

Contents

Foreword	ix
Introduction	xi
Chapter 1 – My Faulty Foundation–Rational Humanism	1
Chapter 2 – Sticking My Toe into the River of God	19
Chapter 3 – Wading Deeper into the River of God	41
Chapter 4 – Discovering the Role of the Heart and Spirit	71
Chapter 5 – Discovering the Role of the Mind	99
Chapter 6 – Discovering Meditation, the Alternative to Study	127
Chapter 7 – Discovering a Spirit-anointed Paradigm for Decision-making	151
Appendix A – Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice	177
Appendix B – Naturally Supernatural	183
Appendix C – How to Walk by the Spirit	187
Appendix D – How Do You Know?	189
Appendix E – Spirit-anointed Teaching	193
Appendix F – People Who Possessed Their Promised Lands	199
Appendix G – Faith’s Promises Versus Reason’s Promises ...	203
Appendix H – A Brief Systematic Overview of the Heart	207
Appendix I – A Brief Systematic Overview of the Mind	211
Appendix J – Life-changing Mottos, Principles and Scripture	213

Foreword

Dr. Mark Virkler's *WADING DEEPER INTO THE RIVER OF GOD* is a profound story of how God took Dr. Virkler from the darkness of theological rationalism to a thoroughly biblical understanding and experience of Spirit-led knowing and understanding and Spirit-led ministry. The book is also a practical guide to hearing God's voice in life and ministry. Dr. Virkler provides practical, biblical steps to growing in knowledge and wisdom in the only way that Scripture teaches—through conscious dependence on the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13-15). Overlooking this simple truth has shipwrecked the faith and spiritual life of many in most Christian seminaries and colleges today, and only by returning to it will future Christian leaders be trained in a way that will make them fruitful for God's Kingdom in their churches, cities, and nations.

Dr. Gary S. Greig

Educational Advisor

The Apostolic Council for Educational Accountability

Wagner Institute for Practical Ministry

Introduction

My Journey from Rationalism to Revelation

Life Without a Biblical Epistemology

In my early life, I never reflected upon the epistemology (i.e. system for knowing) that I used. I hadn't even heard the word "epistemology." It never crossed my mind to ponder the **method** I used for "knowing" something. I just knew. And I have always been quite sure that what I "knew" at any particular time was the absolute truth. I was so convinced about that that I considered anyone who held a different point of view to be wrong, and I tried to convince him of my "correct" position on the issue at hand.

As I reflect back, it becomes clear to me that I have used several methods for "knowing" during my life. Most of them were based on who I honored as an authority at that time.

The first method I used was the exploration of the world around me with my five senses. As I discovered the world, I drew conclusions concerning it.

My second method was probably, "If Dad or Mom say something is true, then it is true."

Next I believed, “If my school teacher says it is true, then it is.”

After I became a Christian, my approach was, “If my study of the Bible convinces me of a particular position, then that is true.”

Finally, in Bible college, my belief was, “If my Bible school teacher says it is true, then it must be true.”

At some points in my life I have held such philosophies of knowing as, “If my doctor says it is so, then it is so,” and “If the government or the majority says it is so, then it is so,” and if science *proved* it was so, then it was true.

So I have held many varied epistemologies throughout my life, and during all this time it never even occurred to me that perhaps I should do a thorough study of Scripture to see what God says about how one knows.

Can the Wrong Theory of Knowing Cause Shipwreck?

Once you ask the question, the answer becomes obvious. Yes! If my foundations for knowing are faulty, then my conclusions will be faulty and I will be living in error rather than in truth.

We have thousands of denominations all seeking truth, using different philosophies for determining truth and arriving at fairly different conclusions.

We have medical researchers who have spent \$27 billion over a period of 27 years seeking a cure for cancer, and yet the incidence of cancer is now 18% higher than before they invested their \$27 billion in research. Is their theory for knowing flawed? Has this wrong epistemology cost us millions of lives and much needless pain and suffering in the United States? If doctors used a more biblical approach to knowing, would they have the solution to cancer?

Medical researchers currently use a ten-year process which involves careful scientific experiments and a \$200 million price tag to bring a new drug to market to prevent a disease. Does this

process follow biblical principles concerning how one is to know and discover truth?

Philosophers argue about how one knows. There are many beliefs currently in fashion concerning how to discover truth, ranging from humanism to mysticism, to pragmatism, to rationalism, to hedonism, to empiricism, to you name it. Which is correct? Do several of them have pieces of the puzzle? Or are all philosophical approaches to discovering truth wrong?

For about 500 years, science has said that we know by using the scientific method and applying it to the outer world, analyzing the results with the use of sense knowledge. However, science added a whole new dimension to its approach to knowing in 1979 when it accepted parapsychology into its ranks. They effectively reversed themselves and said in effect, “We now believe there is knowledge beyond the five senses, and we have begun to explore it.”

Foundational Truths Which Underlie This Book

My wife and I have written several books which can bring a person experimentally to a place of sensing his spirit and the voice of God within his spirit. We began with *Dialogue with God*, or *How to Hear God’s Voice*. You may want to read them before you read this book, as we will not be repeating their messages here but will assume you know them. In *Dialogue with God* and *How to Hear God’s Voice* (two books with the same message), we teach four keys to hearing God’s voice. These four keys are summarized in Appendix A, “Four Keys to Hearing God’s Voice.”

In our book *Naturally Supernatural*, we taught that it is not I that live, but Christ is living His life out through me (Gal. 2:20). A summary outline of this book is found in Appendix B, “Naturally Supernatural.”

In our book *How to Walk by the Spirit*, we examined the 1420 verses on heart and spirit in the Bible to give one a working vocabulary for inner, spirit sensations. A summary outline of this book is found in Appendix C, “How to Walk by the Spirit.”

In our book *How Do You Know?*, we examined 5500 verses to create an understanding of a Spirit-anointed epistemology. A summary outline of this book may be found in Appendix D, “How Do You Know?”

The book you are about to read, *Wading Deeper Into the River of God*, builds upon an understanding of the principles in the above-mentioned books. If you read them, you will find that this book will have a much deeper impact upon your life. Not that this book can’t stand on its own, and can’t have an impact on your life all by itself. It can, but if you will then go back and read this book a second time after reading all the above books, it will speak to you on a much deeper level.

Spirit-anointed Teaching (available as a full text, a 36-page seminar guide, and series of cassettes) is a follow-up which trains teachers how to bring the anointing of the Holy Spirit into the center of the classroom, and allow the learning to be experiential, spiritual, and truly life-changing. A summary outline of *Spirit-anointed Teaching* can be found in Appendix E.

Now let’s begin.

1

My Faulty Foundation— Rational Humanism

The Roots of My Christian Experience

The church where I was saved: I was born in 1952 and grew up on a farm in northern New York State. I was saved at age 15 in the extremely conservative, fundamentalist, separatist Evangelical Baptist Church, which is part of a network called the Apostolic Christian Churches. It is one of the most conservative churches you could possibly imagine. It had no musical instruments because they believed they were of the devil. The men sat on one side of the church, the women on the other. Members greeted one another (of the same sex) with a holy kiss. Women wore head coverings. We could only marry other members within our denomination because everyone outside our church was believed to be a non-Christian. There was no dating, no television, no movies, not even any Bible study, because we were taught that “too much study causes weariness of the flesh” (Eccl. 12:12). When my brother wanted to start a home Bible study, he was faced with excommunication. How’s that for conservative roots?

MY CALL INTO MINISTRY: So I studied Baptist doctrine, listened to Baptist radio programs, read my Bible, and evangelized. The best part of my last year in high school was my hands-on work as a youth pastor and coordinator among the churches in my hometown. When I felt a call in my heart to go into the ministry, I, too, was faced with excommunication. You see, my church did not believe a pastor should prepare or receive any training. Yet when I asked other pastors (outside my home church) how to prepare for ministry, I was instructed to go to a Bible college, and Roberts Wesleyan was recommended. Once I chose to go to Bible school, I would be excommunicated. I decided to withdraw my membership from my old church, and went for training as a pastor to Roberts Wesleyan College near Rochester, New York.

MY COLLEGE CAREER: I took the only major recommended for pastors, Religion/Philosophy, with a minor in Psychology (so I could understand the emotionalism of revivalist meetings. I actually wrote a research paper on “The Psychology of Revivals.” Makes me shudder even to think of it now.).

My college courses required me to skim-read portions of the Bible and study comparative religions, philosophy, and psychology. Of course, in order to be well-rounded, I was also required to take courses in biology and dissect small animals, so that I would be able to intelligently communicate with others who might have done similar things (or something like that!). Actually, since college, I’ve never fulfilled that expectation. Maybe I have never run into another person who also dissected rats and felt it would be a great thing to discuss. Oh well, at least I am well-rounded. (A look at my stomach will confirm that.)

I had a hard time understanding the value of school, or college, for that matter. It was all so impractical and irrelevant to where I was in my life. I grew up on a dairy farm, so I had a passion for down-to-earth, practical things. School didn’t fill that need. If it weren’t for my passion to minister, I never would have even considered attending college.

Unfortunately, it gradually became clear to me that college was

not training me properly for ministry, either. The fact that I was not even required to read through the entire Bible was one sure indication, as was the fact that the philosophy courses which I was required to take were so far over my head, I had no idea even what they were talking about. The dissecting of rats left me cold, as did most of the courses. But I persevered because I loved the Lord and wanted to become the best I could possibly be for Him, and this was the path I was sent on to properly prepare me for ministry.

While in college, I decided to do on my own some things I felt were necessary to equip me for the ministry. I knew I needed a Bible education, so I read the Bible through from cover to cover and charted and graphed each of the books. Since I knew as a preacher I would be required to read the Bible from the pulpit, I practiced public reading by reading the New Testament aloud with my girlfriend, Patti, who is now my wife.

And the best learning experience I had was a job as youth pastor in a nearby Wesleyan church which I held for three of my four college years. There I learned the practices of ministry and how to hold attention by becoming a good speaker and planning a good program. I definitely learned more from this “accidental” (i.e. God-ordained) stint as a youth pastor than I did from my Christian college experience.

Obviously, this should have been my first inkling that learning occurs best on the road of life, rather than in a classroom. I would observe years later that God generally does not use a classroom to train His leaders. Instead, Jesus disciplined the Twelve as He took them with Him and let them watch and help Him minister. God also seems to use the wilderness as a great place to develop His leaders. However, at this point in my life, these facts totally escaped me since I was so caught up in the western culture, which places a high priority on classroom study and systematic theology, that it never even crossed my mind that it might not be the only, or even the best, way to develop spiritual leadership. I was totally blind to God’s educational processes as recorded in the Bible.

The Roots of My Theology

Theologically, I began as a Baptist (Calvinist) and then, at Roberts Wesleyan College, moved more toward Wesleyan Methodist doctrine (i.e. Arminianism).

NO PLACE FOR THE SPIRITUAL: Both of these theological emphases were evangelical, fundamentalist, rational, and anti-supernatural. I embraced these teachings fully. I was taught that God no longer spoke to His children, because now we have the Bible. I was taught that there is no longer any need for the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, because now we have the Bible. I was taught that dream and vision were no longer for today, because now we have the Bible. I was taught that casting out of demons was no longer for today; I'm not sure why not. Perhaps now we have signs up at the borders of our countries saying, "No demons allowed. We are a western civilized nation." I am sure that as long as demons can read English, they will honor the signs and stay away, going to more uncivilized countries to molest their populations.

NO PLACE FOR EMOTIONS: I was taught that expressing emotions was merely emotionalism, part of the soul, and therefore, to be avoided. That was fine with me since I have a choleric temperament and little tendency toward emotions anyway. In addition, my culture taught me that men are not supposed to express any emotion. All the pieces fit together extremely well to make me into an unemotional robot who loved with commitment (i.e. non-emotional love) and acted out of decision, not because I "felt moved." So, I loved my wife with "commitment love" (i.e. *agape* love), and refused to cherish her, because that was an emotion which was soulish, and I surely didn't want to be soulish. If you want to know how wise this is, ask any woman if she wants to be cherished by her husband, and see what she says. Of course, I didn't need my wife's opinion, because she was supposed to submit to me. And women are more emotional anyway, so how could they properly appreciate the value of non-emotional love? (Trust me, Patti has gotten me straightened out over the years!)

I was taught that clear, well-thought-out theology is what is important. Growth in the Lord is equivalent to one's theological maturation. Therefore, I loved theology (especially applied theology, as it is more practical) and studied it and taught it continuously, even to the extent of graphing and charting every book of the Bible.¹

I was taught to scorn those who “spoke in tongues,” prayed for healing, cast out demons, raised their hands in worship or prayer, and were into spiritual emotionalism. So childish, and even cult-ish. I was glad to be free from, and above, such craziness.

I had a verse to back up everything I did and everything I believed, and I would be glad to give it to you whether you wanted it or not. My passion was to be like Paul, to have either a revival or a riot in every city I went to. Well, I succeeded. Generally, I brought riots and was thrown out, but I was serving God! That was all that was important. I was speaking and teaching the truth, and I was evangelizing.

However, my heart was hungry for more of God. I would read the book of Acts and hunger to have the same experiences they had—to hear the voice of God, to do the miraculous, to see vision. But those who were older and wiser (?) just patted me on the head and assured me that I would get over such cravings as I matured. I would soon learn to settle down to the good, important stuff—theology and doctrine.

