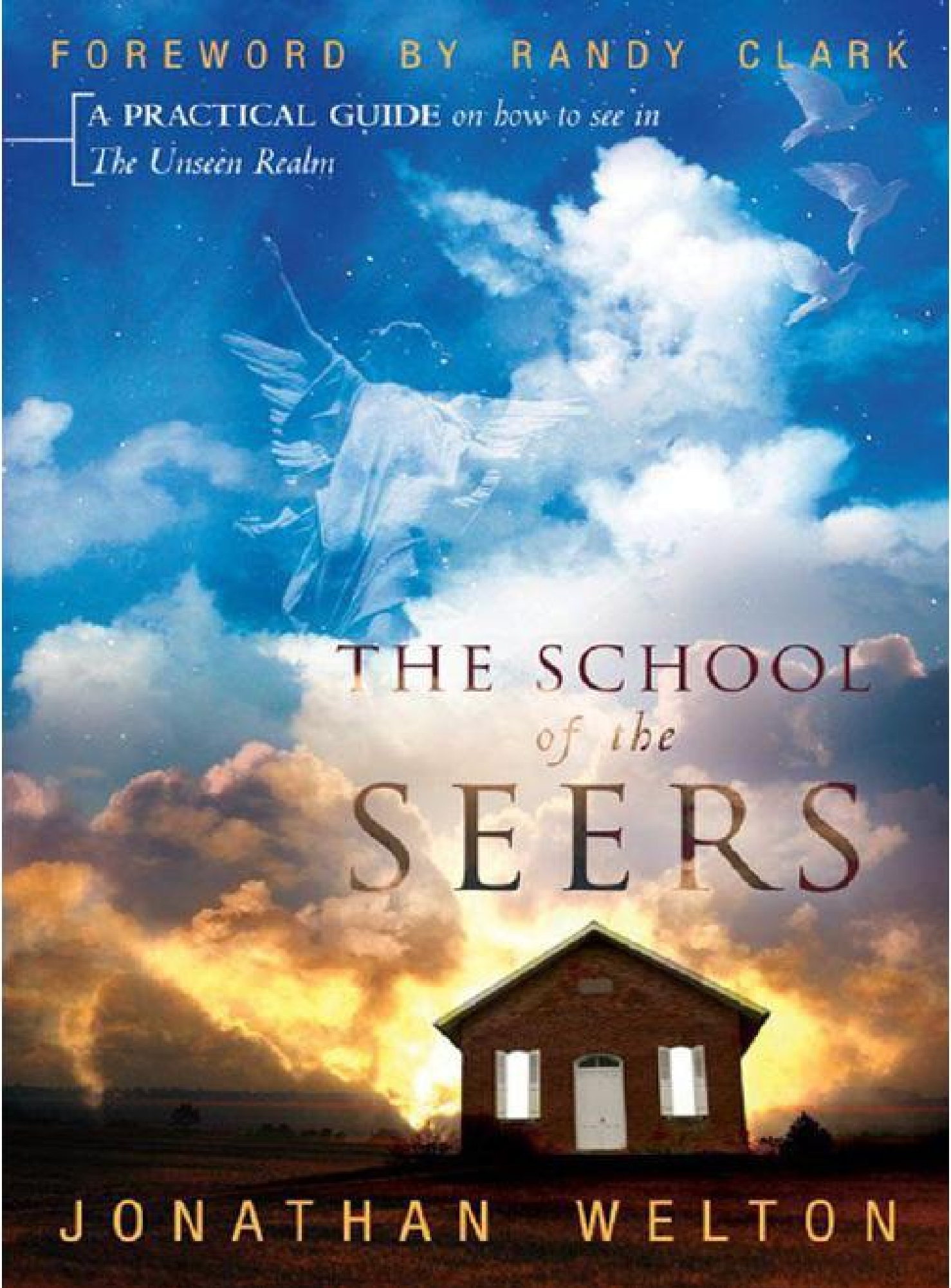
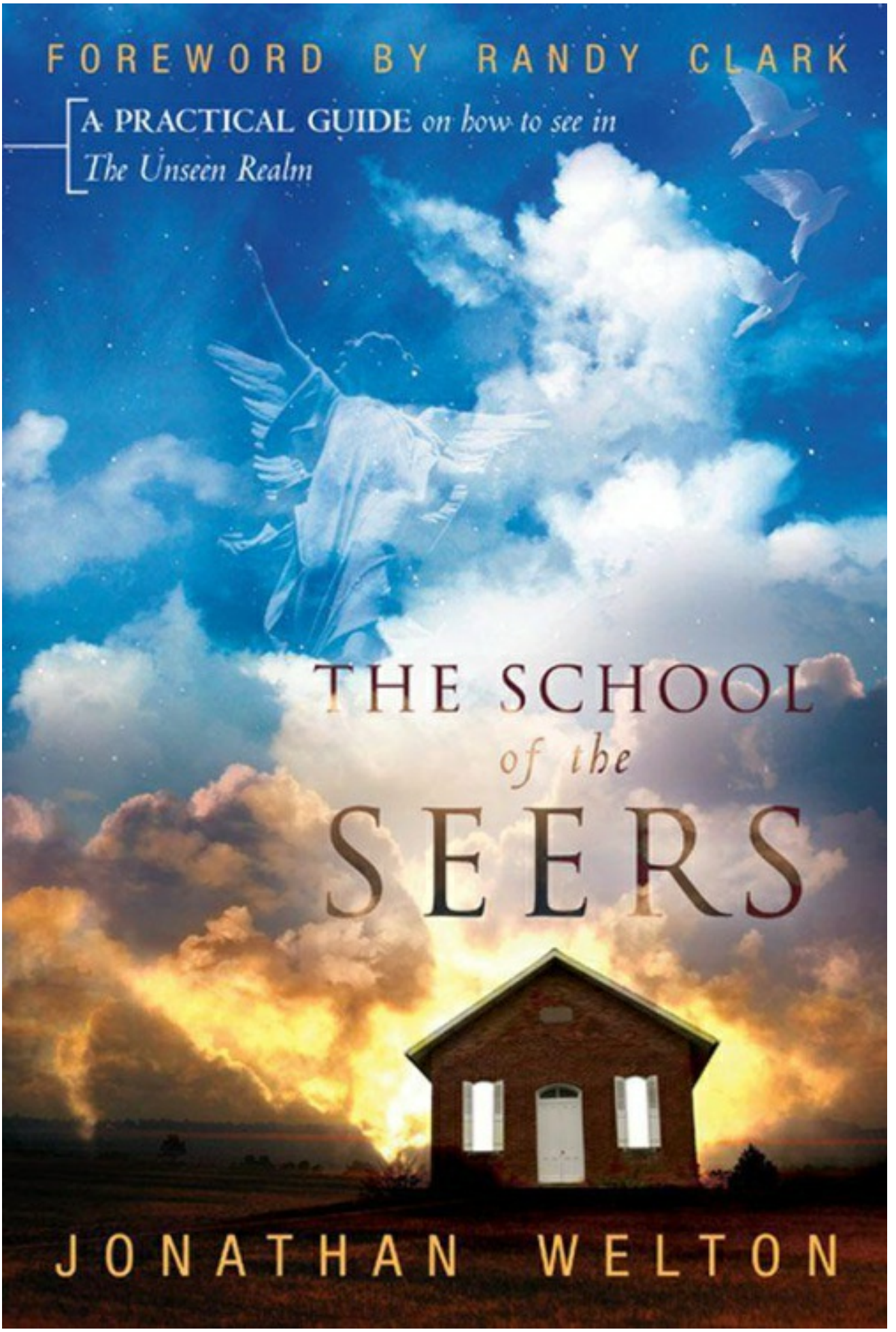
FOREWORD BY RANDY CLARK

A PRACTICAL GUIDE *on how to see in The Unseen Realm*



THE SCHOOL *of the* SEERS

JONATHAN WELTON


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JONATHAN WELTON

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

IWOULD LIKE TO START by saying thank you to my wife,

Karen, the most important person in my life. You have been

the most profound representation of Jesus I have ever known.

Your walk of love, humility, forgiveness, gentleness, and faith

challenge me daily. You are the biggest sign in my life that

there is a God, because I can see Him in your heart daily. I

thank the Lord for such a perfect match for my strengths and

weaknesses. The trust that you have in my ability to hear

from God causes me to walk in a deeper level of the fear of

the Lord.

I would like to honor my parents, Jim and Carolyn

Welton. I am so thankful for having parents who are the most

humble, affectionate, gentle, kind, and compassionate lovers

of God that I have ever seen. I love you both so much.

I would like to acknowledge the following people (in no

particular order) who have encouraged me and made me the

man I am today: Tay and Ruthie Williams, M ark and Adam

Young, my siblings, my in-laws, Ben and Chrystal Valence,

my two editors Kathy Welch and Sandy

Holladay. Toby

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Stutzman, and the staff of Camp Hickory Hill (1998-2004). I

love you all.

I would like to say thank you to the following heroes in

the Body of Christ; you have been a tremendous example and

influence in my life: Randy Clark,

Harold Eberle, Patricia King, Dennis Cramer, Cheryl

Schang, Watchman Nee, Kris Vallotton, Bill Johnson, Heidi

Baker, Gary Oates, Davi Silva, Joe M cIntyre, Tommy

Tenney, John Shoemaker, Bob Sorge, Leif Hetland, and Lance

Wallnau.

ENDORSEMENTS

The seer anointing is a current invitation from God for the

Church in this hour. It is time for us, like Jesus, to see what our

Father in Heaven is doing, and do it! Jon Welton has studied this

subject and moved in this realm for many years. In *The School of*

the Seers, he shares insight from the Word of God that will help

you grab hold of this anointing.

—Patricia King

Extreme Prophetic

Jonathan Welton is brilliant. When he teaches, you remember

what he has said. God's Spirit is upon him, and the anointing he

carries will impact your life.

—Harold R. Eberle

Founder, Worldcast M inistries

We are constantly surrounded by the unseen realm of spiritual

forces both good and bad. In his work, *The School of the Seers*,

Jonathan Welton reveals valuable insights on how anyone can

sharpen his or her own spiritual discernment. By sharing his

precious revelations learned through the study of Scripture, church

history, and prayer, Jonathan explains to the conventional

Christian how to interact with the unseen realm.

—Robert Stearns

Founder/Executive Director, Eagles' Wings M inistries

I have passed on a lot of my gifting and grace to younger men

and women in the next generation. Jonathan is one of them. He is

prototypical of the prophetic Timothys that I have been honored

and privileged to speak into in many countries. Jonathan is clearly

an emerging prophetic gift to the Church. His ability to teach *and*

demonstrate the revelatory gifts of the Spirit makes him a true

double threat!

—Dennis Cramer

President, Dennis Cramer M inistries

Jonathan Welton's *The School of the Seers* will help you

discover that the supernatural can become a normal way of life. In

this training manual, Jonathan is

speaking from experience, not

theory, about the many different aspects of seership. Just as

blindness and deafness are serious handicaps in the natural, so are

spiritual blindness and deafness in the spirit realm. M ay you begin

to see into the unseen realm as you study this manual.

—Gary Oates

Author, *Open My Eyes, Lord*

International Conference Speaker

I have known Jonathan Welton for years and I appreciate the

man, ministry, and message. Jonathan teaches what he knows and

reproduces his anointing in others. This book is an impartation

from a man who carries the message and mantle of a seer. You

cannot separate between what Jonathan teaches and who he is; this

gifting is in his DNA. *The School of the Seers* will open the realm

of the invisible so you can do the

impossible. This is the gift that

will bring the Body of Christ into the supernatural realm. M y

prayer is, “Open my eyes, Lord, so that I might see!”

—Leif Hetland

Global M ission Awareness

Jonathan’s bookshelves sag under the weight of material that he

has read and that he plans to read. He has always “studied to show

himself as one approved,” and this has

given him an understanding

of Scripture that is a true blessing to the prophetic/charismatic

movement. He is one of the most unique individuals that I have had

the honor of knowing. Even with all his wisdom and anointing he

has remained personable and transparent, even outside of the

spotlight. I have always known him to be beloved of any pastor

who meets him. I highly recommend his teaching to all who are

hungry.

—Rev. Jeffery R. Babajtis

M asters of Divinity, Duke Divinity School

I have been asking the Lord to raise up the next generation of

theologians and teachers who will articulate a theology of the

Kingdom with signs and wonders to the Body of Christ in the next

season. I believe Jonathan Welton is one those new breed of

theologians and teachers. He deeply loves the Body of Christ and

he carries an anointing for revelation, teaching, and seeing that the

Body needs in order to be properly equipped for the days ahead.

—Rev. John S. BaylorJr.

M asters of Divinity, Fuller Theological Seminary

Jonathan opens the eyes of his readers to the exciting life that is

available to those who learn to see the spirit realm. He powerfully

unveils Scripture to show how many of the leaders in the Bible

were able to see into the spirit realm, commune with God and

receive divine direction. Few others have taught that this is

possible for us today as Jonathan has in *The School of the Seers*.

—Dr. Art M athias

President, Wellspring M inistries

Jonathan Welton has a passion for God that overflows into his

teaching and ministry. His teaching allows you to view the power

of the Holy Spirit through the lens of God's Word in new ways.

The School of the Seers will challenge and encourage you to change

the way you view the world by opening your eyes to the unseen

spiritual realm.

