“If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Two things are meaningful to me here. One has to do with the fact that in the original language the present tense is far more apparent. More accurately translated as, “we are in a constant state of sin.” The other has to do with the promise of His faithfulness. If we confess it, He cleanses us from the effects! I tend to be sensitive and readily admit to being screwed up. I also find it oh, so simple, when I realize that I have *sinned* (ignored, disregarded and otherwise not gotten God involved in some area of my life or another, that is, missed Him -the real definition of the term in the original-), the simple act of saying to Him, “Yikes, Dad, I screwed up” (fess up to it instead of denying it through some doctrinal gobbledygook), I am immediately restored; for me, an incredibly simple way to stay in fellowship with my Dad.

Another passage that, for me, provides a powerful example and sense of getting back to Dad for His blessing and approval, when I am devastated by the realization that I have missed His leading in any particular situation, is the story Jesus told about the two men who went up to the Temple to pray. You remember the story; one of these guys was a sinless paragon of virtue and what some people miss is that he gave all the credit to God for having been made better than other men.

“I thank you God that you have made me better than other men. For I do not commit adultery, I am honest in all my business dealings; I give ten percent of everything I have and twice each week I don’t even eat. I thank You that I am especially better than that man over there.”

The man to whom he was making reference was beating on his chest and crying out, “God be merciful unto such a sinner as I.”

The other fact some people miss is that Jesus said this latter guy with the concave chest went home righteous in the sight of God – Now get this, ***INSTEAD*** of the other one that looked so good in the sight of men, but went home empty in the eyes of God. I prefer Dad’s view of righteousness. Sometimes my sensitivity about how badly I miss God needs, for me, to be handled in this manner. As I said, I am merely sharing what works for me,

just one beggar sharing with other beggars where he got bread. If you have your own supply simply ignore this.

I was just reminded of Jesus coming upon the woman caught in adultery who was about to be stoned to death according to Mosaic Law. He interrupted the proceedings, as I'm sure you recall with, "Let the one among you that has not sinned, cast the first stone."

Everybody got up and sadly walked away. He asked her where all her accusers went. Then he told her he wasn't judging her, but to go and don't do it again. What gets missed is the others went home with all the guilt of their own self-condemnation firmly intact. She was declared okay by the only one fit to judge. Nobody threw a stone, get it?

If we deny we sin – on whatever basis – we are liars. I didn't say that, John said it. Not deliberate liars, we simply miss the fact that our lists of "sin" are different from God's. Besides He has made provision for us to be completely restored. Rather than fool around with my finite understanding of what constitutes "sin" I simply acknowledge the fact that this body bag I occupy is in a constant state of sin. When I feel miserable in my awareness of how badly I've missed God, it just doesn't work for me to recite what I know to be true both spiritually and intellectually. That is, that the Righteous One lives in me and therefore I am righteous. I recognize the truth of that fully. But it feels good and, again, works for me, to beat on my chest and rehearse the words that Jesus provided, "God be merciful unto such a sinner as I." That may not make me righteous in anyone else's sight, but I have the assurance from Him that by so doing, my Dad sees me as clothed totally in His righteousness! Hallelujah and I don't have to try to figure out what is sin and what isn't.

Now then, I just received the "green light" to share the distinction between being "called" and being "chosen." I know I have been both called and chosen to be involved in mutual ministry with others who share my sensitivities to missing God – and to which the foregoing is a meaningful way to walk in the power of God's forgiveness; another step in the process of having and using *Power for Living*. If you don't have that sensitivity, that's between you and our one and only perfect Dad who is perfectly able to finish the processes He has begun in our lives, without our feeble attempts to "fix" one another.

Just a few weeks ago, I was pondering about the biblical, "Many are called, but few are chosen."

I've known for some time, with utmost clarity, that I have been "chosen" to the above referenced "calling" and further to share Jesus' blueprint for getting his consciousness and faith with which to do the same things He did and more, according to his own promise.

What's the difference? I asked? The answer floored me.

"I choose whoever wants Me to choose them. It is your choice!" Think about it, I'm chosen because I wanted Him to choose me! What works for me will work for you, if that's your choice. He is "no respecter of persons."

I hope this ride has been as much fun for you as it has been for me. Thanks for coming along.

"It Is Finished"