Well, I got over something, all right. But it wasn't my spiritual cravings; it was the emptiness of mere religion. God began to open for me the door to the spiritual world through the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the operation of the gift of speaking in tongues. However, we will save that story for the next chapter.

What I was far too young to realize during those early years was that I, along with much of the Western Church, was trapped in the western culture's worldview of rational humanism.

My Western Cultural Roots: Rational Humanism?

What in the world is rational humanism? Is it good? Is it bad? What is it? Let's start with Webster's definitions of these two words. Please take a few minutes to ponder these definitions and try to decide if they are biblical concepts.

RATIONALISM: "Reliance on reason as the basis for establishment of religious truth. A theory that reason is in itself a source of knowledge superior to and independent of sense perceptions."

HUMANISM: "A philosophy that asserts the dignity and worth of man and his capacity for self-realization through reason, and that often rejects supernaturalism."

My culture, my nation, my church, my school, and my college all fully embraced these two philosophies, as did I, because it never crossed my mind to question them. Of course, they had to be right. Everyone I knew believed them, from my parents, to my pastors, to my educators. No one disagreed. Everyone agreed that:

Man's ability to reason is the heart of life.

We even had a saying, "God gave you a brain; you're supposed to use it." It never occurred to me to question either of these premises. They just have to be true. The Bible must support them, doesn't it? As we will find out in a later chapter, the Bible speaks directly *against* both of these assumptions.

I could reason about God and develop proofs for His existence, ontological proofs that God really exists. I trained and sharpened my mind so I could be skilled in theology and debate, able to convince people of their life of sin and lost condition and need to receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

That, of course, was pure rationalism—reliance upon reason to prove God exists. But, you see, I had to do that, because God was no longer active in the world today. He no longer spoke or gave dreams or visions or did miracles or healings or provided tongues or interpretations. We were alone to think about God

and to reason about Him. We were not to expect any active interaction with Him in our own lives.

CONCERNING HUMANISM AND SELF-ACTUALIZATION: I was taught that we are to make the most of ourselves that we possibly can for God. We are to give our all to serving Him, to living for Him, to obeying Him, to following Him. We are to stretch ourselves for God, in service to Him. That, of course, is humanism—man making the most of himself. Did the Bible tell me to give my all for God? I assumed so. The answer seemed so obvious that it never crossed my mind to examine it to see if it was biblical.

Both humanism and rationalism are false religions. One is the worship of the mind, the other is the worship of self-effort. However, I was too naive to know that I had been led into idolatry. I had a passion to serve God with my life, and that was what I was going to do. Even when I mocked and ridiculed the charismatics and Pentecostals for their emotionalism and aberrant theology, I felt I was doing God a favor by keeping the Church pure. It is amazing that as we kill the prophets God sends, we think we are doing Him a service. This has been true all through Church and biblical history, and it was true in my life.

Now, the Bible never encourages rationalism (reliance upon the mind) or humanism (self-actualization). As a matter of fact, the Bible pointedly discourages both, very clearly and with very little room left for dispute. However, when you are caught up in something, it is hard to see the verses of Scripture which counter your position.

Well, the verses are clear about both. Concerning rationalism, the Bible never once commands or encourages us to reason on our own. This I discovered when I finally got around to looking up every verse in the Bible on reason (25 years after I left college). We will examine this in detail in a later chapter. Suffice it for now to say that the Bible commands that we:

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths (Prov. 3:5,6).

That is a pretty clear start to clarifying God's view of man's mental abilities. We are commanded specifically not to lean to our own understanding.

When I consider that I only earned a "B" on my courses in high school and college, it becomes clear that perhaps any theology I build about God with my "B-level" brain might only be a "B-level" theology. Is God's truth's actually bigger than can be distilled or fathomed by someone with a "B-level" brain, or even an "A-level" brain? I surely hope so! If not, how big is the God I am worshipping? Perhaps the biblical alternative to the false religion of rationalism is to present our hearts and minds to God to use, letting Him give us anointed reason, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, dreams, visions, and discernment on the level of our spirits. I have no doubt this is true.²

Humanism (self-actualization), too, runs directly counter to many Bible verses. One could start with Galatians 2:20.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

It must be pretty hard to self-actualize when you have been crucified! Perhaps the biblical alternative to the heresy of humanism is learning to release the power, anointing, and wisdom of Christ out through our lives. I am completely convinced this is so.³

My heart breaks when I hear story after story of people who went to Bible school and had their intimacy with God extinguished by rational humanism. Church members tell me that they used to journal and hear God's voice and see His vision, but were told by their pastors to stop because it was improper. When I come along with a Communion with God Seminar twenty years later, God is able to restore to them what was robbed by rational humanism.

How do you think God views this? Do you think He is pleased by what happens in our Bible colleges? Do you think He is pleased

when His children are drawn away from intimacy with Him and drawn into the worship of their minds instead?

Does this anger God? Did it anger Jesus? Did He not call them blind guides who lead the blind (Matt. 15:14)? What will be God's response to those who poke out the eyes of God's children and make them blind? What will be God's response to those who break the eardrums of God's children and make them deaf for many years, until someone comes along to restore their faith to believe they can see and hear from God?

Does God's anger and fury burn against such people? Study your Bible and decide. I surely do not want to be in their place when we all stand before God's great white throne judgment, and He asks them why they blinded the eyes of His children and why they deafened their ears.

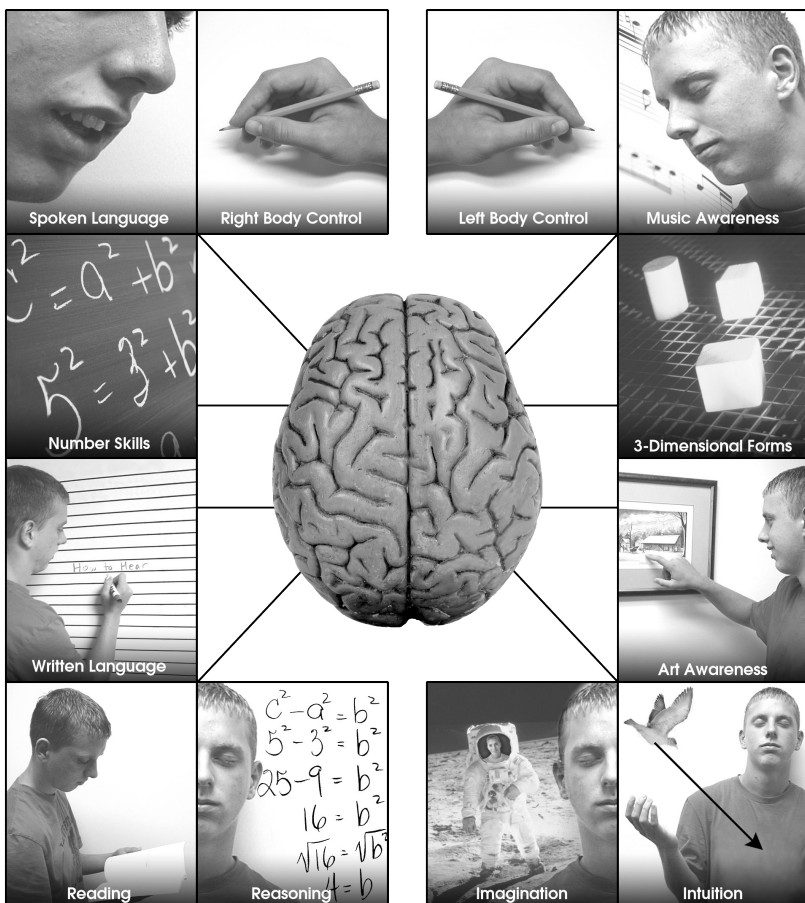
My Psychological Roots

Not only did my culture and my church lead me astray in my early years, but I was created by God with a stronger left brain than right brain. And I was created with the personality of a choleric. Unfortunately, I allowed both of these to encourage me along the path of rational humanism.

In 1981, Roger Sperry won a Nobel Prize for his experimentation on left- and right-hemisphere brain functions. It has been discovered that, although we do use both sides of our brains, most of us tend to rely a bit more heavily on one side or the other. The chart on the following page provides a pictorial overview of the functions carried on by each hemisphere of the brain. Please take a moment and examine it now.

You will note that the left hemisphere of the brain works primarily with analytical functions, while the right hemisphere processes intuitive and visionary functions, as well as emotions.

In the test on left- and right-hemisphere brain functions which is found in our book *How to Hear God's Voice*, my score indicates that I am a left-brain person. I score 4.5. A score of 5.0 indicates



that one accesses both hemispheres in perfect balance. There is a bell curve on this scoring line which goes something like this: I estimate that approximately 60% of the population scores between 4.5 and 5.5. Another 30% score between 4.0 and 4.5 or 5.5 and 6.0. And the last 10% of the population is either under 4.0 or above 6.0. Practically no scores are below 2.8 or above 7.2 on this test.

The bottom line concerning myself (i.e. a 4.5) is that I prefer logic and theology over vision and intuition. I suspect I was born

with this bent, and I believe it was over-nurtured as I grew up in the western world. I was taught that what came naturally to me was correct and reliable, and that those who were right-brain were somewhat unstable.

As a matter of fact, in the western educational system, the three “R’s” are reading, writing and ‘rithmetic, which are all left-brain functions, while the electives are art, music and drama (i.e. use of the visionary capacity), which are all right-brain functions. So, the official stance of western education is that the right brain is elective, as are right-brain people. How does that make all you “right-brainers” feel? Good, I’ll bet!

In fact, it has been discovered that the left hemisphere actually grows slightly heavier during our schooling years than the right hemisphere. How is that for a culture out of balance, a culture which has chosen to worship one lobe of their brains and believe that it is the right thing to do, and suggest that anyone moving strongly in his right brain might just be unbalanced? Who is really unbalanced? Is this a case of the pot calling the kettle black?

CREATIVITY: Another study shows that almost all children test high in creativity at five years of age (i.e. just before they enter school). Creativity is a utilization of the right-brain functions of vision and intuition. By the time students are seven (have been in left-brain schools for two years), only 12% indicate high creativity. By the time we are adults, only 2% test as highly creative. The western world destroys creativity. Another proof of this is that our most creative geniuses generally do not fare well in school. This includes Albert Einstein, Henry Ford, and even Bill Gates, who dropped out of college to become the founder and CEO of Microsoft and the richest man in the world through expressing his creativity.

I do not doubt that this is one of the reasons I hated my school experience. It was trying to destroy my creativity. No one was teaching me how to yield the left or right hemispheres of my brain to the indwelling Spirit of God to receive revelation, divine creativity, and anointed reasoning. That I had to learn on my own,

25 years after I graduated from college. Praise God, He is bringing divine creativity back. And praise God, Patti and I decided to never let our children set foot inside a western school. We have homeschooled them from kindergarten through Master's degree.⁴

No subjectivity means no place for the Holy Spirit: There was no place in my life for subjectivity or having an experience with God, because my culture *told* me there was no place for subjectivity.

Subjectivism—a doctrine that individual feeling or apprehension is the ultimate criterion of the good and the right (Webster's Dictionary)

Actually, the Bible is full of subjective, inner experiences. From Genesis to Revelation, we read about dream, vision, prophecy, the voice of God, the leading of the Holy Spirit, peace ruling in your heart, etc., etc. And these experiences led people to the truth—to what was good and right.

However, since my theology of dispensationalism had conveniently removed all these sections of the Bible, and said all subjective portions of the Bible were no longer relevant, I was able to simply and blissfully write them off as irrelevant to my life! Wow! Pretty scary, don't you think? There is an appendix in the back of the book *Encounter with God* by Morton Kelsey which lists all the verses in the New Testament which deal with subjective, inner experiences. Kelsey concludes that 49% of the New Testament deals with such experiences and 51% with rational experiences.

LOSING ONE-HALF OF THE BIBLE: Now, it was not that I didn't believe that the Bible was the inerrant Word of God. I did. However, I had been taught a theology of dispensationalism which conveniently removed half of the Bible from my experience. My Bible was cut in half, just as it was for the liberals who believed that one needed to demythologize the Bible and remove all the sections which had myths (i.e. miracles or non-rational sections). So, from the most conservative fundamentalist to the most liberal

theologian, all are equally convinced that God has no living contact with mankind. And half of the Bible has been stripped from them both! Actually, as an evangelical, I lost more than half the Bible because I didn't just reject the 49% that dealt with subjective, spiritual experiences. I also dismissed the Old Testament as being for the Israelites, the Gospels as being only about Jesus' lifetime, the book of Acts as transitory, and the book of Revelation as futuristic. Therefore, all I really had left which applied to me were the non-subjective/non-Spirit sections of the Epistles (i.e. the moral commands which "I" was supposed to obey). Just a few pages. The rest had been stolen.

Rationalism has certainly done its work. It has stripped the Bible from us all. It makes you wonder who might be behind it. Who would like to strip the Bible from the Church? My guess is satan, and that we are dealing with doctrines of demons.

Rather than learning how to let the Holy Spirit guide my reasoning processes through anointed reasoning, I learned to worship the false god of rationalism (i.e. to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil). I do not think that was God's intention when He created me with a slight bent toward left-brain functions.

Since the right brain deals with the more subjective elements of vision and intuition, and I didn't access my right brain as easily as I did my left brain, it was easy for me to receive the instruction to set aside subjective religious experiences. I was already weak in those areas. My culture didn't honor them. My Christian trainers didn't accept them. And as a result, I had no place for subjectivity in my walk with God.