—Brian Stebick

Regional Director, CSB M inistries

Bachelors of Biblical Studies—Baptist

Bible College

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FOREWORD

JONATHAN WELTON'S BOOK , *The School of the Seers: A*

Practical Guide on how to see in the Unseen Realm, is a helpful

study for anyone desiring to grow in the prophetic/seer realm. I

believe Jonathan is one of the next generation of prophetic

ministers. He is well-read, has a great spirit based in love and grace,

walks in humility, and has pursued training and advanced degrees

in his pursuit of excellence in his gifting and calling.

Jonathan not only writes about the

subject, he also models

what he teaches by ministering in churches and conferences in the

gifts he has written about. I believe Jonathan has learned a lot

about character and integrity through healthy role models that

began in his home. He comes from a solid family with healthy

relationships. He has watched his parents move in prophecy in

church and in their ministry. This is such a great foundation to

build upon, and it serves him well in his writing, teaching, and

prophetic ministry.

Jonathan is one of the young men I have had the privilege of

speaking into and have watched him grow rapidly in his pursuit of

God and His purposes. I am excited about him and other young

prophetic ministers who are arising in this generation. I believe

they will go higher, dig deeper in the Word, and experience more at

a younger age than many of the past generations. I believe there is a

degree of revelatory teaching coming from this generation that will

cause us to see truth that we have missed in the past. I have often

echoed what my friend Pastor Bill Johnson has so often said: “Our

ceiling is the next generation’s floor!”

I am excited to welcome to the public Jonathan’s book, *The*

School of the Seers. I know that power to work miracles is

dependent on revelation from Heaven. The clearer the revelation,

the more faith it creates, and the greater the faith, the more

powerful the miracle or the healing. Seeing is a biblical concept and

principle. Seeing on the part of God's people continued in the

history of the Church. Seeing is important for the Church today.

What Jonathan has done is write a book that helps us "see" what is

in the Bible, and from that truth discover

the right of believers to

“see” into the unseen realm.

Evangelist Randy Clark

Global Awakening M inistries

Author of *There Is More!*

PREFACE

JONATHAN IS A GIFTED TEACHER and a humble leader. As his

wife and best friend, I respect him tremendously for the unique

anointing he carries and the

compassionate heart he has to see

every believer rise to the fullness of his or her destiny. His

influence in my life and the lives of many of our friends has

changed us forever. I still encounter people thanking Jonathan for

the profound impact his encouraging words and teachings have had

on their lives many years ago. I remember the early days when

Jonathan first began to experience the "seer" gifting. I will let him

tell you the full story in the following pages, but allow me to share

with you my perspective.

Jonathan first began to “see in the spirit” when we were both

attending a college-age charismatic youth group in upstate New

York. At the time, we were close friends and both passionate for

Jesus. I remember Jonathan pulling me aside at youth group to tell

me about these strange experiences and what he was “seeing.” He

seemed to be equally freaked out and excited by what was

happening to him. Although he did not openly share these

experiences with others for a long time, he felt that he could trust

me with this information. I remember listening in awe and wonder.

Jonathan explained seeing strangers walking down the street;

some had a light or aura around them, and he knew they were filled

with the Holy Spirit. He could see a

dark cloud surrounding others,

and he knew they were depressed or tormented by demons. Even

more exciting to me were the angels—they usually radiated light or

fire. He could describe the color and style of their garments, their

facial expressions, and many other details. Certain angels carried

staffs or swords, and some, but not all, had wings. Some angels

were the size of men; others stood at eight or ten feet tall or taller.

Occasionally, he would see angels who were assigned to specific

Christians.

In youth group, when we worshipped the Lord with

abandonment, countless angels would flood into the room. They

would join with us in praising, singing, and dancing. Sometimes,

when the worship was cut off, Jonathan saw them crying, knowing

that the will of man had overruled what the Holy Spirit wanted to

do. He described these experiences in profound detail, as if he saw

them as clearly as he saw me.

Had I not known that Jonathan was an emotionally stable,

well-respected leader who knew the Bible better than anyone I had

ever met, I would have understandably been more skeptical.

Instead, I wanted to know everything. I asked him endless

questions: “What do you see right now? Do you see anything

around me? Are there angels in this room? How do angels *look* to

you? Can you see them physically, like you see me, or are they

transparent, as if superimposed over the physical realm? Do you

see things in your mind's eye?" M any times during worship, I

could not bear my excitement any longer, and I would lean over to

Jonathan and whisper, "What's happening in the spirit realm right

now? Do you see any angels? Where are

they?” M ost of the time

he kept this information to himself, but if I was lucky, I could prod

it out of him, and over time he grew more comfortable sharing with

others.

Jonathan began a long journey of studying and writing about

this gift, delving into the Scriptures and any book he could get his

hands on for deeper revelation. The product of his study, seven

years later, is the book you are holding in your hands.

Jonathan is a teacher in the true sense of the word. If there is

one trait I respect most about teachers, it is not extensive

knowledge, charismatic speaking, or even profound revelation.

Although all of that is good, I incline my ear to those who

continually submit their minds to the Holy Spirit, holding their

knowledge not as a trophy but as a clay

vessel that the Lord can

mold and transform. Paul says, “Be transformed by the renewing

of your mind (Rom. 12:2). I have seen this process eloquently

modeled in my husband. Like all true teachers, he has never

stopped learning.

Jonathan’s experiences opened up a whole new world to me.

I believed in angels and a spirit realm before, but his encounters

made what I read about in the Bible so much more real. Since those

early days, I have learned how to grow in my own discernment,

experience the spirit realm, and sense angels. Sometimes I can't

help but feel like I have an unfair advantage with a seer as a

husband! Of course, as you will read, true discernment goes far

beyond the ability to see angels. There is a realm of revelation and

experience that God has hidden *for* His

children, not *from* them. If

you are sincere and hungry, you will find it.

M y early fascination and curiosity with the spirit realm is

shared by many others, both in the Church and outside it. M ost of

the questions I pestered Jonathan with are the same questions he

receives from people when they first hear about his ability to “see

in the spirit.” God created us to have an appetite for the

supernatural. I once heard it said, “We are not physical beings who

occasionally have a temporary supernatural experience; we are

supernatural beings having a temporary physical experience.” The

spirit realm is all around us, and it is more real than the physical

realm we live in and experience every day. Whether we believe in it

or not, our lives are intricately affected by the invisible spirit

realm.

M any people have encountered this unseen realm through the

New Age, meditation, or other supernatural experiences. These

individuals grasp the reality and power of the spirit realm, but the

Church does not understand it and often condemns it. Because

there is little biblical teaching in the Church today about the spirit

realm, many believers have drifted away from the faith, sometimes

hurt or confused, because their hunger

for the supernatural was

quickly rebuked.

Other Christians in the Church have begun to experience

supernatural phenomena, such as dreams, visions, open visions, or

seeing angels and demons, but they lack solid biblical teaching and

become what we have termed *seer orphans*. These individuals are

desperately looking for someone to train them, encourage them,

and release them. If the Church does not embrace its “seer

orphans,” then the New Age movement will.

God is restoring the seer anointing and the gift of discernment

to the Body of Christ. Jonathan shows how any Christian can

safely and biblically experience the spirit realm through Jesus

Christ, who is the source of all Truth. Whether you are a “seer

orphan” searching for solid teaching or

an individual longing to

experience the spirit realm for yourself, this book will give you the

tools you need to activate and sharpen your own discernment.

Above all, I pray that you would encounter the Lord beyond

all your expectations. In fact, before you begin Chapter 1, I dare you to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal himself to you supernaturally

before you finish this book. I am convinced that God will always

answer this prayer because He promised to draw near to us when

we draw near to Him (James 4:8). M ay this book create a hunger in

you to pursue the presence of God, discover the secrets of God,

and open new realms of possibilities that you never dreamed

existed!

In Christ,

Karen Welton

INTRODUCTION

FOR MANY YEARS I have heard Christians talking about angels,

spiritual warfare, prophecy, and the spirit realm. There have been

multitudes of books written on each of these subjects, with many

different teachings for each of them. I have asked myself many

times, why write another book on this subject? How can I make it

unique?

I am a fervent reader of all books about Christian spirituality

and the supernatural. What I really enjoy, though, is finding

something fresh, profound, and new. As one who is hungry to

pursue more of God, and as a seeker of deep truths in the Word, I

am attempting to write a book that no one else has written. M y

desire is to bring you fresh and deep revelation from the Word.

M y goal is to create a practical manual for teaching the

typical believer how to interact with the

unseen realm. In our daily

life, we are surrounded by spiritual forces and activities. However

a lack of understanding exists inside the Church about how to

interact with this reality. This is disturbing, considering that “New

Agers” outside the Church tend to be very comfortable with the

unseen realm and sometimes understand truths that the typical

Christian hasn’t been taught.

The foundation for the teaching in this book is the Word of

God along with a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is

important to remember that satan operates his kingdom by

counterfeiting the true Kingdom of God. When making a

counterfeit, such as money, the goal is to make the forgery look as

much like the real as possible. A counterfeit tries to imitate the

truth, yet it will never *be* the truth.

Although some of the teachings

in this book may seem controversial, by measuring them against

the Word of God, we should be able to discern the difference

between the truth of the Kingdom of God and the lies of the

kingdom of darkness.

A counterfeit looks very similar to the real. We can't run

away from the real just because there is a counterfeit.

Unfortunately, that is what many Christians have done. You

would not throw out your money just because there are

counterfeiters in the world. Neither should we throw out

understanding the spirit world and operating as born-again spirit

beings just because there are counterfeits in the world.

M any Christians consider themselves inadequately equipped

to understand deep things of the Spirit or

operate in the

supernatural. Perhaps this has been the case, but training now

exists to bring the Church into maturity. That is the very purpose

of the book in your hands—to equip the Body of Christ with the

information needed to mature in walking in the supernatural.

Scripture gives confirmation to the idea of training people in

the supernatural. Take, for example, the following story from the

Old Testament.

In First Kings 19:19-21, Elijah, the famous prophet of Israel,

takes on an apprentice named Elisha. There was a significant

increase of spiritual power when Elijah went home to be with the

Lord, and Elisha received double the anointing that was on Elijah's

life (see 2 Kings 2:12-14). In fact, Elisha has exactly twice as many

recorded miracles as Elijah. Elisha then took on a servant of his

own named Gehazi (see 2 Kings 4:12a).

It is my personal opinion that had Gehazi pursued a double

portion of the anointing on Elisha, the Lord would have granted it

to him as well. However, Gehazi's greed disqualified him from

becoming Elisha's successor (see 2 Kings 5:20-27). He not only

was disqualified, but was cursed with leprosy! At this point in the

story, Elisha took on a new servant whose name is never revealed,

so I refer to him as the “no-name” servant.

When the servant of the man of God got up and went out

early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had

surrounded the city. “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant

asked. “Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are

with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha

prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes so he

may see." Then the Lord

opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of

horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 6:15-17).

(Author's note: This portion of Scripture is rich with

examples, so you will see it quoted several times throughout this

book.)

The intention of this book is to lay a foundation for the Body

of Christ to experience what the “no-name” servant experienced. I

pray that the Lord would literally open your spiritual sight so that

you may see into the unseen realm.

ACTIVATION

At the end of most chapters, you will see a section marked

Activation, which is a unique feature of this book. Each activation

suggests an exercise that will help you put the truth of the chapter

into practice. These are basic exercises intended to stretch your

spiritual muscles and prepare you to walk in the anointing of

seeing in the spirit and discerning of spirits. The truths in this book

are deep and stretching. In order to get the most out of this book, I

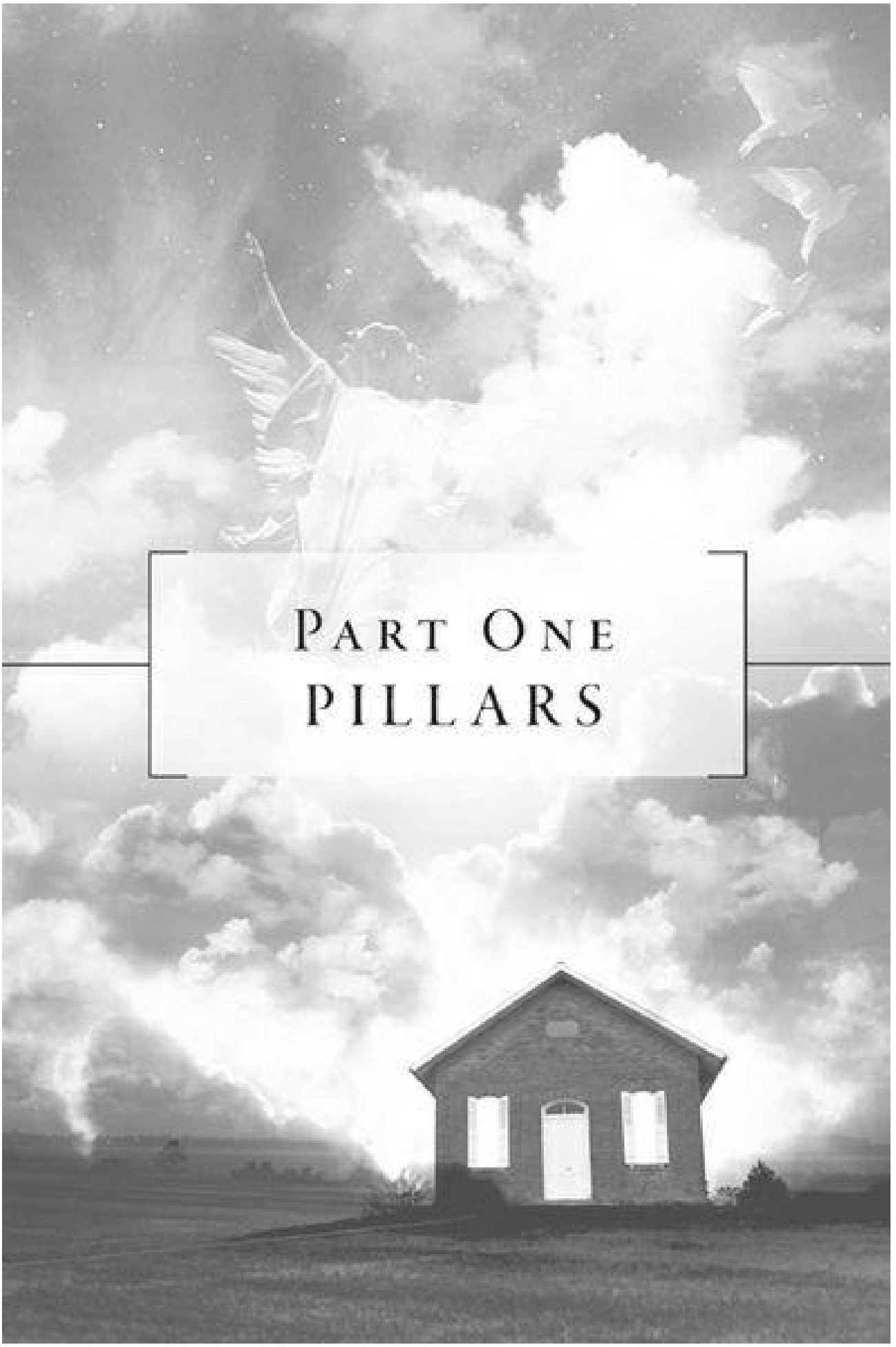
strongly recommend that at the end of each chapter you stop, put

in your bookmark, and do the activation exercise. You will receive

the best assimilation of this material if

you take my advice on this.

M ost of all, enjoy and have fun growing!



Part One
PILLARS

CHAPTER 1

THE MANTLE OF FIRE AND WATER

Where It All Began

HOW WOULD YOU FEEL if a well-known prophet stood you up

in a church service and prophesied that you would begin to see

things in the spirit, that you would have a gift for discerning

spirits, and that God would even teach you about being a “seer?”

As many of you probably would be, I was excited, confused, and

soon-to-be quite freaked out. To give some clarification, I have

included the exact prophecy I received from Prophet Dennis

Cramer:

M arch 7, 2002

You're a young man with a tremendous call upon his life,

very, very strong call…you have had some rumblings lately of

prophetic ministry. And you thought maybe you were losing

your mind. You thought, *Lord, my mind is going off. What's*

wrong with my mind? You're also a man that is going to begin

to discern spirits more than you ever wanted to. So, the Lord

told me to tell you, Jonathan, you are not losing your mind;

you are simply beginning to discern spirits as never before.

There is a good prophetic call upon your

life… But also, as I

said, especially discerning of spirits.

M arch 9, 2002

Jonathan, you have a strong seeing edge already

developing in your life. You are uncomfortable with this

because you don't know what you are seeing. It's caused you

some distress. You've almost begun to feel a little rejected.

But the Lord says all He is doing is

teaching you about being

a seer. Your own unique seeing gift and dimension The Lord

says just keep your mouth shut; don't get too verbal about

what you are seeing because you are still in the beginning

stages of understanding this. So, the Lord says a seeing

dimension is going to be well developed in your life in the

years ahead.

THE GIFT IS ACTIVATED

The day that I received this word, I began to see things in the

spirit around me. I had never had this gifting activated before, and

so I was very startled with this new experience. I began to see

colors in the spirit, words imposed over the physical things in

front of me, body parts randomly appearing, fire or water

descending on things, places, or people. I would on occasion even

see angels or demons. When I first started seeing these things, I

was surprised and even confused. I had to grow, learn, and come

into understanding about what was happening. Even now, as I

reread the second prophecy from Dennis Cramer, I see such

wisdom in his statement, *"The Lord says just keep your mouth*

shut; don't get too verbal about what you are seeing, because you

are still in the beginning stages of

understanding this."

I was really taken aback by this whole new gifting, especially

since I didn't have anyone to mentor me in seeing at the time.

There are precious few in the Body of Christ who are willing to

share their experiences. The Lord had to personally teach me about

the things He was showing me.

FLIPPING THE SWITCH

About a month after Dennis Cramer

prophesied over me, the

frequency of the visions began to diminish, and again I was

confused. I thought, *did I commit some sin that is hindering my*

seeing ability? Have I done something wrong? What is happening

to my gift?

The Holy Spirit showed me that in the previous month He

had sovereignly demonstrated to me the potential of my seer

gifting. Now the Lord would teach me how to activate my gifting.

In the spirit I saw a large switch, much like a typical wall-mounted

light switch. On the switch were the words “On” and “Off,”’ and

then in my spirit I heard the meaning. In the first month the Holy

Spirit had flipped my switch “On” to enable me to see in the spirit

realm around me. Now He was flipping my switch to “Off,” and

things would be totally normal again.

The Holy Spirit told me that

He would teach me how to flip the switch myself.

WE MOVE THE SWITCH BY FAITH

With all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we have a role in

activating them. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will move sovereignly

and heal someone, but most of the time faith must be activated.

When we read the Gospels, we often see Jesus telling people to

take an action—to show themselves to a priest, to wash the mud

from their eyes, or to pick up their bed and walk. These were each

acts of faith that, when activated, released the gift of healing.

If the Holy Spirit tells me to give a prophetic word, then I

must take part in cooperating with the Spirit and deliver the word.

When you activate faith, then you have stepped over into the

things of the Kingdom realm: healing,

prophecy, miracles,

discerning of spirits, and so on. The Lord was moving me from

relying only on sovereign experiences, into activating my faith to

believe for the gift of discerning of spirits to function (see John 5:8;

M ark 2:9; John 9:11; Luke 17:11-19).

IN MY EXPERIENCE

From my personal experience I can tell you that when God first

opens your spiritual eyes as He did

mine, it can be very scary,

even terrifying. When it first started, I was not expecting to see

into the spirit realm. I wasn't against such experiences—I was just

unaware of them.

I would look at a fellow believer and see a background of

illuminated light behind him, or I would see a nonbeliever and a

darkness or cloud of depression on him. I would see large demonic

presences hovering on or above certain buildings. I would see large

warrior angels standing guard around certain buildings and

churches. There were times I could see angels dancing among us at

church during worship. At other times, I would see the worship get

cut off by a speaker who was not following the Holy Spirit's

leading, and I would see very sad expressions on the angel's faces.

It looked as though they were crying

because they knew what we

were missing out on by worship being cut short. I would see angels

carry in strange-looking internal organs that they would put inside

of people, and then those same people would later testify to

having been healed. I found these experiences overwhelming, and I

want to clarify that I didn’t read any books that encouraged or

directed me in any of this.

BRAZIL

Six months after Dennis Cramer prophesied into my life, and

five months after God began to teach me how I could activate my

gifting, the Lord led me into the next level of training.

I took an opportunity to intern for Evangelist Randy Clark

for a month in Brazil. While there, I met two seers who greatly

encouraged me in my gifting. The first was Pastor Gary Oates. He

had traveled with Randy the previous spring and had his own

powerful encounter, which activated his spiritual eyes.

His story and experiences are similar to my own, especially

in the sense that neither of us were seeking the ability to see—it

was something God chose to give us. He is an excellent example of

modern seership. God sovereignly opened Gary's eyes in an

encounter where Gary had an out-of-

body experience, and the Lord

took him to Heaven. He writes about this in his book, *Open My*

Eyes, Lord.[1]

The second person that I met was Davi Silva, one of the

foremost worship leaders in Brazil. He not only has an extensive

background in musical training, but he also has an amazing

testimony of healing. Born with Down syndrome, Davi was healed

by the Lord at the age of six. Now in his forties, he still has the

medical intricacies that Down syndrome patients have, yet without

having Down syndrome. M oreover, the Lord has blessed Davi

with a very strong ability to see into the spirit realm.

When I met Davi, I asked him to lay hands on me and pray

for an increase in my gifting. He was in a hurry to get the worship

service started, but he still took a few

minutes to pray for me.

After he had prayed, he went off to lead worship. The following is

what happened to me in that evening worship service.

A WHOLE NEW LEVEL

I don’t usually respond physically to the Holy Spirit, not

because I am unwilling, but I do not easily experience rolling,

falling, laughing, or the other manifestations that people have in

response to the Holy Spirit. Understanding that about me will help

you understand how powerful the following experience was for

me.

As worship began, I saw two angels standing on the stage,

and they were unlike anything I had ever seen. They were about 15

feet tall, and there was fire coming out of them—six feet in every

direction. I was standing in the front row of the church with

Randy, so I was closer to the stage than the rest of the crowd

around me when the closest angel began to walk toward me. I

wanted to turn and run or get out of his way, but I was unable to

move.

He came straight at me and reached out his hand. When he

touched my chest, I collapsed to the floor on my side in the fetal

position. The spiritual fire from his touch remained on me, causing

me to create my own puddle of sweat on the cement floor of the

church. In that moment, I began to see more clearly in the spirit

than ever before.

The church held about 6,000 people, divided into six sections

of chairs. Over each section I saw another angel of fire about the

size of a human man, and the fire only emanated out of them about

six inches. As the worship intensified I saw more of these smaller

angels come down through the ceiling and join the crowd of

worshippers. The worship grew so intense that at the height of

worship, while the fire angels continued to join in, the crowd

looked like a field of grass on fire, an extreme wild fire of worship.

Then I saw a dark cloud over the crowd, and there was

lightning flashing across the cloud. I heard two words in my spirit,

“New mantle.” Randy Clark, knowing

that I could see in the spirit,

came over to ask me what I was seeing, and I shared with him all

that I have written here. Then I asked him to flatten me out on my

back because I was in an awkward and uncomfortable position. He

flattened me out, and I still did not have control of any of my body

below my neck.

While stuck to the ground, I looked down at my body and I

saw three angels on me. There was one on each of my legs holding

me down with their hands. A third angel was sitting next to me

using his right hand to press down on my chest. I could see that

the two 15-foot angels of fire were still on the stage watching.

I felt a splash of water come across my chest as if someone

had taken a water bottle and poured it on me. I looked around but

couldn’t figure out who had done it.

Then it happened two more

times a few minutes later. This felt so real in the natural that I was

actually getting annoyed. I didn't understand what this was until

later.

Eventually the worship ended, and I was able to make it back

to my seat with some help. Later on, I found an interpreter and

spoke with Davi. I asked him what he had seen that evening, and

he told me exactly what I had seen in his own words. He even

included that the large angel of fire who had touched me at the

beginning had told Davi that he was going to step off the stage and

minister to me. Also, Davi saw the three angels lay a mantle over

me. It had flames on top and water dripping from the bottom,

which is why I had felt the water on my chest and heard in my

spirit the words, “New mantle.” I had

been confused about seeing

the dark clouds in the meeting, and then the Lord showed me in His

Word about His presence coming in a dark cloud:

"...the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven,

with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness" (Deuteronomy

4:11 NKJV).

"He made darkness His covering, His canopy around

Him—the dark rain clouds of the sky. Out of the brightness of

His presence clouds advanced, with hailstones and bolts of

lightning" (Psalms 18:11-12).

"Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; righteousness

and justice are the foundation of His throne. Fire goes before

Him and consumes His foes on every side. His lightning lights

up the world; the earth sees and trembles" (Psalms 97:2-4).

Since these experiences in Brazil, I have received this new

mantle in my life. The Lord has increased my vision and ability to

understand what is happening in the spirit. It is from these

experiences that the Lord directed me into my call to teach others

about the spirit realm.

ACTIVATION

The Lord taught me about activating my faith and “flipping my

switch.” In this activation I direct you to prepare your heart for

the Lord to teach you about flipping your spiritual switch. As a

symbol of activating your faith, I recommend that you anoint

yourself with oil. Go to your cupboard or pantry and find some

olive or other safe food oil. Take a small dab and place it on

yourself—you could put it on your forehead or wherever. As you

do this, say this prayer in your own

words:

Lord, I receive Your anointing. I desire to grow in my

walk with You. I open my heart for more of Your work in and

through me. I desire to fulfill the call on my life. I ask for Your

anointing to run down upon me now (see Ps. 133).

ENDNOTES

1. Gary Oates, *Open My Eyes, Lord* (Dallas, GA: Open

Heaven Publications, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

SPIRITUAL SENSES

BECAUSE THE GIFT OF DISCERNING of spirits is one of the more

perplexing gifts, let me clarify some of my language about seeing in

the spirit. No believer has the “gift of seeing in the spirit” because

there is no such thing. The gift that is actually functioning when

someone says that he or she is seeing in the spirit is the gift of

discerning of spirits.

Discerning of spirits is a true gift of the Holy Spirit found in

First Corinthians 12. The emphasis in this book is seeing in the

spirit, which is just one way that discerning of spirits functions.

Seers function in a high level of discerning of spirits, usually

through spiritual sight. Later I will discuss more about the role of

seers in the Church.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

The gift of discerning of spirits is a communication gift through

which the Holy Spirit makes us aware of our spiritual atmosphere

and environment around us. The main way that this functions is

through our five spiritual senses that God placed within each of us

at creation. To understand how we function in discerning of spirits,

we must understand our spiritual senses. M ost people only realize

that they have five physical senses. The truth is that we have three

sets of five senses.