THE RESULT—A DEAD RELATIONSHIP: Let's take, for instance, my salvation experience. I was told it was to be an objective, rational experience. I was to have faith in the facts about the effects of Christ's blood at Calvary in washing away the sins of the repentant believer. So I repented, and I believed. I did not expect to feel anything because, of course, feelings are soulish and we do not base our life in God on feelings, but on the truths of the Word of God. God's Word said I was now in relationship with

Almighty God because I had accepted Him into my heart and He was my Lord and Savior. I totally ignored Romans 8:16 which said that “the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” There was no place for bearing witness in my life. That would have been an inner, subjective experience and we could have none of that. So I just ignored that verse.

Now I had a relationship with this God whom I couldn’t see (no vision), couldn’t hear (God doesn’t speak today), and couldn’t feel (because feelings are soulish and God is spiritual).

Let me ask you: Is that **really** a relationship? If you were engaged to a person you couldn’t hear, see, or feel, would you consider that a relationship? I think not! And yet, that was exactly what I was saying about my engagement to God! Maybe I had a theology that said I had a relationship, rather than actually having a relationship.

You say, “Oh, but we have love letters from 2000 years ago which we can read and understand and live out of.” Well, great. You love someone and the only contact you have with them are some letters they wrote many years ago. You call that a relationship, an engagement, a marriage? You can, but I’ll tell you what the world thinks. They laugh in derision at the Church. To them it is dead; it has no meaning. They want an experience, not some 2000-year-old letters as a substitute for a living experience.

THE RESULT OF OFFERING TO THE WORLD A RATIONAL, HUMANISTIC “CHRISTIAN” MESSAGE: Deuteronomy 28:10 says that the world is supposed to look at God’s people and fear because the power and anointing and blessing of God is so powerful in and through them (Deut. 28:1-14; II Cor. 1:20).

And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee (Deut. 28:10).

Instead, since the Church has repudiated all direct spiritual encounter with Almighty God, and only has a dead religion to offer, the world laughs and scorns. Who needs a dead religion,

anyway? The Church has not only made the Bible optional in the training of its pastors, it has ruled out all working of the Spirit in our lives today. The Church's two pillars are gone. The Bible and the Spirit have been removed. So instead of the Church leading in society, as God designed it to, it is scorned and has lost its place. Whose fault is that?

The beautiful thing is, God didn't die. He is still alive, and He still lives within the hearts of His children, giving them dream, vision, His voice, His emotions, and His anointing. We do not have to participate in a dead religion. We can have a living relationship, if we want it. It is still available, even though theology has tried to do away with it for years. God is still alive in the hearts of His people, and He is not going away. What is going to fall away is falsehood, and truth shall prevail as the waters cover the sea. I can celebrate because I have finally come over and joined the winning side, and what I have to offer now is a living, vital, dynamic relationship with the Creator of the universe, rather than some dead theology. Glory be to God!

ARE EMOTIONS ACCEPTABLE? I can even experience God's emotions within me, as well as His voice and His vision. For, you see, the Bible says, "Jesus, moved by compassion, healed..." (Matt. 14:14). Apparently Jesus didn't discard emotions as soulish and something to be scorned and shunned or as something that had no place in Christian spirituality. I don't believe God created my emotions so I could stuff them and not give them a place.

No, we find Jesus not only honoring the emotions of God within Him, but also letting His actions be controlled by these emotions. No one in my religious upbringing ever conceded that a Christian could let his life be lived out of his emotions. Emotions were unreliable, undependable, not trustworthy. My faith in the facts of the Bible was what was reliable. What in the world was Jesus doing allowing emotions to control His life like that? He surely was not a good westerner. Perhaps His problem was that He wasn't born in the West and didn't attend western schools and seminaries. I am sure if we could have arranged for that, then He

would have been more able to see how ridiculous it was to allow His emotions to guide His actions. It is so much better to “stuff” them, don’t you think?

Perhaps God knew what He was doing when He created man with the ability to feel emotions. Perhaps God had a purpose for man’s emotions. Perhaps God wanted to fill them and move in them so that love, joy and peace (fruit of the Holy Spirit) would flow through man’s emotions and guide him into righteous ministry and lifestyle. What do you think?⁵

The River of God: A Theology or a Reality?

I know that there is a river which flows from the throne room of God, through the streets of heaven, and out through our hearts.

Jesus Himself said:

“He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified (Jn. 7:38,39).

So, of course, theologically speaking, there is the river of God within the heart of the believer. But God said to me, “Mark, My river within your heart is more than theology; it is reality. Believe it. Live in it. Walk in it. Swim in it.” That reminded me of Ezekiel’s vision of going ankle deep and then waist deep into the river of God. How deep will I go into this river? That depends on me.

First, I must accept the fact that there really is a river within me and that it is sensed as “flow,” according to John 7:38. When I tune to this flow, I experience the river and the anointing of the Spirit of God within me. All of a sudden God becomes more than a distant theology. He becomes an immediate reality I can touch and live out of every single moment of my life.⁶

Flow, vision, stillness, and recording and acting upon this flow were to become very important parts of my life as time went on. However, we will pick that up in Chapter Two and other later chapters. For now, let us say that God is alive in the midst of His Church. He is still speaking, still granting vision, still healing. The river is still flowing and available for those who will wade out into it. It still has fruit-bearing trees along its banks (Ps. 1), and those who live their lives out of this wonderful indwelling river of God find that they are more fruitful than they ever dreamed possible.

Phariseeism

As I reflect, I feel I was filled with a lot of phariseeism in my early Christian years. Like the Pharisees, I did not believe in the supernatural power of God to interact with my life in the form of miracles. Not seeing vision or receiving from God in dreams, I could easily be characterized as a blind guide leading the blind. I had to be a legalist, since I couldn't sense the Holy Spirit within me. And I certainly came against the prophetic moves of God in my generation. So I came to a point where I realized I needed to do a complete study on phariseeism and then examine my life, so I could repent of any pharisaical elements I found within me. I truly did not want to be a pharisee, nor did I want to be held back in my walk with God by embracing any pharisaical attitudes or theologies.⁷

Personal Application

1. Take some time to prayerfully recall your roots, theologically, culturally, religiously, and psychologically. What natural giftings and leanings did God place within you? What were the cultural influences upon your life? What influence has your religious training had upon your life? Are you living as Jesus lived, or do you need to shed some things and press on into that lifestyle?

2. Do you need to repent and turn away from any of your roots? Were they improper, unbiblical, unspiritual? Did they rule out the heart or the spirit or the power of the Holy Spirit? Did they rule out dream or vision or God's voice? If so, take the time to repent now and ask God to begin the process of restoring these things which have been robbed from you.

(1) These charts of the Bible became a study manual which we still sell, entitled *Through the Bible*.

(2) We have written about the contrast between rationalism and anointed reasoning in systematic detail in our book *How Do You Know?*, for those who, like me, feel more confident with a systematic theology than with a narrative theology.

(3) We have have written about the contrast between humanism and living as the "Galatians 2:20 I" in our books *Naturally Supernatural* and *The Great Mystery*.

(4) We head up an external degree program called Christian Leadership University which allows individuals to receive college-level Spirit-anointed training from their homes. And this college does not teach rationalism. It teaches how to access Holy Spirit revelation, instead.

(5) For our study on emotions in one's spirit, read the book *How to Walk by the Spirit*. In it you will learn that mind, will, and emotion can operate on the level of the spirit as well as the soul.

(6) Read our books *Dialogue with God* and *How to Hear God's Voice* to learn about flow and about the other three keys which should be used in conjunction with the principle of "flow."

(7) The story of God's freeing me from phariseeism can be found in my book *49 Lies I Repented of When I Renounced Phariseeism*. It includes journaling in which God very lovingly but firmly pointed out attitudes and theologies of which I needed to repent so I could get on with my walk in the Spirit. If you sense a need to explore this topic in depth, you may order this book from our offices.

2

Sticking My Toe into the River of God

My Baptism in the Holy Spirit

IT STARTED WITH A HUNGER: During my senior year of high school, my hunger to live the book of Acts was kindled by reading an extended novel on the life of Paul. I wanted to be like Paul. I wanted to do miracles, hear the voice of God, move in the anointing of God. But everyone was telling me this lifestyle was no longer available to Christians today.

A year later, my Bible college professors assured me of the same thing. The age of miracles was past. My Greek professor even went so far as to make extensive use of class time to mock and ridicule “tongue speakers.” So I settled down and accepted the fact that the Church Age was a dispensation in which the power of God was not present to do miracles.

This worked all right until my senior year at college. Patti, my new wife, had been trained as a teacher. Part of her final year was devoted to doing student teaching in an elementary school

setting. The woman she taught under just happened to be a charismatic who was extremely wise. She never let on to me that she was a charismatic, but instead invited Patti and me over every little while for an evening meal with her and her family. There she told us stories— stories of how she and her family used to be quite sickly and had to go to the hospital every winter with a variety of illnesses. Then, a few years ago, she learned how to pray for them for healing and none of them had been sick for the last two or three years.

Well, of course, this didn't jive with any theology I had been taught, but what was I to do with it? It was a living story in a real person's life, and it happened. How could I say it didn't?

THE POWER OF STORY: So even then, God had chosen to get through to me with a story, with an experience which would bypass all my theological hang-ups. I was experiencing the power of story to affect one's life, even though it would take me another ten years to come into an understanding of the power of narrative theology as contrasted to systematic theology. (More on narrative theology in Chapter Six.)

CAN EXPERIENCES TEACH? And then there is the whole question of the validity of experience in determining theological truth. I had, of course, been taught in rationalism that one does not trust experiences or look to them as a guide in life. One looks instead to what his mind can comprehend as being true according to his interpretation of Scripture.

It would be many years before I would have a formal understanding that the Bible places a high value on experiences. For example, the disciples on the road to Emmaus had their theology transformed as Jesus shone light on various Old Testament passages and helped them see what they had never seen before (Lk. 24:27ff). This resulted in an inner, subjective experience of their "hearts burning within" them as they walked along (Lk. 24:32). And, to top it off, they ran back to Jerusalem and "began to *relate their experiences* on the road" (Lk. 24:35)!

Have inner, subjective experiences in which Scripture is re-interpreted to them? Then *relate their experiences* as proof of their new theology? This surely wasn't very western or very rational or very correct theologically—at least from a rational western theologian's point of view. I suppose one could ask what makes the rational western theologian's approach more accurate than the Bible's own approach to discovering truth. However, those are the questions one never gets around to asking as he merrily prances along the road of life imposing his theological pronouncements on everything and everyone.

Well, I was blessed, because my heart hungered enough for truth that I knew I could never stand in a pulpit and preach that God doesn't heal anymore today and encounter the possibility of some woman in my congregation saying, "Well, I've been praying for health for myself and my entire family for many years and none of us have been sick." I felt I must reconcile my theology and her experience. So off I went.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE: I love God's providence. He always places in our path exactly what we are ready to receive, when we are ready to receive it. I call it "divine serendipity." Serendipity means a happy, chance encounter, and I have learned to expect God in these divine "chance" encounters of life. They come often to the prepared life.

The chance encounter in this instance was God's leading me to a charismatic cassette lending library of perhaps 1300 teaching cassettes. There I found Derek Prince, a charismatic theologian, who could teach Hebrew and Greek on the graduate level and who had written his graduate thesis on logic.

Now tell me, isn't he perfectly suited to speak into the heart and mind of this left-brain thinker who had been trained in rational Christianity? Derek Prince was exactly what I needed. I listened to several hundred of his teaching cassettes, and through them I radically reversed my theology, realizing that God is still alive in the midst of His Church and still doing miracles and healings, and speaking and prophesying, and casting out demons, and doing

everything He has always done throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. There was no need to dispensationalize the power of God away just because our culture believed in rationalism. The Bible could still stand, and our culture could be challenged by it—by those who would believe it was still so, and who would demonstrate in and through their lives that it was so.

MY INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARISMATICS: So I became a charismatic, theologically speaking. I became convinced rationally and in my heart that the gifts and callings of God were irrevocable (Rom. 11:29 NASB), and that we could operate the gifts of God in our lives today.

I began by seeking the most basic and supposedly easiest gift to operate, the gift of speaking in tongues. I was comfortable with the belief that this gift could be a sign that one has been baptized in the Holy Spirit, something for which I now hungered. (Patti had been baptized in the Holy Spirit several years earlier, but was wise enough to keep it to herself, as she knew sharing it with me would only cause me to despise her and try to talk her out of her “false experience.”)

Now I began to seek God for a supernatural manifestation of His power through my life, specifically through my mouth. I went to a charismatic prayer meeting and received prayer for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues. I received the prayer, but I didn’t feel anything and I didn’t begin speaking in tongues. That was disappointing, because I had fasted all day and really had high expectations that something special was going to happen to me that night.

I drove home, frustrated that God had not made Himself real to me through the gift of speaking in tongues, but I didn’t give up. For months I studied, read, and prayed concerning the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues. Even though I sought it earnestly, nothing seemed to happen. I would pray for the gift of tongues, and then let my tongue hang loose and ask the Holy Spirit to move it around and give me the gift of tongues, but nothing would happen.

FINALLY—THE GIFT OF TONGUES: One Sunday morning I was too sick to attend church, so I was left alone in our small trailer in a rocking chair re-evaluating everything I knew about speaking in tongues and wondering what I was doing wrong that was keeping me from experiencing it.

My thoughts went like this:

1. I know that God wants me to speak in tongues (I Cor. 14:5).
2. I know that when I ask for the Spirit, God will not give me a serpent but He will give me what I have asked for (Lk. 11:9-13; Matt. 7:7-11).
3. I know that when I ask anything according to His will He hears me and I have that which I have asked of Him. (I Jn. 5:14,15).
4. And now for the amazing piece—I know that in any miracle, there is a part God plays and a part I play. When Peter walked on the water, Jesus said, “Come” and kept Peter’s feet afloat, but *it was Peter who was doing the walking!*

What God showed me that morning in the rocking chair was that in the miracle of speaking in tongues there was a part He would play and there was a part I must play. The two parts are recorded in Acts 2:4—“**They spoke**” and “the **Spirit gave** the utterance.” The part I must play is that I must be willing to speak, while choosing not to speak in English, my native language. Instead, I must let the Spirit within me form the syllables. I choose to articulate sounds, but I choose not to consciously form the syllables. I leave that to the Holy Spirit Who indwells me.

So, with a leap of faith, I prayed once again and asked God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues, and then I began to speak, without consciously choosing the syllables. Sure enough, I was speaking something. But what? I received two answers to that question. My rational brain skeptically evaluated each syllable and told me I was speaking gibberish.

My heart clung to faith and said this had to be tongues. I had to choose which voice I would listen to.

Being at a point where I desperately wanted intimacy with God and to experience His power, I decided to press on unreservedly for the next couple of weeks, doing the same experiment over and over. I found that when I let my rational mind evaluate the experience of tongue speaking, it would tend to grind the whole process to a halt. It would evaluate each syllable coming out of my mouth and say, "That is stupid. That is not a language. That doesn't edify me." I had to remind my rational mind of several things. First, *all* other languages sound stupid to it, and it probably couldn't recognize another language if it had to. Also, the Bible is clear that speaking in tongues is not to edify my mind, but rather to edify my spirit (I Cor. 14:1-4).

So I told my left brain to do something constructive and to think thoughts of praise and worship while I was speaking in tongues. This helped a lot, because now my brain was cooperating with my heart in worship unto the King, rather than pulling against my heart. And the flow of tongue speaking began to enlarge and come much more freely in my life. However, my fears and rational skepticism kept me from praying in tongues in a public setting for an entire year. Talk about being locked up in doubt and rationalism! I was surely handicapped, spiritually. Seeing my bondage to rationalism should help you see why I am so against it today. Rationalism held me back from God for many years. My passion is that its power be broken in our culture so that people can freely experience God on a spirit-to-spirit level.

The first time I spoke in tongues publicly was at the close of a home cell meeting. We had just prayed for an individual, ministering deliverance of several demons, and the group was worshipping together. As we worshipped softly and gently, I spoke a bit in tongues. I "happened" to be taking a girl home afterward who had spent time in South America and knew Portuguese. She mentioned that she had overheard me as I was praying in

tongues that night, and, in Portuguese, I was saying, “Hooray! Long live Jesus!”

I was astounded. I had never considered the possibility that someone would hear me speak in tongues and recognize it as a foreign language which they could translate. Wasn't God good to me? Knowing the rational doubts I had grown up with and needed to overcome, He graciously gave me this startling confirmation that, yes, these babbling syllables which I was speaking from the flow in my heart were indeed more than baby talk. They were a foreign language which could be understood and translated.

INTRODUCING THE PRINCIPLES OF FAITH AND FLOW: What had I learned as I had pressed my way into the Spirit world, through discovering how to yield myself to God so that He could speak through me in tongues? I had applied two foundational principles to my life: The Principle of Faith and The Principle of Flow. I was using them together, purposefully, for the first time in my life.

1. The Principle of Faith

But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6).

2. The Principle of Flow

“He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive...(Jn. 7:38,39).

3. The “Faith in Flow” Principle

The gifts of the Holy Spirit operate through the one who, in faith, yields his outer faculties to the control of the river of God within him.

- or condensed to -

In faith, yield your outer faculties to flow.

For example:

- ❖ The mind yielded to flow = anointed reasoning, word of wisdom, word of knowledge
- ❖ The mouth yielded to flow = tongues, interpretation, prophecy, persuasiveness of speech
- ❖ The heart yielded to flow = God's voice, distinguishing of spirits, faith, peace, unrest
- ❖ The hands yielded to flow = miracles, healing
- ❖ The eyes yielded to flow = dream and vision, divine perspective

Take a few minutes to ponder what has been said, for you *can* press in and learn to operate the gifts of the Holy Spirit if you will but yield your outer faculties to the river of God within you. Once God gives you revelation concerning this, you will begin operating in the supernatural. Don't put it off. Stop and ponder and meditate and receive this revelation. Your life will go on whether you operate in this revelation or not. But, if you will receive it and live in it, you will be a supernatural manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit in the world today. If you don't, you will be a manifestation of yourself. The world needs Christ much more than it needs you.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLE OF FAITH: Hebrews 11:6 says that it is impossible to please God unless I choose to believe that He is and that He will reward me when I diligently seek Him. So the thing that gives God pleasure is my choosing to believe Him—that He is here with me and that He does love and guide and protect and deliver and interact with me. For so many years I had not given God this pleasure of believing in Him, because my belief in dispensationalism and rational theology had removed God's immediacy from my life. Now, finally, I could begin giving Him pleasure by believing that He was and that He would reward me as I sought Him.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRINCIPLE OF FLOW: In John 7: 38,39, Jesus defines the Holy Spirit within us as a river which we experience as “flow.” I had never honored the flow within me. I had never had a course on “flow,” or weighed or considered the theological implications of “flow.” In the course I took in college on systematic theology, we did not cover “flow” as one of the theologies. I missed the concept of flow completely, until 1979 when God taught me that “flow” or “spontaneity,” as I have come to call it, is the way we experience the river of God within us and one of the four keys which I needed to learn in order to begin clearly hearing His voice within my heart.

TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, BEFORE BEING ABLE TO CLEARLY DEFINE THE PRINCIPLE: Unfortunately, I was not able to state or fully understand this Principle of Faith in Flow at the time I first used it for speaking in tongues in 1975. It would take 23 more years before I would be able to put it down on paper and grasp its universal application to the operation of the other gifts of the Holy Spirit. You see, this same principle of Faith in Flow is what is used to operate all the gifts of the Holy Spirit in one’s life. We shall explain its application in detail as we go through the rest of this book.

“EXPAND YOUR FAITH”: This was God’s directive to me in 1995 when He instructed me to begin attending a church which preaches faith continuously. I began exploring faith in a deeper way, and I finally decided I must look up every verse in the Bible on faith and belief, and meditate and pray over them.¹ A partial summary of my research on faith is given below.

OUR FAITH GIVES GOD PLEASURE: Without faith it is *impossible to please him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him (Heb. 11:6).

FAITH DEFINED: An assurance placed in your spirit by God’s indwelling Spirit as God speaks to you (Heb. 11:1; Rom. 10:17).

Faith is a manifestation and a fruit of the indwelling Spirit of God (I Cor. 12:9; Gal. 5:22).

THE PRIORITY OF FAITH: It is impossible to please God if one does not have faith (Heb. 11:6). Anything not done in faith is sin (Rom. 14:14,22,23). Faith furthers the administration of God (I Tim. 1:4). Faith is one of the six foundation doctrines (Heb. 6:1). Faith is one of four things required to enter the presence of God (Heb. 10:22). The work of God is to believe (Jn. 6:29). All things are possible to those who believe (Mk. 9:23-25). Our faith is the victory that overcomes the world (I Jn. 5:4). Jesus called faith a weightier matter (Matt. 23:23). Paul called faith one of three abiding realities (I Cor. 13:13). Faith can purify the heart (Acts 15:9). The just must walk and live by faith (II Cor. 5:7; Rom. 1:16,17; Gal. 2:20; 3:11,12; Heb. 10:38). Faith gives us peace with God and access to His grace (Rom. 5:1,2). Faith makes us children of Abraham (Gal. 3:7-9). Belief in the heart and confession with the mouth result in salvation (Rom. 10:8-11). Unbelief cuts one off from God (Rom. 11:20). Each person is to minister according to the measure of faith they have (Rom. 12:3,6). We are to accept people at the level of faith they have (Rom. 14:1-8). The Law is a schoolmaster which leads us to faith (Gal. 3:22-26). Faith (and love) is a breastplate which shields us from the darts of satan (Eph. 6:16; I Thess. 5:8). Holding faith and a good conscience keeps one from suffering shipwreck (I Tim. 1:19). We are to fight the good fight of faith (I Tim. 6:12). The gospel must be mixed with faith in order to profit (Heb. 4:2).

WHAT GREAT FAITH (I.E. NOT MINGLED WITH DOUBT) PROVIDES: The Spirit (Jn. 7:39; Gal. 3:2,14); all things you ask in prayer believing; ability to cast mountains into the sea (Matt. 21:19-22); miracles (Gal. 3:5); wisdom from God (Jas. 1:2-8); healing of the sick (Jas. 5:14-16); and authority to cast out demons and speak in new tongues (Mk. 16:17).

Epistemological Reflections Concerning Faith

If faith and trust release God's power, protection, guidance, and anointing into one's life, then all my teaching and all my learning

must be focused on building faith and trust in my God. All of my life, hope, joy, love, and provision come from His responses to the faith I release toward Him. How is that for a singleness of focus in education?

ADVERSITY—GOD’S FINAL EXAM—WHICH TESTS HEART BELIEFS: And you shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not (Deut. 8:2 NASB).

WHAT DID GOD DO TO ABRAHAM? Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am” (Gen. 22:1 NASB).

WHAT DID THE ISRAELITES DO BACK TO GOD? Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs, which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My voice (Num. 14:22 NASB).

WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE WHO PASSED GOD’S TESTS? But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it (Num. 14:24).

WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE WHO FAILED GOD’S TESTS? Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it (Num. 14:23).

How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against Me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against Me. Say unto them, ‘As truly as I live,’ saith the LORD, ‘as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you’ (Num. 14:27,28).

HOW DOES THE STORY OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS RELATE TO US? But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples (I Cor. 10:5,6).

MY PERSONAL REFLECTIONS CONCERNING FAITH: The above summary on faith and God's use of adversity in our lives as the final exam to test the level of faith in our hearts was quite startling to me. I learned several things which I had not known before:

1. My faith that God meets me moment by moment gives Him great pleasure.
2. The Bible teaches that faith is the switch that turns on the power of God in my life and opens the door for the flow of God's anointing, gifts, and grace into my life.
3. God tests my level of faith by letting me walk through a difficult situation (i.e. a wilderness) to see if I will continue to praise Him and believe Him and His word in the midst of contradictory circumstances. If I pass the test and don't descend into grumbling and complaining, then I get to go on into the Promised Land. If I fail the test, I get to circle back around Mount Sinai and stay in the wilderness for awhile longer, until God presents me with another test to see if I have matured in faith.

If I want to progress in God and move in the supernatural, I must get over my grumbling, doubt, negativity, and rationalism, and learn to give thanks in and for everything, and believe and confess the words and visions God has given me, even in the midst of life's greatest distresses and contradictions. If I don't do this, I will wander aimlessly in the wilderness and could conceivably die there. This principle is demonstrated over and over in the lives of biblical characters.

The Discovery of Flow

PAGA: Learning about flow has been one of the greatest revelations of my life. It was a startling discovery which was initiated at an Elim Camp meeting in the late 1970's. Jack Hayford was speaking on the word *paga*, the Hebrew Old Testament word for intercession. He taught that it meant "to strike or light upon by chance," or "an accidental intersecting."

When God leads me to pray and intercede for a person, He sends thoughts which “strike or light upon me by chance” or which “accidentally intersect” my thought processes. I would call them “chance encounter thoughts” or “spontaneous thoughts,” in that they come to me without my analyzing or thinking. They just light upon my mind. God sends them. I don’t think them up.

Each of us has probably experienced this phenomenon as we have driven down the road and had a thought light upon our minds to pray for a certain person. That was *paga* or God’s voice calling us to intercession. That was the river flowing within us. That was flow. That was spontaneity.

Each of us has experienced the anointing which comes when we find ourselves praying in flow, or worshiping in flow, or working in flow. It is an exhilarating, life-giving, anointed experience which makes our efforts more effective than if we are just doing these activities under our own strength. In flow, we connect to the river of God and the indwelling Spirit takes over the activity, and it is God doing the work through us rather than us doing it on our own. It is now a living work (i.e. inaugurated and sustained by the Holy Spirit) rather than a dead work (i.e. inaugurated and sustained by self-effort—Heb. 6:1,2).

NABA: God then showed me the literal definition of the Hebrew word *naba*, an Old Testament word translated “true prophecy.” The literal definition is “to bubble up.” So when I want to prophesy, I come to God in faith, asking Him to speak prophetically through me, and then tune to that which is bubbling up within me. “Bubbling up” sure sounds a lot like “flow” or “spontaneity” or “lighting upon by chance” to me. Now, with a flash of revelation, I saw that I must become trained in *naba*. I must become skilled in listening for and expressing what is bubbling up from the river within my heart. I need training on living with my eyes fixed on Jesus, my faith placed squarely in God, and my heart tuned to spontaneity. If I can learn the art of living this way, then I will find myself living out of the river of God, out of the anointing of God, out of the gifts of the Holy Spirit Who is within me. I will return

to supernatural Christianity, rather than rational Christianity. I will live, not out of reason, analysis, and cognition, but, instead, out of flow, spontaneity, and “the bubble.”