Science has learned that the physical body has five senses

that enable us to interact with the environment: taste, touch, smell,

sight, and sound. In addition to your five physical senses, every

person has five senses in their soul and five senses in their spirit.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through

and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept

blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1

Thessalonians 5:23).

…Scripture has hundreds of verses that lay out clearly that

we are a spirit, which has a soul and occupies a body. We are a

three-part being consisting of a spirit, soul, and body.

SOUL SENSES

Experience and culture dictate our own individual reactions to

taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight through our soul. For example,

smell brings back memories. If I were to give flowers to one

individual, it may bring back good memories like flowers from a

wedding, but if I gave the same flowers to another person, it may

bring back bad memories from a funeral. This is not a physical

reaction to the flowers or their smell; it is a reaction from the

individual soul.

If two people are walking together and they cross the path of

a dog, one individual may like dogs and begin to pet the dog;

however, the second person may be afraid and begin to feel

uncomfortable. This is also a response from the individual soul

senses. The way we *see* the world, and the way we *hear* others, is

affected by the condition of our soul. Also, the willingness to *touch*

certain things like a snake may be easy for some or terrifying for

others, depending on the condition of the soul. Even the *taste* of

some foods will bring varied responses from different people.

The human soul has senses just like the physical body. Each

category of senses has a realm that it interacts with. The physical

senses interact with the physical realm,

the soul senses interact

with the interpersonal realm. And the spirit has senses that interact

with the spiritual realm.

Although there are hundreds of books that can help develop

the soul or the body, this book is focused on the developing and

operating of the spiritual senses.

SPIRIT SENSES

Author and teacher Harold Eberle offers great insight regarding

our spiritual senses:

Just as we have five senses that provide us with

information about the physical world, we also have senses in

touch with the spiritual world. The spiritual senses are just as

important as the physical senses. Unfortunately, most of us

have not developed our spiritual senses.

M any Christians do not even believe they have any

spiritual senses.

I like to ask them, “Has the devil ever tempted you?” Of

course, they answer yes. Then I like to say, “Well, how did

you hear the devil? You could not hear him if you did not

have spiritual ears.” It is sad, but many people have more

faith that the devil talks to us than that God talks to us. In

reality, the Bible makes it clear that we all have spiritual eyes

and ears.

When Elisha prayed for his servant, he did not pray for

God to give him eyes, but he prayed that God would open up

his eyes (see 2 Kings 6:17). In Ephesians 1:18, Paul did not

pray for the saints to receive eyes, but for God to open the

eyes of their hearts. We already have spiritual eyes and ears.

What we need is to have them opened. We need to become

sensitive. 1

It is a fact that we have senses in our spirit through which we

interact with the spirit realm. When the gift of discerning of spirits

is functioning, it is through these spiritual senses that we receive

communication.

In human communication, the two main senses we use most

often for relating information are sound and sight. Communication

in the natural is received through listening, as well as through body

language and facial expressions. God also communicates through

the other three senses (taste, touch, and smell), but most of the

time He will speak through seeing and hearing. Because the

spiritual senses of taste, smell, and touch are the least understood,

the following examples show how, on occasion, God may speak to

us through these senses.

TASTE

And He said to me, "Son of man, eat what is before you,

eat this scroll; then go and speak to the house of Israel." So I

opened my mouth, and He gave me the scroll to eat. Then He

said to me, "Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and

fill your stomach with it." So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as

honey in my mouth" (Ezekiel 3:1-3).

If we suddenly taste something sweet, sour, or salty, but the

taste is not a result of anything we have physically had to eat or

drink, we should ask the Lord if He is trying to speak to us. On

occasion, in the Old Testament, God spoke to His prophets

through experiences with spiritual taste.

SMELL

But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal

procession in Christ and through us, spreads everywhere the

fragrance of the knowledge of Him (2 Corinthians 2:14).

In the spring of 2005 I was helping Randy Clark and Leif

Hetland at one of their book tables in Nashville, Tennessee, when a

large angel appeared at the end of the table by Leif's books, and a

stir began among the people. To my knowledge, no one else was

able to see what I was seeing, yet they

could smell the change. I

saw the angel pulling out small vials of heavenly fragrances, each

one being very distinct. He pulled them from his belt and wafted

them in the air. There was the scent of perfect cinnamon; then after

about two minutes, a fresh scent would be put out. The scents

were drastically different from one another: from the scent of

cinnamon to wild flowers to baby oil and then to various spices.

This continued through about 12 different smells, and by the end

of 30 minutes there were about 30 people crowded together on the

tips of their toes smelling the air and sharing in the experience.

TOUCH

As Jesus was on His way, the crowds almost crushed Him.

And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for

12 years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind Him

and touched the edge of His cloak, and immediately her

bleeding stopped. "Who touched Me?" Jesus asked. When

they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding

and pressing against You." But Jesus said, "Someone touched

Me; I know that power has gone out from Me" (Luke 8:43-

46).

This is a great example of the difference between physical

touch and spiritual touch. According to this story, Jesus was

almost physically crushed, but when someone reached out and

drew healing power out from His spirit, He declared that someone

had touched Him, speaking spiritually, of course.

M y friend Benjamin Valence and I had a spiritual experience

together a few years ago. Ben wrote out the experience in his own

words as he remembers it (notice how

the senses of touch and

smell were both operating).

I remember it like it was yesterday. Jonathan and I were

sitting in his kitchen talking about things of the spirit when we

stepped into some activation. As we were talking about angels and

things of the unseen realm, Jonathan suddenly told me there was

something in front of me (in the spirit) on the table and that I

should reach out my hands to feel what it was. To most this might

seem a little weird, but he and I had been operating in discerning of

spirits for quite a while, so I didn't hesitate. I reached out my

hands and began to feel what was there; I could make out

something that felt like a large bowl. It felt as real as if I was feeling

a bowl in the natural realm. As I was telling Jonathan what I felt,

he would confirm it by seeing in the

spirit what I was touching. He

would then ask me what else I felt, always trying to get me to

reach a little deeper. As I felt out the bowl Jon asked me to feel

inside of it, and as I reached into the bowl I could literally feel a hot

liquid on my hand. After realizing I could feel heat coming from the

bowl when I placed my hands inside it, I tried putting my face over

it. As soon as I did, my face became hot, and I began to sweat; it

was incredible. After a while of playing with the bowl, Jon told me

that it was oil and asked me to pick it up and to pour it over my

head. As soon as I reached for the bowl and began to tilt it over my

head, Jon and I looked at each other, and as if repeating each

other's words said, "Did you smell that?" At the same moment we

both smelled the scent of oil fill the room. Excitement boiled inside

me as I raised the bowl over my head

and began to pour it out. I

could actually feel the oil running down over my head and heat

coming from the substance. I will never forget the feeling of the oil

running over me as if consuming my senses. I felt peace, joy, and

love of the Father washing over me. I will never forget that day.

FOCUS ON THE LORD

Once I started to share what I was able to see, people were very

hungry to have similar experiences and would ask me how they

could begin to see. Since God had sovereignly given me this gift

that I had not sought out, I didn't know what to tell them, until I

found a key in M atthew 5:8.

I understood impartation through the laying on of hands;

therefore I would pray for impartation to anyone interested, but I

was only seeing a fraction of people receive the gifting. (I will

address impartation in greater detail in a later chapter.) Over the

last several years, the Lord has taught me some principles that

have opened the door for more people to be able to activate their

faith for the gift of discerning of spirits. The first one that I want

to share is the principle of M atthew 5:8, which was the first

insight the Lord gave me: *"Blessed are the pure in heart for they*

shall see God" (M att. 5:8).

How pure does a person have to be to see God? I believe that

the answer is in asking the right question, “What is meant by

purity?” The vast majority of believers hold the word *pure* as a

moral standard that is unattainable. Jesus was speaking of purity

as a key to seeing God and I believe He told us this because it is

attainable.

To illustrate the meaning of *pure*, take gold as an example.

When gold has been truly purified, it has had all the other elements

removed from it. This process causes all the dross and impurities

to come to the surface so it can be skimmed away. In the end, it

produces gold that is one single element. Our hearts are sometimes

cluttered with the dross of life, and we must remove all the

distractions so we can focus our whole heart on God. For us to

have a “pure” heart, our heart must be

focused. If we are to “see

God,” then the one element our heart contains must be a focus on

the Lord.

When we focus our hearts on the Lord, we are aimed to come

into the experience of seeing God. The verse is clearer if we read it

this way, “Happy are those who focus their heart on God, for

they will actually see God.”

FAITH AND THE EMPTY CHAIR

The following story is a favorite of mine. It is a great illustration

of what it means to focus your heart on Jesus using the eyes of

your imagination.

A man's daughter had asked the local minister to come and

pray with her father. When the minister arrived, he found the man

lying in bed with his head propped up on two pillows. An empty

chair sat beside his bed. The minister assumed that the old man had

been informed of his impending visit. “I guess you were expecting

me,” he said. “No, who are you?” said the father. “I’m the new

minister at your church,” he replied. “When I saw the empty chair,

I figured you knew I was going to show up.”

“Oh yeah, the chair,” said the bedridden man. “Would you

mind closing the door?” Puzzled, the minister shut the door. “I

have never told anyone this, not even my

daughter," said the man.

"But all of my life I have never known how to pray. At church I

used to hear the preacher talk about prayer, but it went right over

my head."

"I abandoned any attempt at prayer," the old man continued,

"until one day about four years ago my best friend said to me,

'Joe, prayer is just a simple matter of having a conversation with

Jesus. Here is what I suggest. Sit down in a chair; place an empty

chair in front of you, and, in faith, see Jesus in the chair. It's not

spooky because He promised, "I'll be with you always." Then just

speak to Him and listen in the same way you're doing with me

right now.'"

"So, I tried it and I've liked it so much that I do it a couple of

hours every day. I'm careful though. If my daughter saw me talking

to an empty chair, she'd either have a nervous breakdown or send

me off to the funny farm."

The minister was deeply moved by the story and encouraged

the old man to continue on the journey. Then he prayed with him

and returned to the church building. Two nights later the daughter

called to tell the minister that her daddy had died that afternoon.

"Did he die in peace?" he asked.

“Yes, when I left the house about two o’clock, he called me

over to his bedside, told me he loved me, and kissed me on the

cheek. When I got back from the store an hour later, I found him

dead. But there was something strange about his death.

Apparently, just before Daddy died, he leaned over and rested his

head on the chair beside the bed. What do you make of that?” The

minister wiped a tear from his eye and

said, “I wish we all could go

that way.”

ACTIVATION I

For the first exercise we are going to talk to Jesus like the old

man in the story did. First put in your bookmark and set the book

down, then close your eyes and with your imagination, picture

Jesus.

Now engage in a conversation with Him. If you cannot think

of anything to say, you can always start by thanking Him for the

things He has done in your life. For example, salvation, physical

healing, emotional freedom, baptism in the Holy Spirit, financial

blessing, reconciliation with others, divine favor, deliverance, and

the fruit and gifts of the Spirit. Do not forget to listen to the Lord

speaking back to you.

ACTIVATION II

For the second activation, you are going to pray a simple prayer,

consecrating your senses to the Lord.

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments

of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those

who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts

of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness (Romans

6:13).

Pray this prayer of offering in your own words:

Lord,

I offer to You all the parts of my body including my

spiritual senses. My spiritual ability to see, hear, taste, smell,

and touch I give to You alone. I offer myself to You as an

instrument of righteousness.

ENDNOTES

1. Harold Eberle, *Partnership*

Newsletter (Yakima, WA: World

Cast M inistries, M ay 2008).

CHAPTER 3

IMPARTATION

TO UNDERSTAND IMPARTATION , you have to understand

anointing, which in the Bible means “a smearing.” In Scripture, oil

is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. When a prophet or priest poured,

rubbed, or smeared oil over the head of someone, it was referred to

as anointing that person. This actually gave the anointed person a

measure of the oil that belonged to the prophet or priest. This is

commonly referred to as *transferring the anointing*.

In the Old Testament, the oil was used to signify the passing

of the anointing. In the New Testament we find that the anointing

of the Holy Spirit can now be passed through the laying on of

hands because the anointing abides

within us: *"But the anointing*

which you have received from Him abides in you…" (1 John 2:27).

IMPARTATION IS FOUNDATIONAL

The apostle Paul named the laying on of hands as one of the six

basic fundamental doctrines a Christian should understand. This

places it in the very foundation of our Christian beliefs. In many

circles of the modern Church, impartation is ignored, if not denied

all together; in the first century, it was considered a foundational

truth:

Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrines about

Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation

of… the laying on of hands… (Hebrews 6:1-2).

Paul also thought of impartation as part of the process of

becoming established. He imparted spiritual gifts to the Roman

believers to give them a better foundation: “For I long to see you,

that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be

established…” (Rom. 1:11 NKJV).

IMPARTATION IS INTENTIONAL

In the Old Testament, the anointing was a very purposeful,

pronounced event. Impartation occurs not just because of touch,

but because a person places his or her hands on you by the

direction of the Holy Spirit with a goal in mind. Intentionally, the

impartation occurs.

To say that impartation occurs every time touch occurs

would be similar to saying that if an Old Testament prophet had a

leaky oil flask, then everything that he dripped oil on was anointed

to be king. If it were just touch, then every time you shook

someone's hand, you would have some of him or her rub off on

you. This is not biblical, and we are not promoting such

superstition. We intentionally give that which we have, by the

direction of the Holy Spirit: *"what I have I give you..."* (Acts 3:6).