Could supernatural Christianity be this easy—as easy as fixing my eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:1,2), quieting myself down into my heart and spirit, tuning to flow, and then expressing what is flowing out through me? Yes, I believe it can be this easy. I believe it *is* this easy. Christianity must be simple enough for children, because the Bible says we must become like little children if we want to enter the kingdom (Matt. 18:3).

The Origin of The River

This river does not start in our hearts. It originates in the throne room of God. The beloved disciple John saw it in a vision God gave him on the Isle of Patmos:

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 22:1).

The river doesn't start with us. It begins in God, in the heavens, and it flows through our hearts, transforming our lives. We must tune to it and allow it to flow effectively and continuously out through the capacities of our souls, transforming us into living expressions of the Body of Christ, and empowering, anointing, and equipping us with God's magnificent grace.

The Connections Within Us That Allow the River to Flow

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing (Jn. 15:5).

We are grafted into Jesus, the Holy Spirit is joined to our spirits, and we have become one spirit with Him (I Cor. 6:17). Now this river which comes from the throne of God can flow, even as sap

flows from the vine to the branch, through the Holy Spirit who is joined to our spirits.

The Results of Allowing This River to Flow

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper (Ps. 1:3).

As we allow the river to flow out through the capacities of our souls, transforming our beings, we become like trees planted by this river of life, and the fruit that is born in our lives does not wither, and whatever we do, prospers, for they are no longer our fruit, but instead are borne by the river of God within us. We become deepened individuals, not confined to rationalism, cognition, or outer sense knowledge, but living out of the flow of our spirits which can now guide any outer faculty which we yield to it.

Psalms 1:2 tells what makes us like a tree planted by the rivers of water:

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Meditation on the Bible can produce this lifestyle. We will discuss meditation in detail in Chapter Six. For now, let's simply say that study alone is generally a left-brain activity, whereas meditation is a whole-brain plus heart activity.

How different from the rationalism which I was taught all through school and college! How absolutely, diametrically opposed to all that, flow is. Perhaps that is why so many pastors lose their fire for God and their intimacy with Him in Bible school and seminary, because these institutions train the mind (i.e. rationalism) rather than training the heart (i.e. Spirit encounter). Perhaps they train flow *out* of a person, rather than training him to live continuously in flow (i.e. walking and living in the Spirit). Perhaps

if we would bring flow back into the middle of every course and every class and every assignment, our Bible schools and seminaries could be places where students learn to wade deeper into the river of God, until it is up around their waist and even their chest. Perhaps the anointing could be trained *into* them rather than *out* of them. Then perhaps our nations would once again respect the Church and even fear her, when they saw Christians moving in the awesome power of Almighty God, making them extremely effective in everything they put their hand to do. That is my vision. I believe that is God's vision.²

RE-DISCOVERING THE RIVER OF GOD AT THE END OF THE AGE OF RATIONALISM: Let the Church once again return to training her members how to move in the river of God. This river carries all God's graces, His gifts, His anointings, and His blessings for us.

The Age of Rationalism is over. It probably officially ended in 1979 when the American Association for the Advancement of Science accepted parapsychology into its ranks. In so doing, science said to the world, "We have reversed our position." You see, it was science which gave us rationalism and sense knowledge. Science repudiated any and all knowledge outside of the five senses. Now, after several hundred years of maintaining its erroneous position that there was no knowledge outside of the five senses, it has begun to intently explore ESP (i.e. the world's counterpart to the Christian's spiritual revelation from God) as another way one can receive knowledge. Now one can be scientifically respected and believe in spiritual communication. Not that a Christian should care whether his views are accepted by his culture or not, since the Christian is supposed to be leading his culture, not following it. However, for those married to rationalism and science, it is nice not to be thought of as "unscientific." Actually, the unscientific ones now are those who are still clinging to the outmoded worldview of rationalism (or religious dispensationalism). How is that for turning the tables? Obviously the Church should never have embraced rationalism in the first place. Just because science told us to, was that any excuse to come up with the doctrine of dispensationalism and through it to rule out all biblical non-ra-

tional (i.e. spiritual) experiences? I think not. So let us repent and get on with our lives and once again lead and not follow.

DELIVERANCE—THE CASTING OUT OF DEMONS: I mentioned in a story earlier in this chapter that I was involved in casting demons out of a person. Yes, I had become involved in ministering deliverance. It was Derek Prince who laid out for me a systematic theological foundation and understanding of the deliverance ministry. (I love Derek Prince. He is so logical, so biblical, and yet the truths he shares are so spiritually insightful. He was the perfect mentor for me, a Baptist, left-brain theologian.)

It was a deacon from my church who came into my office and said he felt he needed deliverance from a demon. As the other two elders and myself prayed deliverance prayer with him, sure enough, he began trembling and shaking and a demon spoke out through his mouth in a gruff voice, saying, “I’m not coming out.”

When we prayed and commanded it to come out, it did, along with several others, and the deacon’s life was radically changed from that point on. This ushered me into a deliverance ministry in which I have ministered deliverance to hundreds of Christians, casting out thousands of demons. I am always amazed at the power of the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every knee must bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil. 2: 9-11). God surely is alive in the midst of His Church for those who want to believe it. And He surely is doing all the same things that He did long ago.

The Bible can be lived today. It is not a dusty Book telling of an age long past which cannot be experienced today. It demonstrates what I can believe God for, if I choose to. Believing that the Bible is true is one thing. Believing it is true in my life is another. It is the parts of the Bible which I believe are true **in my life** that make a difference and set me free.

FURTHER RESOURCES: There are many good books available on the market today concerning the deliverance ministry. They

include *Pigs in the Parlor* by Frank and Ida Mae Hammond and *Can a Christian Have a Demon?* by Don Basham.

Discerning When Deliverance Is Needed

The key indicator that a person may need deliverance is a “besetting sin” which cannot be crucified. If a person has a sin which they have tried to crucify and are unable to overcome through the normal spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, Bible study, and Scripture memorization, then it is likely that there is more to be dealt with than the lusts of the flesh. Probably a demon is also involved, which must be rebuked and cast out in the name of Jesus Christ. To solve this problem, the person will need a two-pronged solution:

1. Repentance and crucifying of the sin, and
2. Rebuking and casting out of the demon in the name of Jesus Christ.

Without using **both** of these solutions, the person will not be set free. Unfortunately, many Christians walk in bondage because they do not use both of these divine solutions. Somehow, we have dismissed deliverance and demons as not being a western concept.

The Fundamental Steps in Deliverance Are:

1. Confess all sin and pray for a covering of the blood of Jesus Christ over all involved and their families and properties before beginning.
2. Let the counselee name any besetting sins he struggles with (as these may have demonic roots and indicate what demons the person needs deliverance from).
3. Have the counselee separate himself from the demon by;
 - ❖ Repenting once again of the sin;

- ❖ Commanding the demon to leave; (Call the demon by the same name as the sin it is causing.)
 - ❖ Setting his will against the demon while counselors pray.
4. The two people ministering deliverance then begin commanding the demon to come out in the name of Jesus Christ, staying open to Holy Spirit flow, allowing the Spirit to reveal anything which the demon is anchored to within the individual which must first be dismantled before the demon will come out.

When a person was saved in the early Church, he was automatically taken through deliverance prayer before he was baptized so that all demons were dealt with as he entered the Christian community. Since this procedure is no longer practiced, most people come into the Church still carrying a bunch of demons with them. What a disservice to the baby Christian and to the Church at large, as these demons kick up later on, causing all sorts of personal and church problems. There is no reason for the Church not to immediately restore this practice of the early Church. I pray your church does so.

SUMMARY: I was changing. I had learned how to operate in the gift of speaking in tongues. I had learned to yield my tongue to the flow of the Spirit of God within me. I had learned the Principle of Faith, to believe that God would reward me as I abandoned myself to Him. I had connected my present-tense faith with my belief in the river of God within me. I was progressing into the world of the Holy Spirit.

I had learned the awesome power of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I had learned that every demon must bow to this Name, and that through this Name, demons could be cast out of people and they could be set free of life-dominating problems and issues.

It had become clear to me that the rational, humanistic, dispensational worldview that I had been taught as a young Christian

was crumbling around me. I was discovering and entering the world of the Spirit. However, I had a long way to go. In the next chapter, we will explore the next steps I took.

It also became clear to me why the issue of speaking in tongues is such a hot and explosive issue in the body of Christ. Why should people get so lathered up and upset over speaking in tongues? If you don't want to speak in tongues, don't. If someone wants to speak in tongues, let him. Don't jump up and down on him and call him a heretic. However, the Church reacts intensely to those who speak in tongues, calling them heretics, tying them to trees, throwing rotten tomatoes at them, and doing many other terrible things to the early Pentecostals.

When I see a response that is so out of proportion to such a simple thing (such as a person choosing to speak in tongues), I assume there must be spiritual forces behind it. And here is what I sense: Tongue speaking is a door-opening experience into the world of supernatural Christianity. If one can take this simplest of all gifts and learn to yield his tongue to the flow of the Spirit within him, he can then take the next step and learn to yield his other outer faculties to the control of the Holy Spirit within him and he can begin manifesting supernatural Christianity once again on this earth.

Who would be against the Church ascending out of rational Christianity and stepping forth into the realm of the operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the anointing of God? My guess is satan. So I suspect it is satan who has so many Christians all riled up against speaking in tongues. If satan can keep them opposed to this gift, he can most likely keep them away from the operation of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Thus satan, demons, witches, clairvoyants, New Agers, and people with ESP can operate in the realm of the spirit world, while the Church operates in the realm of the mind. I hope that is not acceptable to you. It surely is not acceptable to me. Let's join forces and become an army which fights to bring the Church into supernatural Christianity.

Personal Application

1. If you have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues, pray now, asking God for it. Practice the Faith in Flow Principle and begin to speak, yielding your mouth to whatever syllables flow out, believing that whatever comes is the spiritual gift of tongues. Can you embrace faith in flow as you yield your tongue to the control of the Holy Spirit within you? I pray you can. Faith is only faith when you apply it personally to your own life. So apply faith to the gift of tongues and walk out on the water and see if God doesn't support you. He will. Your mind may not be excited at first, but your heart will witness to it as you go along. We have written a short booklet called "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" which lays out a bit more of the theology behind this experience. You may find it helpful.
2. If you have not experienced deliverance ministry, read a couple of the books recommended on deliverance. Then go to a prayer team which practices deliverance prayer and allow yourself to be prayed for. The book "Prayers That Heal the Heart" by Mark and Patti Virkler offers a simple and effective strategy for getting demons out of people.

(1) My study on faith can be found in the book *How do You Know?*

(2) This is the vision of the school we have established, Christian Leadership University, whose motto is, "Raising Up Spirit-anointed Leaders Who Disciple Nations."

3

Wading Deeper into the River of God

EZEKIEL'S VISION OF THE RIVER OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD:

And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over (Ezek. 47:3-5).

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine (Ezek. 47:12).

I at least had my toe in the river of God. I could finally speak in tongues, and I could cast out demons. I had stuck my toe over the line from rationalism to Christian spirituality. Now could I go further in the realm of the Holy Spirit?

JESUS' SECRET: I read through the Gospels looking for the underlying foundation of Jesus' Spirit-anointed ministry, and I finally settled on the fact that His secret of ministry is recorded in John 5:19,20,30 and 8:26,38.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will show Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel" (Jn. 5:19,20).

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me (Jn. 5:30).

I have many things to say and to judge of you: but He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him (Jn. 8:26).

I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father (Jn. 8:38).

JESUS WAS LED BY THE SPIRIT: Jesus did not act on His own. He even said He could do *nothing* on His own! What an astounding statement. So different from humanism and rationalism. In humanism, we are trying to become all we can be, and yet in Jesus' life, He was simply seeking to be a vessel through Whom the Father flowed. Wow! Can we learn anything here?

Self-actualization is not the key to life. Spirit-actualization is. Life is not about what I can do. It is about what I can let God do through me. It is about God in action, not about me in action.

Again, God's ways are totally opposite the humanism of my culture. I must unlearn so much and re-learn the ways of God.

WHAT MUST I UNLEARN? I was taught that I am a self-contained unit. I can think and reason and decide and plan and prepare. It is up to me. I must strive, I must put forth self-effort, and I can overcome. This could not be further from the truth.

WHAT MUST I LEARN? The truth is that I am a vessel. I am a temple which contains a god. As a Christian, I contain the God Who created the universe. I have become a partaker of His divine nature. He has joined Himself to me, and I am one spirit with Him. What an astounding miracle!

Now it is no longer I who live, but Christ Who is living His life out through me. I should not be looking to myself or my own efforts, but rather to Christ and His power working through me.

This radically changes the picture I have of myself. Now, rather than being a self-contained unit, I am a hollow vessel who is filled with the Spirit of Almighty God. And now, rather than establishing my own strength and my own will, I seek God's inner strength coming through my spirit and God's inner will coming from discernment deep within my heart.

MOVING FROM OUTER TO INNER: Now I must move from self-consciousness to Christ-consciousness, or from rationalism to Spirit awareness. I must learn to live as Jesus did, to do only what I hear and see the Father doing. I must learn to quiet myself down into a heart/spirit awareness and sense the movement of God within me, and then release God out through me. In doing this, I become, practically speaking, the body of Christ to the world around me.

Therefore, I am not into self-actualization or humanism. I am into dying to all self-effort and all self's abilities, and coming alive to the movement of the Spirit of God in and through me. I am not into the mind. I am into the heart. I am into Jesus, my All in all.¹

FOUR KEYS TO HEARING GOD'S VOICE: How do I move from my head to my heart, from self-awareness to Spirit-awareness? God gave me four keys for doing this:

1. Become still (Ps. 46:10).
2. Look for vision (Heb. 12:1,2)
3. Listen to the voice of God by tuning to spontaneity (Jn. 7:37-39).
4. Journal—write down the inner flow (Hab. 2:1,2).

These four keys are expanded in Appendix A at the close of this book. I do not feel we need to go through an in-depth teaching of them here.²

I lived as a Christian with a heart hungering for spiritual awareness for twelve years before God taught me these four keys. It took me another year to understand them. Since 1979, I have taught these principles around the world in hundreds of Communion With God seminars, and have found that everyone who applies these four keys (not two or three keys—but all four of them) also has a breakthrough in his spiritual life and is able to begin hearing God's voice, seeing His vision, and writing down what God is saying to him.

This experience revolutionized my life, and has revolutionized the lives of hundreds of thousands of others, also. I teach children who are too small to journal to draw pictures of what they see God doing and what He is saying to them. This works extremely well, and brings tears to my eyes when they describe what is happening in the pictures they have drawn. Christian spirituality is indeed easy enough for children. Glory be to God!

God was moving me on slowly but surely, deeper and deeper into His wonderful river. I was learning to be led by the Spirit, even as Jesus was (Lk. 4:1).

Following is an example of the way God speaks to me through journaling when I use the above four keys:

“Mark, you wonder who will read this book and who will be changed by it. You wonder if you are writing on the right level, using the right style of speech. You wonder if you should have a better outline or if you should have any outline at all. But perhaps instead of all your wondering you could simply go with the flow. Perhaps you could trust My river within you.

“You could quit wondering and worrying about all these things. You could just write because you feel that I am leading you to write. And you could just write in the way you feel led and in the style that you feel led to use, and who knows? Perhaps it just might be Me! You are preaching this truth, of course. You could just believe it and be at peace while you write. How would that be?”

“Lord, that would be great. It is obvious to me that I am still stuck in rationalism on many levels, even as I write about the ways you are releasing me from it.”

“That is true, Mark. You are still stuck in many ways. But that is okay. I am leading you along a path which is getting brighter and brighter until the dawning of the full day of Christ in your heart. It is all right to be led along. It is all right to not be at the end of this path. And it is okay for your readers to not be at the end of this path. As long as they are on it. As long as they are seeing and hearing and changing. That is all I ask. It is only the stubborn and rebellious and proud—those who will not change—that I am against. For I am with the humble of heart. And this book will be read by many who have a humble and teachable heart, and it will encourage them and nurture them and stimulate them to continue on the path I have chosen for them, even as they read about the path I have chosen for you. So be at peace, My son. Enjoy writing about where I have brought you over the 32 years of your walk with Me. It has been a good time. We have covered much ground, and we will cover much more in the next 32 years. I love you, My son. Stay tuned to My word.”

“Thank You, Lord.”

“You are welcome, My son.”

PAGA—CHANCE ENCOUNTER: I discovered, much to my enjoyment, that *paga*, the “chance encounter,” works not only in God sending chance encounter ideas, words, pictures, and emotions into my heart and mind, but He also sends chance encounters with people and events in my life.

God will spontaneously bring chance encounters across our paths (i.e. serendipitous encounters with events and people), which radically alter our lives. The Bible is full of such experiences. For example, read Esther chapter six. List as many serendipities as you can find which you feel were God-ordained and which brought about the release of the Jews. Here is my list:

- ❖ v. 1—The king couldn’t sleep.
- ❖ v. 2,3—He “just happened” to have read to him a specific chronicle about Mordecai—who had not been properly honored.
- ❖ v. 4—Haman (Mordecai’s enemy) “just happened” to be walking in the king’s court at exactly this moment in time and was called in by the king.
- ❖ v. 6-9—Haman himself was deceived in his heart and pronounced a blessing upon his enemy Mordecai.
- ❖ v. 10,11—Haman was required by the king to give the honor he had pronounced to Mordecai.

In my opinion, every one of the above events was orchestrated by Almighty God through “chance encounter” experiences (i.e. serendipitous experiences). I have no doubt that God is still working in such ways today. And since He is, I have no doubt that He has full intention and full ability to complete the mission which He has chosen to do through His Church, which is to disciple all nations (Matt. 28:18-20). That is why there can be no place for negativity of any kind in the Christian’s life.

The Battle to Prophecy

Once I learned how to journal and record in a notebook what

God was speaking to me, I began to understand that God was prophesying to me personally. God was speaking to me. He was giving me guidance and direction and healing and love and divine perspective. Each was a precious gift from His hand. Each was greatly valued.

I also realized that I could receive a word for a congregation or for another person by simply asking God to give me such a word. Then I would quiet myself down, fix my eyes on Jesus, tune to spontaneity, and write what the Holy Spirit was saying for this other person or for this congregation. I found I could read this journaling to the congregation or to the individual, and it was powerful and effective and anointed.

I was glad to be able to learn to prophesy in this non-threatening way. In the quietness of my prayer room, I could still myself before God, capture His flow, and record it. If I momentarily lost it, I could pause to wait for the flow to resume. Trying to do this same thing on your feet in front of a congregation (which is the way prophecy is usually offered) is much more demanding. You don't really have the opportunity to pause and re-catch the flow if you lose it. You may feel pressured to keep going, keep speaking. And, of course, any such pressure increases your nervousness, which violates the pose of inner stillness which is necessary when one approaches God. So I was extremely glad to learn to prophesy using this two-step process of first receiving the word from God in the quietness of my prayer chamber and then releasing it to the congregation in the public meeting.

However, as God would have it, He is always seeking to stretch us. So, one fine day while I was teaching a Communion with God Seminar to Bill Hamon's staff (i.e. a prophetic group of people in the Florida panhandle), Bill Hammond told me to come to the front of the auditorium with him and several other prophets to prophesy over a young man. I turned him down several times, saying that my forte was journaling, not prophesying. However, Bill Hamon would have none of this and insisted that I come with him to the front and prophesy over this man.

With no alternative but to go, I went, promising God all the way down the aisle that I would be good for the rest of my life, if He would just give me a word for this young man.

As the rest of the prophets are prophesying one by one, I am earnestly doing the four things I know to do to sense the Spirit of God within me. I am quieting myself down, looking for vision, tuning to spontaneity, and getting ready to speak forth whatever I hear and see.

Well, all I can see as I look for vision is a picture in my mind of a full-grown tree with branches in full bloom in every direction. Nothing more. So, in absolute surrender (and with a feeling of foolishness), I share this little picture, saying, "I see you as a tree in full bloom with branches extending in all directions." As I slunk back to my seat, I promised myself I would never again allow myself to be drawn into a situation where I needed to stand and prophesy.

However, about ten minutes later, the young man came back to where I was hiding in the rear of the church and said, "You have no idea what that prophecy meant to me."

I agreed that I had no idea what being a tree would mean to anyone.

He said, "The last time a prophet prophesied over me, he said that God saw me as a stunted tree in partial growth, and that there would come a day when I would be a full tree in full growth."

Amazing! I could prophesy! What a mighty God we serve!

As I reflected on the operation of the gift of prophecy through myself and others, God showed me that all I have to do is apply the same Faith in Flow Principle that I apply when I speak in tongues. However, now I am applying it to speaking in English rather than speaking in another language.

When I prophesy, I come before God in faith believing that He rewards me when I seek Him, and that if I yield my tongue to flow, while my heart and eyes are fixed on Him, and if I choose to continue to speak in my native language, then the words that

tumble out will be prophecy. Amazing! Can it really be that simple? Yes, I believe it can be and it is.

PRAYING WITH AN IDOL IN ONE'S HEART: This principle, which we teach in *How to Hear God's Voice*, comes from Ezekiel 14:4 and simply says that the flow will come out of the vision which is held before your inner eyes. So, if I keep my eyes on Jesus and tune to flow, then the flow can be expected to come from Jesus. However, if I fix my eyes anyplace else, then the flow is likely to be coming through that thing on which I am fixing my eyes. It becomes distorted as it passes through the thing (idol), and is no longer a pure word from God but rather a distorted word.

Therefore, be careful to present the eyes of your heart to God as one of the steps you take when you come before Him.

You may ask, "Do I need to see vision?"

The answer is obviously, "No, you may stay blind, if you prefer."

It is the same as, "Do I need to speak in tongues?"

"Of course not. God will not force His gifts and graces upon you."

You must hunger for them, and then He will freely give to those who seek Him with all their hearts (Matt. 5:6).

Why wouldn't one want to receive God's gifts, His graces, and His visions? I can't conceive of why anyone would spurn God's goodness toward him, but I am astounded at the number of people who do not want to speak in tongues, who do not feel it is necessary to see vision, who do not seek dreams from God.

Check your own heart, and if you are not seeking all that God is offering you, ask yourself why not.

THE GIFT OF DREAMS: God graciously brought Rev. Herman Riffel into my life to teach me Christian dream interpretation. This was another area of the Bible I just never took seriously, probably because dreams are outside our culture's scope of rationalism. Therefore, our culture looks down its nose at them and assumes

they are leftover, undigested pizza from yesterday. Obviously, this view is nowhere found in Scripture, but the Bible over and over declares unconditionally that it is God Who speaks to us through the dream (Num. 12:6; Acts 2:17) and it is God Who counsels us at night through our dreams (Ps. 16:7).

With such awesome declarations and such a wonderful opportunity to receive God's counsel free of charge on a nightly basis, you would think we would all jump at the opportunity to record our dreams and seek God for the interpretation of them. However, probably not one in 10,000 Christians has ever received any formal training on how to interpret dreams. Absolutely astounding!

Rev. Herman Riffel taught me how to hear God speaking through my dreams. He helped me search Scripture and discover how God handles and interprets the dream, so I could learn how to interpret my own dreams and the dreams of those I counsel. What a blessed gift.

I first met Herman Riffel near Toronto, Canada. I was doing a weekend Communion with God seminar and Herman was doing a Christian Dream Interpretation seminar in the same city. Since my seminar finished before his, I just scooted over to pick up the end of his seminar and make his acquaintance. From that meeting, a wonderful relationship developed and we were able to invite him to our church-centered Bible school to videotape him teaching twelve hours on the principles of Christian Dream Interpretation. On the videos he actually interviews students and interprets their dreams. Wow! A Daniel in our midst. And we have this statesman on audio and video tape so we can pass on his lifetime knowledge of Christian dream interpretation to the Church. What a gift!

Now I can put my journal next to my bed and record my dreams when I awake. Then I can ask God for an interpretation of these dreams. As I quiet myself to hear His voice, I use the same four keys that I had discovered when initially learning to hear God's voice. I become still, picture the dream, tune to spontaneity, and

ask God to help me understand the symbols the dream is using to communicate a message to me. Following are a few excellent biblical principles that Herman teaches which assist me greatly in understanding how to view a dream:

Principles of Dream Interpretation

1. Most dreams are symbolic, so view them the same way you would view a political cartoon. Throw the switch in your brain that says, “Look at this symbolically.”
2. The symbols will come out of the dreamer’s life, so ask, “What does this symbol mean to me?” or, if working on another’s dream, ask, “What does this symbol mean to you?”
3. The dream generally speaks of the concerns which your heart is currently facing. So ask, “What issues was I processing the day before I had the dream?”
4. The dreamer’s heart will leap and “witness” and say, “Aha!” when it hears the right interpretation, so never accept an interpretation that the dreamer’s heart does not affirm.
5. Never make a major decision in your life based only on a dream without some additional confirmation through the others ways that God speaks to us and guides us.

How to Recall Dreams

1. Say to yourself, I believe dreams contain a valid message.
2. Ask God to speak to you through dreams as you fall asleep.
3. Put your journal beside your bed and immediately record your dreams upon awakening.
4. Get eight hours of sleep, as the entire last hour will be dream-time.

5. Awaken naturally, without the use of an alarm clock.

If you will do the above five things, you will recall dreams every week.

TRAINING IN SYMBOLISM: One of the best ways to get a feel for how to work constructively with symbols is to purchase and play the game Bible Pictionary. Just as you draw pictures to help people guess the word you are working on, so your heart draws pictures to help your mind understand the message it is seeking to communicate.

Discerning Dreams About Yourself

At least 95% of your dreams will be about you – your inner self, your current situation, your relationships. **Your dreams** come from **your heart** and will express the things that are important to your heart. The most common area your spirit will reveal will be your emotional, heart struggles and sanctification issues, expressed symbolically. Body and health issues are also important to your spirit, so they may be revealed, again in a symbolic way. Your relationships to other people are important to your heart, so these may be conveyed in signs and symbols. And the circumstances and events that surround your life, ministry or vocation are also important to your heart, so these may be portrayed symbolically in your dreams.

Because the vast majority of dreams are about your inner self, begin the process of interpreting your dream with the assumption that it probably is about something you are or should be dealing with in your own life right now.

*Isolate the **feeling** of the dream first.* How did you feel upon first awakening? Was your heart pounding in fear? Were you confused, frustrated, angry, rejected, or threatened? Did you feel loved, excited, happy, or content? Did you feel exposed, unprepared, or disappointed? What was the overall emotion that the dream evoked? In what aspect of your life are you also feeling this emotion? If it is not immediately obvious to you, ask the Lord to reveal it to you.