IMPARTATION IS BIBLICAL

There are many other examples throughout the Bible of

individuals or groups of people receiving an impartation from the

Lord through another person. Let's look at a few of these.

Joshua and Moses: *Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of*

the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the

children of Israel heeded him, and did as the Lord had commanded

Moses (Deut. 34:9 NKJV).

Moses and the Elders: *So Moses went out and told the*

people the words of the Lord, and he gathered the seventy men of

the elders of the people and placed them around the tabernacle.

Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to him, and took

of the Spirit that was upon him, and placed the same upon the

seventy elders; and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them,

that they prophesied. (Num. 11:24-25a NKJV).

Elijah and Elisha: *And so it was, when they had crossed*

over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you,

before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a

double portion of your spirit be upon me" (2 Kings 2:9 NKJV).

Peter: *Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but*

what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth,

rise up and walk" (Acts 3:6 NKJV).

Paul and Timothy: *Do not neglect the gift that is in you,*

which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands

of the eldership (1 Tim. 4:14).

Timothy was deeply impacted by impartation. Specifically,

as a result of impartation, he received a spiritual gift through the

laying on of hands and prophecy by a prophetic presbytery of

elders: *"Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in*

you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6 NKJV).

IMPARTATION IS INDIVIDUAL

Does everyone receive the same level of impartation when hands

are laid on? Some have thought that if a famous Christian leader

lays his or her hands on an individual, then the receiver will get an

impartation that instantly gives them an equal portion of the

anointing.

It is the mercy of God that protects us from receiving more

than we can handle. As Pastor Bill Johnson of Redding, California,

says, “Revelation always brings responsibility, and hunger is the

thing that prepares our hearts to carry the weight of that

responsibility. ”1 Our character must be able to uphold the amount

of power we carry, or else we are a danger to those around us. So

the answer is no, not everyone receives the same level of anointing

in impartation. God knows what you need, and what you can

handle.

IMPARTATION IS A SEED, NOT A FULL-

GROWN PLANT

The parable of the sower (see Luke 8:4-15) teaches us how the

farmer spreads the seeds for salvation, and it also teaches us a

principle of how we receive from God. Our heart is the soil, and

Father God is the farmer who spreads seed, which is the Word of

God (or, for our analogy, impartation). He casts it into the soil of

our heart. Then the birds, which are demonic attacks, come to kill,

steal, and destroy.

This is where the variation in impartation can occur. The

difference in how any seed grows depends on the soil in which it is

planted and how prepared and ready that soil is for seeds to grow.

After the seed is planted, it can grow very quickly if it is given the

proper water (time in the presence of the Holy Spirit—see John

7:38-39) and sunlight (Jesus is the light that the seed needs to grow

—see 2 Cor. 4:4).

To my knowledge, those who have some of the most

powerful impartations are among the following: those who are

hungry for more of God, pastors who are tired and burned out, and

people whose ministry is desperate for a breakthrough. They are

people whose soil is eager for seed, and almost as soon as the seed

hits the soil, something sprouts. The soil is already prepared with

water and sunlight, but the impartation is needed to move into

producing. In contrast, there are those who have no hunger for

God, do not spend time with the Holy Spirit, and do not walk in

the light of Christ, leaving their hearts as hard as rocky soil.

Usually, God has to plow this ground before any seed can grow

there.

One other factor in farming is the needed pressure that dirt

places against a seed so that the shell cracks open and the seed can

begin to grow. Seeds that have never sprouted, because they have

never been planted in dirt, have been found in the tombs of

pharaohs. Some of these seeds, which are over 4,000 years old,

have since been planted in dirt and have sprouted and produced.

That is why seeds of salvation can be

tossed out on the ground of

peoples' hearts day after day with no results, but when the trials

of life give the needed pressure, the seeds crack open and life

sprouts.

This pressure comes into the impartation discussion because

not only spiritually hungry people get powerful impartation.

Sometimes it is a person about to lose his or her ministry, or

someone about to give up from difficulty. Someone under

tremendous pressure in life may be the most ready for the seed of

impartation to be planted in his or her heart.

YOU CAN ONLY IMPART WHAT YOU

POSSESS

It is crucial that we understand this next point: you can only

impart what you possess—if you possess it, you can impart it. If

you don’t have it, don’t lay hands on another and declare

impartation. If you only have olive anointing oil in your flask, you

can’t declare and impart cedar anointing oil to someone else. Yes,

pray that God would give it to them. But don’t go claiming to

impart what you don’t have in your own life. You cannot impart

resurrection power to someone if you have never raised the dead,

but you can declare and prophesy it over

someone if the Lord

directs you.

“The double portion,” as it relates to impartation, is a phrase

commonly heard in some church circles. To understand the double

portion correctly, consider the following scenario. If an Old

Testament prophet was sent to anoint a king and the prophet has

ten ounces of anointing oil in his flask, he can only give the king ten

ounces. If the king asks him to give him a double portion of all the

anointing that the prophet had, this would mean that he wanted

not 10 ounces, but 20 ounces. He cannot give 20 because he only

has 10. That is double the portion of all the anointing that the

prophet has. This is what Elisha did when he asked for a double

portion of Elijah's anointing. Elijah responded by saying, *"You*

have asked a difficult thing" (2 Kings

2:10a). Then, because an

individual does not have the ability to give a double portion to

another person, Elijah puts the responsibility on God by saying,

"If you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—

otherwise not" (2 Kings 2:10b). This is a proper understanding of

the concept of the double portion referred to by Elisha. Notice that

even the prophet Elijah was not able to freely give away the double

portion; he responded, in essence, that God would have to do it. It

may prove wise to use this term with a little more caution.

First Timothy 5:22 raises another important question

regarding the practice of impartation: *"Do not be hasty in the laying*

on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself

pure." If pulled out of its original context, this verse can seem very

contradictory to everything I have

presented in this chapter. A

large part of First Timothy is written about setting church

leadership into positions of authority. All of Chapter 3 lays out

detailed qualifications about what type of person is to be put into

leadership. A few verses earlier, Paul writes, *"The elders who*

direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor,

especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the

Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the

grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages.' Do not entertain an

accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three

witnesses. Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the

others may take warning" (1 Tim. 5:17-20).

In First Timothy, Paul is writing about the laying on of hands

for setting leadership into positions of

authority. This has nothing

to do with the concept of impartation. It would not make sense for

Paul to write in Hebrews 6 and Romans 1 that he wanted to lay

hands on baby Christians that *"they may be established"* (Rom.

1:11), and then to warn in First Timothy that you can share in the

sins of others by laying hands on them. If he is referring to the

same type of laying on of hands in both passages, then wouldn't

he say to “keep yourself pure” by not laying hands on people who

are not yet “established” (1 Tim. 5:22; Rom. 1:11)? There are two

different types of laying on of hands: one for setting leaders into

places of authority, and the second for imparting and transferring

anointing. There are qualifications and restrictions on the first

type, but the second type actually propels you toward being

qualified. Transference of the anointing

by the laying on of hands

for impartation is for each and every Christian and is not held back;

in fact, it exists to help you grow.

ACTIVATION

There are many Scripture verses that validate the fact that

impartation can occur through the touching of physical objects (see

M att. 9:20; 14:35-37; Acts 19:11-12). The exercise for this chapter

will be a prayer for receiving

impartation. Place one hand on this

book, while placing your other hand on yourself. Put this prayer in

your own words and stir up your faith:

I receive an impartation right now from the Holy Spirit for

an increase in discerning of spirits. I receive anointing for my

eyes to see (see Rev. 3:18), I receive an impartation for the

eyes of my understanding to be enlightened (see Eph. 1:17-

18), and I receive an impartation for greater vision in the spirit

realm.

ENDNOTES

1.Bill Johnson, *Dreaming With God* (Shippensburg, PA:

Destiny Image, 2006), p. 60.

CHAPTER 4

WE CAN ALL SEE

You Can Learn

M ANY PEOPLE DO NOT

UNDERSTAND that spiritual gifts can be

taught. The apostle Paul said that he didn't want us to be ignorant

about the spiritual gifts (see 1 Cor. 12:1), and what corrects

ignorance better than teaching?

Some say that Paul was only referring to teaching about the

gifts in a general sense rather than activating the gifts as in a

classroom setting. If Paul was against the idea of activations so that

all may learn, then why would he say, *"For you can all prophesy*

one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged" (see 1

Cor. 14:31 NKJV)?

The gifts can be taught, learned, and activated. Paul also set a

precedent by encouraging his spiritual son, Timothy, to activate

his gifting: *"Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which*

is in you through the laying on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6). I believe

that this charge applies to us as well; we are to activate our

giftings, not merely to wait and hope that the Holy Spirit will

cause our gift to activate: *"But solid food belongs to those who are*

of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses

exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14).

HOW MANY GIFTS DO I HAVE?

M any have been taught that they only have access to one

(possibly more but not all) of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This

teaching has limited the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Church

because believers will not step out in faith to use a gift, since it

might not be “their gift.” When they do not step out, they do not

find out what their gifting is, and satan has effectively immobilized

the use of the spiritual gifts.

There are two main verses that have been misunderstood and

misapplied, and this has caused most of the confusion surrounding

the spiritual gifts. These verses seem to say that we as individuals

have a limited access to the gifts that have been given to the

Church.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for

the profit of all…distributing to each one individually as He

wills (1 Corinthians 12:7-11 NKJV).

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another,

as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10

NKJV).

There is a teaching that expands on First Peter 4:10, stating

that each Christian has been given only one gift (possibly two or

three but not more), and this gift is resident within the individual

and can be called on at any time. First Corinthians 12:11 also

seems to be in agreement with this concept. I agree with this

teaching, but only when it is balanced by a seemingly contradictory

idea.

THE FAITH LEVEL OF OPERATION

Although First Corinthians 12 gives us a list of nine spiritual

gifts and says that the Holy Spirit distributes to each one

individually as He wills, we find what seems to be a contradiction.

It also says of the gifts that "… *God works all in all"* (1 Cor.

12:6). How can the Holy Spirit give you a gift, uniquely yours, if

He also gives everyone that same gift?

Another seeming contradiction is prophecy. It appears on

our list of nine special gifts given to individuals, yet we read, *"For*

you can all prophesy…" (1 Cor. 14:31).

And what about the gift of healing? Is it a gift that only some

have, or should we all lay our hands on the sick and see healing? As

M ark 16:17-18 says, *"And these signs will accompany those who*

believe: ...they will place their hands on sick people, and they will

get well." If I don't have the gift of healing available to me, how

could I be responsible for not praying for the sick? Yet I am

commanded to heal the sick in M atthew 10:8: *"Heal the sick, raise*

the dead, cleanse those who have

leprosy, drive out demons. Freely

you have received, freely give." How can God be "just" if He

commands me to do something for which He has not equipped me?

Lastly, what about discerning of spirits? Hebrews 5:14 says,

"But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those

who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern*both*

good and evil." But if only some Christians have been given the

gift of discerning of spirits, then how can God ask that we all

discern good from evil?

THREE DIFFERENT LEVELS IN THE GIFTS

The missing piece here is that there are three different levels of

the spiritual gifts. Take prophecy, for example: On the highest

level you have the office of the prophet mentioned in Ephesians

4:11-13; on the middle level is the gift of prophecy found in First

Corinthians 12:10; and on the lowest level is the faith level where

Paul says, *"you can all prophesy"* (1 Cor. 14:31). The progression

works like a triangle; at the bottom, everyone can prophesy; as

you move to the middle of the triangle, some people will have the

actual gift of prophecy; lastly, there will be a few people at the top

of the triangle who have the calling of a prophet. Just because you

can prophesy does not mean you have

the gift of prophecy, and

just because you have the gift of prophecy does not mean that you

have the office and calling of a prophet.

Let us take the triangle of three levels and apply it to

discernment. On the top of the triangle we find the office of the

seer; at the middle there is the gift of discerning of spirits; and at

the bottom we have the faith level referred to in Hebrews 5:14:

"those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have

their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." As with

prophecy, just because you can discern does not mean that you

have the gift of discerning of spirits, and even if you can see in the

spirit and have the gift of discerning of spirits, this does not mean

that you are in the office and calling of a seer. M any have operated

in the lower two levels and have

declared themselves to be

prophets and seers in the Body of Christ, and this has brought

much unnecessary spiritual warfare against them. It is spiritually

dangerous to declare that you are a prophet or a seer unless you

truly are one. A surefire way to know if you are a prophet or a

seer is to look at the one passage that gives the New Testament job

description of a true prophet: *"And He Himself gave some to be*

apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and

teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for

the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12 NKJV). The New

Testament prophet is supposed to be equipping others for the

work of ministry; if you are not equipping others in prophecy,

then you are probably not a prophet.

"HAVING EYES, DO YOU NOT SEE?"

(MARK 8:18)

M any verses in the Bible state that all Christians can and should

have their spiritual eyes and ears open and functioning. We often

pass over clear references to spiritual sight because we have been

told that seeing in the spirit is not our gift. Here is a quick

overview of seven sections of Scripture that speak of how every

believer should have their spiritual eyes operating.

1. Hebrews 5:12-14: “For *though by this time you ought to be*

teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles

of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not

solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in

the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs

to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use

have their senses exercised to discern

both good and evil" (NKJV).

This shows that a sign of all mature Christians is that they

will be active in using discernment. This is not only available to us,

but it is also a sign of maturity. It is time to grow and start using

our discernment.

2. Ephesians 1:15-18: *"Therefore I also, after I heard of your*

faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease

to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that

the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to

you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may

know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the

glory of His inheritance in the saints" (NKJV).