Look at the **action** of the dream next. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you the symbolism of the action. For example, if the symbol in your dream is that your car is going backward, ask, "In what way do I feel that I am going backward, that I am not moving forward in this area of my life?" If someone else is driving your car in the dream, ask, "In what way is this person driving or controlling my life (e.g., my reactions, attitudes, behaviors) at this time?" or "How is the characteristic that this person symbolizes controlling me?" (See the section below on the symbolism of people in your dreams.) If you are falling, ask "In what way do I feel like I am falling, losing ground, or out of control in my life at this time?" If you are soaring, ask, "In what way or what area of my life do I feel like I am flying, that I am rising above my problems or my abilities?" If you are being chased, ask, "How and why do I feel like I am being pursued or hunted?" If you are naked, ask, "In what way do I feel like I am exposed and vulnerable?" If you dream of dying, ask, "What is dying within me?" (This may be a good thing, for perhaps you are dying to pride, or to self, or to workaholicism.)

Remember, actions in the dream are to be viewed symbolically. If your dream wanted to really show you that you were going to die, it would picture that event symbolically. For example, just a few days before his assassination, President Lincoln dreamed of a casket.

Once you have used the feeling and action of the dream to identify the aspect of your life that it is revealing to you, the rest of the symbols will be much easier to identify.

The people in your dreams often represent characteristics within you. You can determine what facet of yourself they are representing by simply asking, "What is the dominant personality trait of this person, as I know him?" The answer will tell you what aspect of yourself you are dreaming about. For example, your heart may want to show you the entrepreneur, the hospitable host, the administrator, the class clown, the spiritual leader, the laid back one, the workaholic, etc. that is within you by the appearance in

your dream of an individual who epitomizes that kind of person to you. Your pastor may be the spiritual part of you; a president or king may symbolize other leadership qualities within you; a policeman, judge, or dictator may be the authority figure in you; people in uniform (nurses, waiters, choir members) may represent your desire to conform.

It is also possible that the person's name may be the point that the dream is trying to bring out, especially if that name is spoken within the dream. Dreaming of a friend named Charity or Joy or Grace or Joshua or David may be your heart's way of calling your attention to the qualities that are seen in the meaning of the name. Or the name may actually sound like the message the dream is trying to convey. For example, dreaming of "Sharon" might be your heart's way of pointing out an area in which you should be "sharing" something you are not, or should not be sharing something you are. One person reported dreaming of a friend named "Anita Cook" and finding the interpretation to be "I need to cook."

It is also possible that the Lord Himself or one of His angels may meet you in the dream.

Animals often represent your emotions. Ask, "What emotion might this animal be symbolizing to me?" This will depend on your geographical home, your personal experiences, your knowledge of the Bible, and your own culture. For example, a bull might be anger (an "angry bull"); a fox, craftiness; a cat, curiosity; a dove, peace; an eagle, freedom; a snake, subtlety; a lion, royalty, and so on. Keep in mind that in the Bible, a lion is used to represent both Christ ("the Lion of the tribe of Judah") and satan ("as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour"). Therefore, you must maintain your dependence upon the Holy Spirit to reveal what the animal represents in your specific dream.

When you face the animal representing your emotions in your dream rather than running from it, you may find that the animal changes into a different one. It is good to face your emotions.

Numbers in dreams generally represent the identical number in real life. However, the number will probably be linked to something which needs to be interpreted symbolically. For example, when Joseph dreamed of eleven stars, the eleven was literal but the stars were symbolic and actually represented his brothers. Joseph was dreaming about his eleven brothers (Gen. 37:1-11). Likewise, the cupbearer's dream of three branches stood for three days (Gen. 39:12), and for the chief baker, the three baskets represented three days (Gen. 39:18). In Pharaoh's dream, the seven cows were seven years (Gen. 41:26). So expect the number to mean that exact number of something. It will take prayer, discernment and the revelation of the Spirit (confirmed by the leap in your heart) to determine what it means.

Continue to move through the dream, seeking revelation on symbol after symbol, until you sense in your spirit that the interpretation is complete.

Occasionally you may have dreams that relate to more than your personal, inner life. If you have examined the dream carefully, in full reliance upon the Holy Spirit to bring the interpretation, and you cannot see how the symbols of the dream apply to you, seek the input of your spiritual counselors. They may be able to see your blind spots and recognize the message your heart is trying to give you.

If your counselors agree that the dream does not apply to your inner life, you may then consider the possibility that it is a dream for or about others. One indication that this may be a dream for another rather than you is if you are an observer of the action of the dream, rather than a participant. Some dreams are combinations, being about you but with results that affect others as well. In this case, you may at first be active in the dream, then there is a clear transition point after which you become an observer.

It is vital to remember this principle: *All kinds* of dreams can contain symbolic language, literal language, or a combination of symbolic and literal language.

When interpreting dreams, look for metaphors, similes, and metonymies of our language. Dreaming about ketchup may be calling you to “catch up” in some area. A fire may be trying to warn you that you are “playing with fire.” A dream of being smothered or drowned may indicate that you are feeling “in over your head.” A frozen lake, an ice flow, or even ice cubes may be cautioning you that you are only seeing “the tip of the iceberg.” Having your glasses broken may be an indication that you are not seeing the situation clearly. One lady reported that a dream of a fire in the kitchen of her house was a warning that she had an infection in her digestive tract. Other examples of word plays that may show up in your dreams include: “walking a mile in someone else’s shoes;” “being born in a barn;” “being up the creek without a paddle;” “as the crow flies;” “throwing the baby out with the bath water;” “on a level playing field;” “throwing a wrench in the works;” “at the eleventh hour;” or “speaking with a forked tongue.” Your heart may use one of these pictures in your dreams, expecting that you will understand the symbolic meaning of the expression.

Think outside the box! Be prepared for unexpected and clever ways for your heart to get its point across to your conscious mind. Be open to plays on words and lateral connections.

Finally, always remember that God is big enough and gracious enough to make sure that you understand the message He wants to give you. If your understanding of dream interpretation is different than that given above, He will meet you in the dream according to your expectations.

The Simplest Method for Interpreting a Dream About Yourself

The best way to interpret a dream is to start with the first symbol and try to interpret that. Then go on to the next symbol, and so on. Continually ask the question, “In what way am I experiencing this symbol in my life at this time?”

Dreams About Others

Perhaps only 5% of our dreams are about others. This dream is not talking about parts of yourself, but about real outer situations. I have discovered that the more right brain a person is (i.e., visionary and intuitive) the more likely he is to dream further away from home (away from his own self). That means that right brain people may be more likely to have a greater number of dreams about others.

For example, I have noted that three different woman who scored 7.7 on the “Brain Preference Indicator” test in the *How to Hear God’s Voice* book (the highest score I have seen) have vivid dreams about others in which they see the murders, rapes, and thefts taking place in their communities that night, and which are indeed reported in the newspaper the following day. These were literal dreams of real life events. Obviously, not all dreams about others show such fearsome pictures. These are just given as examples I am personally aware of.

Dreams about others are shared publicly much more often than dreams about self, which is why the vast majority of the dreams in the Bible fall into the category of dreams about others.

Clues Which May Indicate Your Dream Is About Others

1. You are an observer of the action.

If you play an active role in the dream, it is likely a dream about you. If you are only an observer to the activity of the dream, it is likely a dream about others. If you start in an active role and then stop to observe the remainder of the dream it is a combination dream.

2. The dream just does not fit your life.

You should always ask God, “Lord, show me any way the events in this dream are revealing struggles my heart is currently facing.” If you cannot see that the dream is talking about an issue you are facing, and your spiritual counselor

cannot help you see how this may be something your heart is currently processing, then you may assume that the dream is not about you.

AN EXAMPLE OF DREAM INTERPRETATION: Recently I had the honor of teaching a Communion with God seminar to about 35 pastors who had come for a week of training to the Toronto Airport Christian Center. Toward the end of the week, one pastor, Rev. Mike Bastien, voiced some concerns that he was not getting all the information I was unloading on them at breakneck speed. I assured him that he probably wasn't, but that it was all right since he could take the *How to Hear God's Voice* book and cassettes and videos home with him to review at his leisure. However, this advice was not heard by all parts within Mike, as he e-mailed me a day or two later with a troubling dream he had had. Following are the e-mails which went back and forth between us over the next few days. Mike has given me permission to share them and his dream.

THE DREAM AS MIKE SENT IT TO ME: "Here it goes: The school bus was coming to my home when I was in high school. I was running late and saw the bus coming and was running towards it and I saw my father-in-law (Fred) get on the bus and before I could get on, just before I reached it, it left. I was a bit upset that he didn't wait for me. I tried to look to see if it was George driving the bus and thought it was. (George and I talked once in awhile and he was the actual bus driver when I was in high school.)

"But soon after, I saw another school bus coming and knew it was going to the public school in the same town and asked the lady if I could take it and she said yes. So I got on. Don't remember any of the ride. Next I remember talking to my father-in-law and asking him why George left me and didn't wait. He gave me a mumbled answer which didn't make sense and which I can't remember at all now.

"And that was the dream. One thing that really concerns me is that my father-in-law died this past December of cancer at the age of 61."

MY FIRST RESPONSE: “I’ll be glad to offer a few questions and suggestions for you to consider.

“The symbols in the dream include:

- * school = place where we are educated and learn
- * bus = transportation to the place of learning
- * being left behind = fear of being left behind

“So the question you would ask yourself is, ‘In what sense am I being educated at this time in my life, and am I afraid I am going to be left behind?’

“I suspect the answer is that you are being educated in the area of communion with God, and that there is a part of you that is afraid that you are being left behind (i.e. not going to get it all). You actually expressed exactly that fear in class. I assume it is that fear in your heart which was expressed in your dream.

“However, God showed you in the dream that there was hope. Another bus came along and took you to school. So you do not need to fear missing some parts of the teaching the first time around. There is another way to get it. For example, reading the whole *How to Hear God’s Voice* book; taking the three-month Communion with God course with Christian Leadership University and having me as a mentor; purchasing the videos which were made; purchasing the cassettes of me teaching the entire course; purchasing the CWG Teacher’s Guide; getting a couple of spiritual counselors in your church or area who are right-brain and sharing your journaling with them and having them cover it, etc.

“Don’t be concerned that the person in your dream died a year ago. People in our dreams most often are part of ourselves. The way we discover what part is to ask, “What is the dominant characteristic of the person?” Then, it is usually that part of ourselves we are dreaming about. The dream is not about you dying.”

MIKE’S SECOND LETTER: “Thank you, Mark, for responding. To be honest, it was not what I expected. It sounds good but I have this big question...why was my father-in-law in this dream and

why was it so evident that he was in it? He must have something to do with the dream?”

MY SECOND RESPONSE: “When you think of your father-in-law, Fred, what is the most dominant characteristic of him? That is your key. Once you identify that characteristic, you are then talking about that part of yourself. Your heart is drawing pictures (like Bible Pictionary—if you have ever played it), to communicate a message to you.

“Whatever part of you that Fred is representing, that part of you is OK with the message of CWG and is getting along with it and on time (as evidenced by the fact that he got on the bus OK). Some other part of you is struggling with the message of CWG, being afraid you are not getting it all.

“Any chance that Fred is a ‘heart’ kind of a guy as opposed to a ‘head’ kind of a guy?”

“My guess is that your heart is fine with the CWG message but your left-hemisphere is afraid that it hasn’t got all the pieces yet (which it is true—it hasn’t). However, as I mentioned earlier, your head doesn’t need to get all the pieces in my four mornings of teaching you, because I have provided books and cassettes and videos which you can take home and study in detail.

“My guess is that your left-hemisphere (your analytical reasoning brain) is uptight, but that your heart (as perhaps represented by an “easy going Fred”) is fine with the message of Communion with God.

“What do you think?”

MIKE’S FINAL RESPONSE: “Mark. Wow. That’s exactly how he was. Easy going. Laid back.

Blessings

Mike”

Further resources: My highest recommendation goes to Herman Riffel’s book *Dream Interpretation*. We also have Herman on cassette and video, plus his lecture notes. I have also written a book entitled *Biblical Research Concerning Dreams and*

Visions and a teacher's guide to go with it. All these materials are also part of an external degree course you may order from Christian Leadership University.

AM I WAIST DEEP YET? How far have I waded out into the river of God? I am convinced it is only part way. When I can live as Jesus lived, with the same kind of power and authority that He had, then I will be satisfied that I have arrived. Until then, I am a learner. How about you?

SPEAKING OF TORONTO—ISN'T THAT WHERE THEY FALL DOWN AND SHAKE AND LAUGH AND ROAR AND...? Yup. That's the place. Toronto Airport Christian Center. Quite an amazing scene. Is God in this stuff? Is laughing and shaking and falling down part of the river of God that flows through the Church, or is this just some soulish craziness? Might it be an example of what Smith Wigglesworth said, "God will offend the mind to reveal what is in the heart"?

I believe it is part of the river. Revivals throughout Church history have had these manifestations. Read a few books that record the stories of Christian revivals throughout history and you will be convinced that such manifestations have always been a part of revival—if you are open to being convinced. I remember doing some research in the library at Roberts Wesleyan College. I was doing a paper on "The Psychology of Revivals." (Yuk—sorry about that, but that was before I was baptized in the Holy Spirit, and was a pure rational choleric.) I ran across a book about John Wesley's revivals which told one story about participants barking up trees. They called it "treeing demons." I haven't seen that take place in Toronto yet, so we still have a ways to go to catch up to some of the great historical revivals which transformed our nations in the past. So let's get on with it!