If Paul believed that only certain

Christians could see in the

spirit, then why would he be wasting his time praying for all the

Ephesian believers to have the eyes of their understanding

enlightened? Obviously, Paul believed that all of them could have

their spiritual eyes opened.

3. Second Kings 6:15-17: *"And when the servant of the man of*

God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the

city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas,

my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for

those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he

may see." Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he

saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of

fire all around Elisha" (NKJV).

Elisha didn't pray, "If it is my servant's gifting, open his

eyes." No, Elisha knew that God wanted to open the eyes of the

servant, as God always wants to open the eyes of His servants.

There is no question that God has given us all spiritual eyes that

would have worked perfectly before the Fall of Adam—why

shouldn't they work in every born-again believer?

4. Revelation 3:17-18: *"Because you*

*say, ‘*I *am rich, have*

become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that

you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel

you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich;

and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of

your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye

salve, that you may see” (NKJV).

Spiritually we are poor and naked, and God wants to

spiritually clothe us and give us spiritual riches. But the third part

of the verse still causes offense to some —that we are blind and

that God wants us to anoint our eyes with eye salve so that we

may see. But we are spiritually blind, and God has provided an

anointing that can open the spiritual eyes of every believer. God

has not excluded even one person by

limiting His gifts to only a

few. This anointing of Revelation 3 is available to all, as is the

clothing and gold that He has provided for us.

5. Luke 4:18: *"The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He*

has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me

to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the

blind, to release the oppressed."'

This verse is rarely thought of as referring to spiritual sight,

but let us look a little closer. Jesus said that He was anointed to

preach good news to the poor, which is a spiritual activity. He was

anointed to proclaim freedom to the prisoners and to release the

oppressed. I propose that this does not refer to actual prisoners

and oppressed people, as evidenced by the fact that Jesus was not

literally opening jail cells to set captives

free. Instead, He healed

and freed hearts and delivered others of demonic oppression. This

leads to the conclusion that perhaps Jesus was not only healing the

physically blind, which He certainly did, but also the spiritually

blind.

6. M atthew 7:1-5: *"Do not judge or you too will be judged.*

For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with

the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at

the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to

the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let

me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a

plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of

your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck

from your brother's eye"

Clearly Jesus, using metaphor and hyperbole (exaggeration to

make a point), is not speaking of the physical eye. He is speaking

of how we see the world through the eyes of our heart, and how at

times we get a speck or a log that hinders our seeing. This also

speaks of how hypocrisy operates.

7. First John 2:9-11: *"Anyone who claims to be in the light but*

hates his brother is still in the darkness. Whoever loves his brother

lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble.

But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around

in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the

darkness has blinded his eyes."

When a Christian hates another believer, does that Christian

go physically blind? Of course not! This is speaking of how hate

blinds our spiritual eyes. We must operate our discernment

through love. Hate hinders, obscures, and destroys Christ-like

discernment.

AN OPEN HEART

The issue of who has what gifts and how many one person can

operate in has been the topic of much debate in certain church

circles. I hope this quick overview of seven examples of God's

desire for every person to operate in spiritual sight has helped to

open your heart and your mind. There is so much more available to

us, and we must remain open to finding new truth in the Word. We

should heed what the apostle Paul said and *"...eagerly desire the*

greater gifts" (1 Cor. 12:31). Now that we understand the levels

among the gifts, we can truly pursue greater gifts.

ACTIVATION

The words *revelation, interpretation*, and *application* can serve

as a simple and straightforward way to process information from

the spirit realm. First, God shows you something. Second, you ask

the Lord, what the revelation means. Third, ask the Lord what you

should do with the information that He just gave you.

Revelation: Ask the Lord to show you a picture in your

imagination.

Interpretation: Ask the Lord what the picture means.

Application: Ask the Lord what you should do in response.

Perhaps you should just receive the picture and be encouraged, but

He may say that the picture is for someone else and that you

should encourage that person with what He showed you.

Write out in your journal the revelation and the interpretation

and application, this will keep the revelation for future

encouragement. These three steps can be

remembered as the

acronym R.I.A. and can be applied to any vision, dream, or picture

from the Lord.

CHAPTER 5

PROPHETS AND SEERS

THE QUESTION THAT I get asked the most is, “What is a seer?”

The response I give is different, depending on who is asking. There

are three general categories of people who ask this question, and I

answer according to which group they are a part of.

If the person asking is not a Christian, then I cannot use

Christian lingo to explain it. I use terms they might understand and

mold my answer to make sense to them. I might respond by

saying, “A person who operates as a seer can see into the spirit

realm around us, similar to a psychic person. The difference is that

a Christian has legal access to operate in

that realm because Jesus

lives inside of a Christian. A psychic has no right to operate in that

realm, and it is dangerous for them to do so. God communicates to

seers through visions, open visions, and dreams, as well as many

other ways."

If the person is a Christian, but they have no familiarity with

prophets and prophecy, then I would probably say something like,

“Remember how in the Old Testament Samuel would have visions

and speak God’s Word to others? Well, that is what a seer and a

prophet do. God talks to seers and prophets in different ways;

then they take those messages and declare them to the Church to

bring vision, direction, and encouragement.”

When a person who is very familiar with prophets and

prophecy asks, “What is a seer?” there

are usually a few other

questions implied. The implied questions are various: “Does it

matter that we distinguish between seers and prophets?” “Are

seers in the New Testament?” “Who are the seers in the Bible?”

and “How are prophets and seers different?” Since the previous

two groups have just been answered, I will answer these questions

in more detail.

Q: Does it M atter That We Distinguish Between Seers and

Prophets?

A: The Bible is our example. If it is important to God, then it

should be important to us. Scripture is not arbitrary in the use of

the titles *seer* and *prophet*. Individuals were referred to as one or

the other. This was not a synonymous term that was thrown

around interchangeably. Here is an example of Scripture very

specifically separating the two terms: *"As for the events of King*

David's reign, from beginning to end, they are written in the

records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and

the records of Gad the seer…" (1 Chron. 29:29). God clearly

distinguished between Samuel and Gad as seers and Nathan as a

prophet. If it is important to God, then it should be important to

us.

Q: Who Are the Seers in the Bible?

A: There are nine people identified as seers in the Old

Testament. There are many others who operated at times in the

gifting of a seer such as Balaam, Elisha, Daniel, and Zechariah, but

they were never given the title of "seer" in the Bible. Only nine

people have been given the name, title, and calling of seer. Listed

here are the nine, the scriptural reference of their title as a seer, and

the main position that they fulfilled.

1 Chronicles

Samuel

Governmental advisor

29:29

1 Chronicles

Gad

Governmental advisor

29:29

2 Samuel

Zadok

Chief priest

15:27

2 Chronicles

Hanani

Grandson of Samuel

16:7

2 Chronicles

Iddo

Priest

9:29

Sycamore fig picker, marketplace

Amos

Amos 7:12

minister

2 Chronicles

Worship leader,

Asaph

29:30

author of Psalms 50 and 73-83

Jeduthun 2 Chronicles

Worship leader

35:15

1 Chronicles

Worship leader, author of Psalm

Heman

25:5

88

Take note of the positions that the seers fulfilled. One-third

of them were governmental or marketplace oriented, one-third of

them were worship leaders, and one-fourth were in formal

priesthood ministry. Also we can see from Hanani that the seer

anointing can be passed generationally. M any times the title of seer

is applied to others such as Ezekiel and Elisha, but these nine are

the only ones in the entire Bible who God refers to as seers.

Q: Are There Seers in the New

Testament?

A: According to First Samuel 9:9, *"Formerly in Israel, when*

a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: 'Come, let us go to

the seer'; for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a

seer." In our modern day we can lose the history and context

behind biblical words. This verse shows us that in the progression

of the Hebrew language; they blended the word *seer* into the word

prophet and called them the same thing. A prophet and a seer refer

to the same calling, yet the way that they receive their revelation

from the Lord functions differently. The seers continued to

minister in Israel, so this was not a dismissal of seers but merely a

change in language trends. This is similar to the fact that there are

electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, civil engineers, and many

other kinds, with a world of difference

between them, but for

convenience we just say engineer.

When we read the New Testament, we find no reference to

the word *seers*. This is because the first-century reader understood

that the word *prophet* was inclusive of both prophets and seers. (If

First Samuel 9:9 had eliminated the use of the term *prophet* in favor

of the word *seer*, then we would still have five New Testament

offices listed in Ephesians 4:11, but prophet would be included

under seer). When first-century believers read the words of Paul in

Ephesians 4:11, they technically saw six ministries, not just five:

"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets [the

word *prophet* is inclusive of seers], *some to be evangelists, and*

some to be pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). Seers and prophets

still both exist, and they are both called

to deliver the prophetic

word of the Lord, but they function differently (more on that

later).

Q: How Are Prophets and Seers Different?

A1: A simple way to determine whether someone is a prophet

or a seer in the Bible is to watch for the prophetic prefix they use.

If, when they prophesy, they say, “The Lord would say,” then it

is likely they are hearing the word of the Lord bubble up inside of

them as a prophet. The root word for prophet is *nabi*. Dennis

Cramer gives a great explanation of what *nabi* means:

The Hebrew word for *prophet* (occurring 300 times in the

Old Testament) means a suddenly inspired person. The word

implies one who bubbles up, one who flows forth. Some

might call this biblical phenomenon

prophetic effervescence—

the sudden bubbling up or flowing forth of the prophetic

message from deep within the human spirit. M any prophetic

believers, whether they are prophets or merely prophetic, will

experience this type of prophesying. “Nabi” style prophecy

is a spontaneous bubbling up, a sudden inspiration to

prophesy with little or no foreknowledge. 1

A2: A seer would more often say, “The Lord showed me,” or

“it was likened unto,” or “I saw,” and then an explanation would

follow. Paula Price, the author of *The Prophet’s Dictionary* writes

of seers,

The Hebrew word for seer is one who receives

communications from God more from visions and dreams than

audible words. Prophets who say they saw the word of the Lord

more than heard it is an example of this type of prophet. 2

Well-known prophetic author Cindy Jacobs writes in her

book *The Voice of God*,

Prophets in the Old Testament at one time were called

“seers.” This means that they literally or figuratively saw

things in the Spirit. Some of the prophets were more pictorial

in their gifts than others, such as Ezekiel who saw visions of

heavenly creatures. Certain prophetic people today receive

their prophetic words mainly through pictures. Their

prophecies will often be interpretations of pictures or inner

visions they see. 3

Typically, prophets and seers teach others to receive

revelation in the way that they receive it. For the prophet, this

would be hearing the inward voice of the Holy Spirit. For the seer

who receives revelation in a more visual way, this would be taught

as dreams, mental pictures, visions that appear before their eyes

(sometimes called an open vision), angelic messengers, and

experiences in Heaven or in the unseen realm.

There are many different ways that God talks to seers, so

each seer is different. Some seers are almost strictly spoken to

through dreams, whereas some have the

ability to use their

spiritual eyes and see into the unseen realm as Elisha did:

And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may

see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked

and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around

Elisha (2 Kings 6:17).

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1.

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2. Paula A. Price, *The Prophet's Dictionary* (Tulsa, OK:

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3. Cindy Jacobs, *The Voice of God* (Ventura, CA: Regal

Books, 1995), 223.

CHAPTER 6

THE UNSEEN REALM

"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen,

for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2

Corinthians 4:18).

WE HAVE IN THIS PASSAGE four different words that are

important to understand: *seen, unseen, temporary*, and *eternal*. The

seen is what we call the physical realm, that which is visible to the

physical eye. This realm can be studied and experienced through

our natural five senses of taste, touch, sound, sight, and smell.

The *unseen* is another realm. Like the physical realm, it also

can be experienced with the five senses. The five senses of our

physical body do not interact with the unseen realm, but we have

five senses in our spirit that interact with this realm. The physical

realm and spiritual realm are what Paul

was writing about when he

refers to the seen and unseen.

Then we have the *eternal* and the *temporary*. The eternal is

any realm other than the physical. For example, ten billion years

ago, God existed in the heavens and in the spirit. Ten billion years

from now God will still exist in the heavens and in the spirit. When

Paul writes of the temporary, he is speaking of this physical realm

that began in Genesis 1 and continues only until it is replaced with

the New Earth in Revelation 22. If you were to draw a line to

represent time and it extended infinitely into the past and infinitely

into the future, and if you were to put a one inch mark on this line,

this would give you an idea of what the time-span of the physical

realm looks like from Heaven's perspective. This is a good

perspective to have when considering

the reality of the spirit

realm.

M any have stated that the spirit realm is just as real as the

physical realm; this is in fact a huge understatement. The truth is

that the spirit realm is far more real than the physical realm. In

fact, if you were to die this very second while reading this book,

you would immediately be dwelling in the spirit realm. You are one

heartbeat away from existing entirely in the spirit realm. Yet some

live their entire lives denying the existence of the spirit realm.

When an angel appears in the physical realm, people

generally think that the angel came from Heaven. It is true that the

Lord's angels do have their home in Heaven with God, but they

can also surround us on the earth in the unseen realm, such as with

Elisha and his servant in Second Kings

6. They sometimes manifest

in the seen realm to speak a message, and then step back into the

unseen realm, such as with Balaam in Numbers 22. At times this

delivery of a message can take much time and warfare that we may

not be fully aware of. For example, the angels M ichael and Gabriel

had to war together against the prince of Persia (possibly a regional

evil spirit) to be able to finally break through 21 days of warfare

and deliver a message to Daniel (see Dan. 10:13).

DEFINING THE TERMS

Some teachers in the Body of Christ have coined new extra-

biblical terms for explaining three different realms. [Authors note:

“extra-biblical” simply refers to things not in the Bible. This is not

the same as anti-or unbiblical] Based on Paul using the phrase

“third heaven” in Second Corinthians 12:2-4, they have

extrapolated that if there is a third heaven, then it would stand to

reason that there must be a first and second heaven, neither of

which is mentioned by name in the Bible. Theologically, this is not

a wrong assumption. However, when we begin to create new extra-

biblical terms, we usually scare and divide from other parts of the

Body of Christ. I have chosen to use biblical language as much as

possible that I may be able to bring other

more timid parts of the

Church into new experience with the Holy Spirit.

When people refer to the first heaven they mean what the

Bible calls the *seen realm*. When the second heaven is spoken of, it

is what the Bible calls the *unseen realm*, which surrounds the

physical realm. The term *third heaven* is only mentioned one time

in Scripture and it is referred to as an experience that had happened

once in 14 years and the author could not even describe this

precious experience.

I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was

caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or

out of the body I do not know—God knows. And I know that

this man—whether in the body or apart from the body I do not

know, but God knows—was caught up to paradise. He heard

inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell (2

Corinthians 12:2-4).

Because the third heaven is only mentioned once and without

description, I chose not to use this term casually. Consider that the

third heaven must be something profound —in that it was

indescribable and unusual—in that it happened once in 14 years.

While we do have access to the heavenly realm and experiences,

according to Paul the third heaven is altogether something different.

EXAMPLES OF THE UNSEEN REALM

ELISHA AND HIS SERVANT

"Go, find out where he is," the king ordered, "so I can

send men and capture him." The report came back: "He is in

Dothan." Then he sent horses and chariots and a strong force

there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the

servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next

morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded

the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked.

"Don't be afraid." the prophet answered. "Those who are

with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha

prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the

Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he

looked and saw the

hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2

Kings 6:13-17).

In this story Elisha had been surrounded by enemy forces

during the night. When the servant awoke and realized that they

were surrounded, he was full of fear. Elisha, however, was calm,

cool, and collected. He directed his servant not to be afraid and

informed him that there were more forces on their side than the

enemy had on his side.

Elisha was seeing into the unseen realm of the spirit. He

prayed that his servant would be able to see as well. The servant

received this impartation and was able to see what Elisha saw. M y

friend Harold Eberle has an interesting insight about how we see

things in the spirit and how God communicates with us:

To see how spiritual dynamics relate to natural

consequences, consider how the prophet Elisha and his servant

became surrounded by enemy soldiers. When Elisha prayed for his

servant's eyes to be opened to the spiritual world, "he saw; and

behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all

around Elisha" (2 Kings 6:17 NKJV). Knowing that God was with

him, Elisha had no fear. He prayed that

God would strike the

enemies with blindness, and they immediately went blind for a

season.

This story is enlightening concerning how the spiritual realm

appears to the one who can see into that realm. God communicates

through visions. He uses pictures we can relate to in order to

communicate what is going on in the spiritual world.

Concerning Elisha and his servant's vision, it is difficult to

say whether horses and chariots actually existed in the spiritual

world or if the horses and chariots that they saw represented the

power of God that was available to defend them. For us today,

horses and chariots would not be a very effective representation of

God's power because one modern military machine such as a tank

could defeat thousands of horses and

chariots. Perhaps, then, if

God wanted to reveal His power to us, He would show armies

with all of the latest, most deadly equipment.

That reveals how realities in the spiritual realm are

communicated to us in the natural realm. It is similar to the

pictures one sees in dreams. There are true messages behind

spiritual images, but the images are merely a form of

communication. 1

DANIEL SEES IN THE SPIRIT REALM

Daniel lived a life full of incredible spiritual experiences. In

Daniel 10, Daniel sees into the unseen realm, but the men who

were with him did not share in his experience. He had recently had

a vision about a coming war and was emotionally disturbed by it

for several weeks. One day, as Daniel was standing on the bank of

the river Tigris, he began to see into the spirit realm:

On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, as I was

standing on the bank of the great river, the Tigris, I looked up

and there before me was a man dressed in linen, with a belt of

the finest gold around his waist. His body was like chrysolite,

his face like lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms

and legs like the gleam of burnished

bronze, and his voice like

the sound of a multitude. I, Daniel, was the only one who saw

the vision; the men with me did not see it, but such terror

overwhelmed them that they fled and hid themselves (Daniel

10:4-7).

Daniel saw, and although the men didn't, they did sense a

very strong presence, so strong that they actually fled and hid.

How incredible that they were standing next to Daniel one minute

and suddenly had the overwhelming urge to run away and hide!

The vision continues with Daniel all by himself:

So I was left alone, gazing at this great vision; I had no

strength left, my face turned deathly pale and I was helpless.

Then I heard him speaking, and as I listened to him, I fell into

a deep sleep, my face to the ground. A

hand touched me and

set me trembling on my hands and knees. He said, "Daniel,

you who are highly esteemed, consider carefully the words I

am about to speak to you, and stand up, for I have now been

sent to you." And when he said this to me, I stood up

trembling (Daniel 10:8-11).

Daniel managed to stay for the vision, but he was physically

overwhelmed. From the outside, this must have been interesting to

watch. Here is Daniel with a group of guys, when suddenly they

bolt, looking terrified. Daniel is the only one left, and he turns pale

and drops to the ground. Then trembling, he rises to his feet, yet in

the physical, nothing is visible to make sense of this.

THE APOSTLE JOHN

The apostle John was under religious persecution and had been

exiled to the island of Patmos. He wrote that on the Lord's Day, he

was in the spirit (for perspective on what "in the spirit" means,

see Chapter 14, "Worship in Spirit and in Truth"). Suddenly, he

entered into a prophetic experience where he saw into the unseen

realm.

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me.

And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and

among the lampstands was someone
“like a son of man,”

dressed in a robe reaching down to His
feet and with a golden

sash around His chest. His head and
hair were white like

wool, as white as snow, and His eyes
were like blazing fire.

His feet were like bronze glowing in a
furnace, and His voice

was like the sound of rushing waters. In
His right hand He

held seven stars, and out of His mouth

came a sharp double-

edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its

brilliance.

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. Then He

placed His right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I

am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead,

and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of

death and Hades" (Revelation 1:9-18).

When it says that John "fell down as though dead," his

physical body actually fell down in the physical realm. As he

stood in the physical realm and watched a vision before him in the

spirit realm, he was affected physically. In Revelation 1-3, John is

in his physical body watching a vision with his spiritual eyes. It is

not until the beginning of chapter 4 that John leaves his body

behind. In Revelation 4, God calls John up and out of the earth:

“Come up here” (Rev. 4:1), and the experience becomes an out-of-

body experience.

BALAAM AND HIS DONKEY

This is one of the most mysterious stories in the Book of

Numbers. Balaam the prophet was rebelling against the word of the

Lord. He had set out on his donkey and had two of his servants

traveling along with him. The Word tells us that Balaam's donkey

saw into the spirit realm and saw the angel of the Lord standing in

the road with a drawn sword. The donkey turned away to save

itself, but Balaam, who was dull to seeing because of his

disobedience, became angry with the donkey. He began to beat the

donkey to go down the road. Again, the donkey saw the angel and

tried to get away by pressing up against

a wall, thus crushing

Balaam's foot. Balaam beat the donkey again. A third time the

donkey saw the angel, and this time it just sat down under Balaam.

This angered him again, and again he beat the donkey.

Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and

went with the princes of Moab. But God was very angry when

he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose

him. Balaam was riding on his donkey and his two servants

were with him. When ***the donkey saw the angel of the***

Lord*standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, she*

turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat her to get her

back on the road. Then the angel of the Lord stood in a

narrow path between two vineyards, with walls on both sides.

When ***the donkey saw the angel of the***

Lord, *she pressed close*

to the wall, crushing Balaam's foot against it. So he beat her

again. Then the angel of the Lord moved on ahead and stood

in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to

the right or to the left. When ***the donkey saw the angel of the***

Lord, *she lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat*

her with his staff (Numbers 22:21-27).

This story gets really weird when God gives the donkey the

momentary ability to speak. The donkey asks why Balaam is

beating her, and Balaam responds that the donkey is making a fool

of him. He foolishly says that if he had a sword, he would kill his

talking donkey. The donkey reasons with him that she has never

acted in this way, and Balaam concedes that this is true. Then

suddenly the Lord opens Balaam's eyes

to the spirit realm. There

standing in the unseen realm is the angel that was sent to kill him.

The angel says that if the donkey hadn't turned away, he would

have killed Balaam and would have left the donkey alive.

Then the Lord opened the donkey's mouth, and she said to

Balaam, "What have I done to you to make you beat me these three

times?" Balaam answered the donkey, "You have made a fool of

me! If I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now.” The

donkey said to Balaam, “Am I not your own donkey, which you

have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing

this to you?” “No,” he said. ***Then the Lord opened Balaam’s***

eyes, *and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his*

sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown. The angel of the

Lord asked him, “Why have you beaten

your donkey these three

times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a

reckless one before me. The donkey saw me and turned away from

me these three times. If she had not turned away, I would certainly

have killed you by now, but I would have spared her" (Numbers

22:28-33).

This opens up a discussion about animals and the spirit

realm. Pastor Roland Buck, author of the classic book *Angels on*

Assignment, shares about his dog having an awareness of the spirit

realm:

Queenie, that's my dog… a purebred Great Dane…

quietly "woofed" as she pressed her wet nose against my

face. The time was 2:00 A.M . I knew what was up by now.

That is the way she rouses me when she becomes aware that

angelic visitors are in the house. 2

Perhaps Balaam's donkey had a heightened awareness of

spiritual beings because of the proximity of the anointing over

time, or perhaps it is part of the nature of animals to be aware of

the spirit realm.

From this sampling of Scripture we see that many Bible

characters experienced and interacted with the unseen realm. As

New Testament believers, we also have access and should

experience this realm in our lives.

ILLEGAL ACCESS

M any New Age leaders teach about experiences with the unseen

realm. These experiences seem real, but that does not mean that

they are true. In First Kings 22 there is a story of a king who had

401 prophets, 400 of whom prophesied that the king should go

into battle and that he would have victory. Then one prophet

declared that they would lose the battle. Both groups were

prophesying, both groups seemed real, but only one of them was

true. Only those who are *legally* accessing the unseen realm are

having true experiences and should be listened to as those who

speak the truth.

Another example is when Aaron threw down his staff and it

became a snake, then Pharaoh's magicians replicated the miracle.

The point is that the false and the real will look identical, except

that Aaron's snake ate the magician's snakes (Exodus 7). The real

difference is that only Aaron was operating with legal access into

the unseen realm. To experience God's power, you must have legal

access to this realm.

God the Father is the Lord of Heaven and Earth; all realms

are His (see Matt. 11:25). There is only one way to be in right

relationship to the Father—that is through His son, Jesus (see

John 14:6). Jesus came to pay for our sin, bring us into correct

relationship with the Father, and open the heavens and all the

spirit realms to us (see John 1:15; Matt. 16:19; Eph. 2:1-7; Col.

3:1-3). Jesus protects us from the evil spiritual beings that dwell in

the unseen realms. Without receiving the

death, resurrection, and

forgiveness of Jesus, we are not in right relationship with the

Father. Without right relationship, we are literally trespassing

when we enter into spiritual experiences and can be easily deceived

and destroyed. It is *dangerous* to operate in spiritual realms

without being in right relationship with the Lord of Heaven and

Earth.

If you have not yet submitted your life to Jesus, received His

forgiveness for your sins, and come into right relationship with

your Father God, it is time that you do. Before you go any further,

pray this prayer with me in your own words right now.

Dear Jesus,

I understand that I have done things in my life that have

separated me from having a relationship with You. I know that

God Your Father sent You to earth to die for my mistakes. I

understand that God brought You back to life, and I am

asking You right now to give me forgiveness for my sins and

eternal life with You in Heaven. Jesus, I ask You to come and

abide within my heart and change my life. I thank You that You

have provided all the spiritual blessings and gifts I will ever

need.

FINAL THOUGHTS

There are a lot of opinions about whether the spirit realm is

good or bad, but as we look at Scripture we find that both angels

and demons operate on this plane of existence. Even Jesus appears

to Daniel and John in this realm. The unseen realm is neither good

nor evil, in the same way that the physical realm is neither good

nor evil. It is merely a plane of existence. Just as in the physical

realm, the beings that dwell there can be good or evil. To say that

everything in the unseen realm [or second heaven] is demonic is not

biblical and we will be cutting ourselves off from a legitimate way

that God speaks to us. Since we do not live in awareness of the

spirit realm on a constant basis, we must use discernment when

interacting with this realm.

ACTIVATION I

Put this prayer in your own words:

Lord,

I want communication from Heaven in my life. I ask that

You would open the unseen realm to me. Lord, please remove

all fear from my heart—fear of the unseen and fear of spiritual

encounters. Lord, I want to receive all of the spiritual

blessings that You have provided for me. I make myself

available to Your many forms of communication.

ACTIVATION II

This exercise may take some more time.

First, ask the Lord to bring to your mind a friend or family

member.

S econd, ask the Lord to show you something about or

around that person in the spirit realm. This could be an angel

standing by them, Jesus, a demonic

presence, a fruit of the Holy

Spirit, objects such as weapons or chains, a special outfit such as

armor or tribal clothing, etc.