Falling down and trembling can surely be found in the Bible

(II Chron. 5:14; Dan. 10:9,10). Laughter certainly is biblical: “A merry heart does good like medicine” (Prov. 17:22). Perhaps God is giving some Holy Ghost medicine to His Church. Roaring is also biblical. One of the meanings of the Old Testament word “meditate” is “roar,” according to Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance (see # 1897).

The first time I saw such wild carrying on, I was in Australia conducting a Communion with God seminar for Chris Gaberit. The evening services were wild and woolly. I had never seen such activities, especially in church! The noise was deafening, the antics were unbelievable—one man actually “rowed” himself backward across the stage. Others were so drunk, they had fallen down in the doorways and I had to step over them as I left the building. Still others were lying down drunk in the parking lot next to their cars. I complained to God that the service wasn’t being conducted decently or in order. God instantly spoke back to me and said, “Mark, how do you get drunk decently and in order?”

Good point! I had never thought about that (Acts 2:15). Amazing the verses the Holy Spirit puts together, don’t you think?

So then, what is all the fuss? If all these manifestations can be found in Church history and in the Bible, why does part of the Church have such a hard time with them while another part loves them?

LEFT-BRAIN PEOPLE STRUGGLE MORE WITH TORONTO THAN DO RIGHT-BRAIN INDIVIDUALS: Here is my suggestion: The more left-brain one is, the more of a struggle it is to understand or experience these phenomena. The more right-brain one is, the easier it is to understand and experience them. Remember, the left brain is the analytical, cognitive, rational hemisphere and the right brain is the intuitive, visionary, emotional hemisphere.

I had been told by some of the leadership in Toronto that only about half of the people who are prayed for fall down. So I asked them if what I suspected is true: “It’s not the right-brain people who fall down and the left-brain people who remain standing, is it?” After reflecting a bit, they answered, “Yes, that is exactly

who it is!”

Now, let me clarify myself. I am not saying a left-brain person can't or won't fall down. He can, and he might. However, it is generally more difficult for a left-brain person to experience this phenomenon than a right-brain person. When I teach in the Toronto Bible School, I survey the students every semester and find that the majority of them are considerably right-brain, and the minority who are left-brain, are only slightly so. The renewal has been a magnet for right-brain people!

My observation is that right-brain people enjoy such experiences, while left-brain individuals feel guilty because they don't have them or are “turned off” by them. Hopefully, the following discussion will help get rid of this guilt and convince us not to try to copy the experiences of someone whom God has built differently from us.

I think left-brain people are quite happy living with a theology about God and an inner commitment to Him, because this is what comes most naturally to them. They perceive life by sifting it through the lens of their left brains.

Right-brain individuals are the opposite. They are not at all happy living with just a theology about God and an inner commitment to Him. They want to experience Him. They want to see Him, using vision. They want to hear His spoken words within their hearts. They want to sense His presence, because they perceive life by sifting it through the lens of their right brains.

Obviously, since God has created some of us with a bent toward the left hemisphere and some with a leaning toward the right hemisphere, both are acceptable to God. Biblical ministry teams seem to have been composed of both left-brain teachers and right-brain prophets ministering side-by-side (Acts 13:1).

LEFT-BRAIN PEOPLE CAN CROSS OVER: This doesn't mean that a left-brain person can't prophesy. He can, however it will take just a bit more effort for the left-brain person to follow the steps necessary to connect to the river of God within him. To capture

vision (i.e. flowing pictures) from God, the left-brain individual will need to shift to the right side of his brain and then present his visionary capacity before the Holy Spirit to be filled with divine vision.

The right-brain person already lives comfortably on the right side of his brain, so he doesn't need to take the step of shifting hemispheres. And the right-brain individual is more accustomed to the concept of "flow," since intuition is a right-brain function. However, the right-brain person still must take the step of presenting his visionary and intuitive capacities before the river of God in his heart so that he has divine vision and the voice of God, not just a vain imagination or his own heart's flow.

I am a left-brain individual, scoring 4.5 on the Brain Preference Indicator Test, and yet, I can prophesy. However, to learn to prophesy I have had to learn how to shift hemispheres and how to present my right hemisphere to divine flow. That I have done. However, I am most comfortable functioning as an anointed teacher rather than as a prophet. The gifting and the call of God upon me are to be a teacher and not a prophet, so I do not even desire to become a prophet in the body of Christ. I am more than satisfied being a teacher—perhaps a prophetic teacher—one who is presenting current Holy Spirit-born truths to the body of Christ.

A LEFT-BRAIN PERSON CAN EVEN FALL UNDER THE POWER: I can even fall down when in a Toronto-style renewal service, and be ministered to by God. That, too, didn't come easily to me as a left-brain analyst, but now I know what I must do to allow God to move upon me in such manifestations.

First, I must believe in it, desire it, and be willing to allow it to happen to me. Next, while being prayed for, I present myself to the Holy Spirit by picturing Jesus laying His hands on me and the wind of the Holy Spirit blowing over me. I tune away from analysis (i.e. the left brain) and I tune to spontaneity, vision, and emotional sensation (i.e. the right brain). When I do this, I will begin to feel a bit weak and shaky, and, if I allow myself, I can and

do fall down. While doing “carpet time,” I stay open to vision and flow, and I commune with God and enjoy the waves of His Spirit which are flowing over me. It is a very healing and refreshing time, especially if I let my emotions out while I lie on the floor. God will touch and heal whatever I present to Him. Glory be to God for His wonderful love.

So even as a left-brain individual, I can experience these more right-brain Holy Spirit manifestations if I am open to them and allow them to happen to me. I feel this is a better approach than to judge them and come against them and attack them, as my left hemisphere might be inclined to do.

WHAT DO LEFT-BRAIN PEOPLE WANT OUT OF REVIVAL? What do I want out of revival? Since I am a left-brain individual and a choleric, I do not have a passionate hunger for experiences or to roar, and even I find some of these manifestations a bit hard to take. If I don’t want these manifestations, then what do I want from revival? When I asked the Lord that question, standing in the midst of a very wild worship service led by Peter Jackson in Toronto, I heard Him say, “Mark, you want what I offered to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. You want intimacy with Me, daily walks in the Garden, and out of that intimacy, you want the power and anointing to subdue the earth.”

That is exactly what I want! Thank You, God, for making it so clear, so precise, and so biblical (Gen. 1:28; 3:8)!

I receive this intimacy and anointing through my daily journaling.³ And, as I journal, God heals me emotionally and spiritually, anoints my reasoning, anoints my teaching, and anoints my writing. He gives me purpose, vision, and anointing to subdue the part of the world God has assigned me to take for Jesus Christ.

TOO MECHANICAL? Does the fact that I understand the way God flows through each hemisphere of our brains take anything away from God? Does it make spiritual things too mechanical? I personally don’t think so. God places no premium on my ignorance.

If I understand His ways, they are still His ways I am coming to understand. He still is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He still is the One Who created all the laws which govern the physical and spiritual worlds. The fact that I understand a few of them takes nothing away from God. He is still God and I am still man.

THERE ARE MANY ANOINTINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: I believe that the level of faith in a Spirit-led service can be raised for numerous different anointings.

The Toronto anointing seems to be for emotional healing (and, more recently, for gold teeth fillings!). The Pensecola renewal services appear to have a strong evangelistic anointing. In other services, I have witnessed an anointing for healing, an anointing for financial giving, and an anointing for faith.

There are many, many anointings of the Spirit of God. We should learn to pursue these many anointings by connecting:

1. Holy Spirit flow
2. with specialized Bible promises and stories (which deal with the specific anointing being pursued in that service)
3. and testimonies and stories by people (including the speaker) who have broken through into victory in the area being pursued in that service (i.e. healing, giving, deliverance, etc.).

It is the anointing that breaks the yoke (Is. 10:27). People are hungry to receive from the anointing. Let each of us become carriers of God's anointing in the area God has assigned us.

God has assigned me the area of teaching the Church how to hear His voice. I have followed the above three steps. I have connected flow to the Bible promises about vision and about hearing God's voice and, using faith, I have battled through my doubts to my own personal victory in faith. I have come to the personal revelation of how to sense God's voice and God's vision flowing within me. I also have faith that I can teach others how to recog-

nize the flow of God's voice and vision within them.

In my seminars, I couple Bible promises concerning God giving His voice and His vision to His children with the story of my struggle, and my battle to come to a faith-filled experience of these promises in my own life. I tell how I finally appropriated the biblical promises which God illumined to my heart and mind and how these allowed me to see how God speaks and how He reveals vision to His children.

As I share my story from the depths of my heart, I discover another biblical principle adding an anointing to my delivery: "The heart adds persuasiveness to the lips" (Prov. 16:23 NASB). I find the story pouring out of me with a heart flow, or an anointing, which springs from the Holy Spirit within my heart.

This combination makes our Communion with God seminars times of great Spirit-anointing and breakthrough for the participants, as they ride the anointing that is released into personal victories in their own lives, hearing God's voice and seeing vision for themselves. What exciting times these are!

YOUR ANOINTED BREAKTHROUGH STORY IS NEEDED: The Church needs you to have an anointed life story to share with others in the body of Christ. This is a special message which God has assigned to you to share. It is an area where you have battled through your hurts, pain, and doubts, and received revelation on biblical truths which have healed you and set you free and given you victory.

Did not the disciples say that their hearts burned within them as Jesus opened the Scriptures to them (Lk. 24:32)? So you, too, will have some Scriptures which God has illumined and made real to you, and they now burn within you. This becomes your special message which you can present to the body of Christ and to the world. For it is the anointing that breaks the yoke and sets people free and brings them into the provision of Christ.

Few pastors can have a new, burning, life-changing revelation on a different topic every week. That is why I like three-month series, where we explore a topic from many angles and get it

firmly planted with divine revelation into the lives of all in the congregation. I also think home cell groups should work for three months on a topic before moving on.⁴

SHARING BREAKTHROUGH STORIES: You can see from the above description that the anointing flows through someone's story of breakthrough victory in faith. It is the living out of the Word of God in your own personal life story that is foundational to releasing the anointing.

This helps me understand why the Bible is set up as a series of stories of people's breakthroughs with God. It makes me understand that story is at the heart of it all, and that narrative theology must replace systematic theology if we are going to move from rational Christianity to Spirit-anointed sermons, teachings, and services. We will discuss narrative theology and systematic theology later in this book.⁵

The simplified teaching on narrative theology is this: Have you ever noticed faith rise in a congregation when someone shares his story of how God worked miraculously in his life, or how He led him into some new revelation from the Scriptures? Just as ideas touch our minds, stories touch our hearts. The Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit's anointing may just be precipitated when our hearts are touched and moved by another's story of the anointing of God in his life. Perhaps the anointing of the Holy Spirit being released through his story prompts the rising of the anointing of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the hearers. This might be an idea to meditate on, don't you think? And doesn't this shed a whole new light on the value of sharing personal testimonies when the church or home cell group gathers?

OTHER THINGS WHICH CAN BUILD THE ANOINTING: The following is an initial list of things which can build the anointing:

- ❖ Prayer—for insight, revelation, illumination;
- ❖ Worship—coming before God's throne and into His presence;

- ❖ Reading the Bible under the illumination of the Spirit;
- ❖ Asking for the anointing—in prayer and in faith believing;
- ❖ Receiving the anointing—in faith;
- ❖ Speaking forth under the anointing—in faith;
- ❖ Receiving the anointing of the gathered community—spiritual energy bounces back and forth among the gathered community and is multiplied as it does so.

FURTHER RESOURCES: My highest recommendation goes to Peter Tan's book *The Anointing of the Holy Spirit*. Peter Tan can be contacted at Peter Tan Evangelism, P.O. Box 8416, Kelana Jaya Post Office, 46790 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia. Our ministry, Communion with God Ministries, also tries to keep this book in stock and available for people to order from us.

Personal Application

1. Are you tuned to inner sensations from your spirit, or do you live more from your outer senses? Are you prepared to put forth the effort to learn to live from inner senses?
2. Have you connected your mouth to flow and learned to prophesy? Are you willing to put forth the effort to learn to yield your tongue to the Holy Spirit so you can prophesy?
3. Have you learned to hear from God through your dreams? Have you received training in how to interpret the symbols in dreams? Are you willing to examine all the dreams in the Bible and see how God interprets symbolism? ⁶
4. Have you experienced the Toronto renewal? Are you willing to learn to enjoy the experience of the flow of renewal? Are you willing to put forth the effort to learn how to conduct services with specific anointings in them?

(1) For an extended teaching on the principles in these two paragraphs, read our books *Naturally Supernaturally* and *The Great Mystery*, and review Appendix B at the end of this book.

(2) In addition, these keys are laid out in-depth in two other books we have written, *Dialogue with God* and *How to Hear God's Voice*.

(3) For more information on journaling, see *How to Hear God's Voice* by the same author.

(4) We assist churches in setting up church-centered Bible schools where we make available several hundred Spirit-anointed courses which are each three months in length.

(5) We also have a larger teaching on narrative theology in our book *How Do You Know?*

(6) The book *Biblical Research Concerning Dreams and Visions* by the same author can help you with this.