Third, ask the Lord to give you insight into what you are

seeing and how this translates into a word of encouragement for

this individual.

Fourth, write down what you saw and what it means as if

you were writing a letter to this person.

We will come back to this letter at the end of Chapter 8,

“Discerning of Spirits.”

ENDNOTES

1. Harold Eberle, *Victorious Eschatology* (Yakima, WA,

Worldcast Pub., 2006), 156-157.

2. Charles and Frances Hunter, with Roland Buck, *Angels on*

Assignment (Houston, TX: Hunter Books, 1979).

CHAPTER 7

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ANGELIC

REALM

THERE HAVE BEEN literally hundreds of books written about

angels. I have read dozens of them. M y goal in writing this book

has been to provide fresh perspective on age-old truths. Rather

than addressing basic questions that can be answered by reading

almost any book on the topic, (e.g., What do angels look like? How

many angels are there? Are there bad angels?), I will focus in this

chapter on some of the more difficult, unusual, and even

controversial questions about the angelic.

Q: Do You See Angels All the Time?

A: As with all gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must step out in

faith to activate the gift. For example, while the Holy Spirit will

sometimes move sovereignly to heal someone, most of the time we

must engage our faith. Jesus often commanded an act of obedience

in order to activate faith for healing. For example, He said, “Go and

show yourself to the priest,” “Go wash the mud from your eyes,”

or “Pick up your bed and walk.” In each case, physical healing

occurred after the person responded in faith by obeying the

command.

When the Holy Spirit gives a prophetic word, we must take

part by cooperating with the Spirit and delivering the word. When

you act in faith, you are stepping over into the things of the

Kingdom realm—healing, prophecy, miracles, discerning of spirits,

and so on. I don't see in the spirit realm all the time, but I can

activate my faith, and I know that the Holy Spirit will meet my

faith, and the gift of discerning of spirits will operate through me.

Q: Do You See Angels Like You See

Other People?

A: When I am seeing angels, I see them in a manner similar to

Elisha, Balaam, or Balaam's donkey. I see them superimposed over

the natural realm. I do not see them as clearly as a person in the

flesh, but my spirit eyes see them.

As we studied in the chapter on the spirit realm, there is

scriptural precedent for one individual seeing an angelic being while

the others standing by do not.

Q: Does Seeing in the Spirit Realm M ean That One Sees the

Demonic as Well?

A: Yes, once your eyes are open, and you are able to see, you

should be able to discern the spiritual roots of diseases, perhaps

things in a person's past, or even at times the presence of demonic

spirits. This is a good thing, because as we walk in the authority of

Christ and the demonic shows up in our path, we can deal with it

and push the Kingdom of God forward.

I have talked with many people who started seeing the dark

side before they began to see the angels and the light side. I don't

have an explanation for this, but I have a few speculative theories.

First, entertainment in our culture is full of horror and

violence. This has polluted the spirit eyes of many and needs to be

repented of so that cleansing can be released.

Second, a familiar spirit might be hanging around a family or

individual because of a generational curse. This can be broken off

by the blood of Jesus.

Third, satan is fully resisting the gift of discerning of spirits.

If he can scare a person away from using his or her gift, then he has

succeeded. As you continue to mature and press forward in your

gifting, the other realms of discernment will begin to open up as

well.

Q: Are There Female Angels?

A: There is no reference to an angel being a female in

Scripture. This is an important point because the New Age

movement has brought so much confusion into the Church in the

Western World. Angels are most commonly portrayed as females

—closely followed by a fat baby cherub with a bow and arrow—

both of which are unscriptural.

There are female spiritual beings in Scripture, such as those

mentioned in Zechariah 5:5-11. These verses are commonly used to

teach that there are female angels. But if we study this passage

closely, these beings are never referred to as angels.

Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and

said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing." I

asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a measuring basket."

And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout

the land." Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the

basket sat a woman! He said, "This is wickedness," and he

pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover

down over its mouth. Then I looked up

—and there before me

were two women, with wind in their wings! They had wings

like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between

heaven and earth. "Where are they taking the basket?" I

asked the angel who was speaking to me. He replied, "To the

country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When it is ready,

the basket will be set there in its place" (Zechariah 5:5-11).

The angel standing next to Zechariah in his vision is referred

to as masculine. Then he sees two women with wings like those of

a stork appear and fly away.

The first wrong assumption is that angels commonly have

wings; therefore, these must be angels. In the Bible, seraphim (see

Isa. 6:2) and cherubim (see Ezek. 10:8) are clearly described as

having wings, but they are a different class of spiritual beings, not

angels. Angels are a specific class and order of being—not to be

confused with other spiritual beings such as cherubim, seraphim,

the four living creatures (see Rev. 4:8), and the seven spirits of

God (see Isa. 11; Rev. 4:5). If you look over the many references

to angels in the Bible, you will find that the majority of them

appear looking like men (not with wings). Hebrews 13:2 says, *"Do*

not forget to entertain strangers, for by

so doing some people have

entertained angels without knowing it."
If all angels had big

Hollywood wings, then this verse would not make sense.

An interesting detail is that Zechariah says that the wings

were like those of a stork. Nowhere else in the Bible does it say

that angels have wings like a stork. If Zechariah were trying to say

that these two women were angels, he could have said that they

had wings like an angel. Instead he chose to describe them as

something completely unique to his vision. As an additional note,

God had told the Israelites that the stork was an unclean and

detestable animal, so this vision was a negative picture (see Lev.

11:19).

Could it be that Zechariah was confused—perhaps he had

never seen an angel, or he couldn’t tell that they were female

angels? This is an invalid assertion because he is standing next to an

angel during the encounter. When looking at the whole of his book,

Zechariah is not ignorant of the angelic realm. Zechariah could have

said that two female angels came in a vision, but instead he

described what he actually saw in this interesting vision—that is,

two women with wings like those of a stork.

There is no direct reference to an angel

being represented in

feminine form in the Bible, but there are many references to

feminine spirit beings. Examples include the two women in

Zechariah 5, the Jezebel spirit in Revelation 2, the woman and the

dragon in Revelation 12, the whore of Babylon in Revelation 17,

and the spirit of wisdom, which is referred to in the feminine

throughout the Book of Proverbs (see Prov. 1:20-33; 4:5-9; 8; 9).

Q: Do Angels Have Gender?

A: Let's look at a passage that is commonly used to say that

angels are without gender:

That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no

resurrection, came to Him with a question. *"Teacher," they*

said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having

children, his brother must marry the widow and have children

for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first

one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his

wife to his brother. The same thing happened to the second

and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the

woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will

she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

Jesus replied, “You are in error

because you do not know

the Scriptures or the power of God. ***At the resurrection people***

will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be

like the angels in heaven*. But about the resurrection of the*

dead—have you not read what God said to you, I *am the God*

of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is

not the God of the dead but of the living.” When the crowds

heard this, they were astonished at His teaching (M atthew

22:30-33).

M any have stretched this verse to mean that angels are

without gender because they neither marry nor are given in

marriage. What is this verse really saying? When Jesus says that

people will be like the angels in heaven at the resurrection, how

does this have anything to do with gender? If we are to believe that

angels are genderless and we are going to be like them, then once we

are resurrected will we also be genderless? Obviously not!

Consider that every single reference out of the hundreds in

Scripture always refer to angels as masculine. To conclude that

angels are genderless and that is why they don't marry is like

saying that people with the gift of celibacy (see 1 Cor. 7:7) are

genderless and that is why they don't get

married. Some have gone

so far as to assume that since angels do not reproduce, they must

be without gender. The truth is, angels are not a race, they are

individual creations and that is why they do not reproduce.

Suppose we were to stretch the meaning the other way and

say that since every reference in Scripture shows that all angels are

masculine, if we are to be like them, then all women will turn into

men at the resurrection. Surely no one would argue this as a valid

point.

When Jesus says that we will be like the angels, the

statement may have more obvious implications, such as having

eternal life, glorified bodies, and sinless living. Perhaps Jesus was

actually answering their question, which had nothing to do with the

gender of angels. He might have been saying that we will live in the

heavenly realm like the angels and not have the difficulties and

complications of this earthly life, such as death, marriage, and

remarriage.

Q: What Is a Typical Physical Response to an Angelic

Encounter?

A: I believe that everyone reacts differently. I would like to

quote from one of my favorite books on angels, *Angels, Elect and*

Evil by Fred Dickason:

When angels do appear, their presence produces various

effects upon men. No special effect is noted upon Joseph

except the allaying of his human concern about M ary and his

obedience to the revealed will of God (see M att. 1:18-25).

M ental and emotional agitation came upon M ary when

Gabriel announced to her the news of the virgin birth of

Christ. Nevertheless, she conversed with him and accepted his

message as from God (see Luke 1:29, 34, 38). Zacharias was

troubled and gripped by fear when an angel appeared to him

in the temple (see Luke 1:12). The shepherds to whom the

angelic messenger announced the birth of Christ were very

much afraid (see Luke 2:9) at first, yet they rationally

investigated the news and marveled at

the message (see Luke

2:15-18).

M ental and physical weakness, sometimes accompanied

by complete lack of composure, results from angels' presence.

Consider the Roman guards who saw the angel who rolled

back the stone from Christ's tomb. They trembled from fear

and became as dead (see M att. 28:4). When Daniel saw an

unusual manlike creature of brilliant appearance, he was left

without strength and comeliness (see Dan. 10:8). Even those

who did not see the vision trembled greatly. Strange

sensations caused them to flee from Daniel’s presence with

fear. Animals may in the will of God see angels and so

hesitate or fall, as did Balaam’s donkey (see Num. 22:26-28,

31). 1

Q: Why Didn't Jesus Die for the Sins of Fallen Angels?

A: M any theologians have suggested that the main difference

between humans and angels is that angels are not a race of beings.

Humans are a race of beings; we reproduce, we die, and we have a

bloodstream in our body. When Jesus came and died for us,

Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus became a part of the human race.

Romans 5 speaks of how Jesus

established a new bloodstream. On

the earth now, there are two races, those who are in the bloodline

of Adam, the fallen first man, and those who are in the bloodline of

the second Adam, Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. 15:44-49). That is why

we are new creatures and why Second Peter 1:4 speaks of us being

partakers of the divine nature. As a race, Jesus could die once for

all (see Heb. 10:10) and establish a new race.

Angels, however, are each an individual creation. They are

not a blood line (they may not even have blood), and they don't

reproduce. If Jesus were to die for their sins, He would have to die

for each fallen angel individually, over and over again, perhaps

millions of times to be able to die and resurrect for each one.

Q: Is It Imbalanced to Focus So M uch on Angels?

A:I have been writing this book for

many years, and I have

felt odd at times writing so much about the spirit realm and angels.

In fact, there has even been an outcry in certain church circles

against the prophetic movement and its focused teaching on the

angelic realm. I have sought the Lord about if we are in imbalance

by talking about and giving focus to angels. The response I received

from the Lord was surprising.

In essence, the Lord showed me that the root issue of those

who have a problem with talking about angels and the spirit realm

is that they do not accurately understand what a Christian is. The

Lord took me to Hebrews 1.

So He became as much superior to the angels as the name

He has inherited is superior to theirs. For to which of the

angels did God ever say, ***"You are My Son; today I have***

become Your Father?" Or again, "I will be His Father, and

He will be My Son?" *And again, when God brings His*

firstborn into the world, He says, ***"Let all God's angels***

worship Him." *In speaking of the angels He says,* ***"He makes***

His angels winds, His servants flames of fire." *But about the*

Son He says, ***"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and***

ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of Your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;

therefore God, Your God, has set You above Your

companions by anointing You with the oil of joy. *”…To*

which of the angels did God ever say, ***“Sit at My right hand***

until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet”? *Are not*

all angels ministering spirits sent to

serve those who will

inherit salvation? (Hebrews 1:4-14).

The Church understands that Jesus is greater and higher than

the angels, but there has been confusion as to whether we are

higher than the angels or vice versa. The answer is simple: If you

are in Christ, then you are higher than the angels. We are to be *"hid*

with Christ in God" (see Col. 3:3), and if we abide in Him, then He

will abide in us (see John 15:4). Christ is higher than the angels,

and we are in Him; thus, we are in a higher place than the angels.

Several other passages shed light on the concept that angels

are lower than believers. The apostle Paul tells us that we are going

to judge angels, *"Do you not know that we will judge angels? How*

much more the things of this life!" (1 Cor. 6:3). The Book of

Hebrews tells us that angels have been

sent forth to serve believers,

"Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will

inherit salvation?" (Heb 1:14). This being the case, consider the

words of Jesus: *"No servant is greater than his master"* (John

15:20). Clearly, this is just a sampling of many verses that show

that in the Kingdom of Heaven, angels are not in a higher position

than a believer. If we are put off by trying to understand beings

like angels who occupy a lower place, then we clearly have not

grasped the Kingdom that we are a part of.

Christians need to stop being so impressed by those claiming

to have seen an angel and realize that every time we look at a

fellow believer, we are looking at a being with a divine nature (see 2

Pet. 1:4). A Christian is of much greater stature than any angel.

When I am looking at a fellow believer,

I am literally looking at the

only type of being that has ever been given the very *mind of Christ*

(1 Cor. 2:16). In fact, Scripture says that we have been given such

a high level of insight into the Kingdom of Heaven that, *"...even*

angels long to look into these things" (1 Peter 1:12). A believer

simultaneously dwells in three worlds because they exist in the

physical realm, the spiritual realm, and the heavenly realms with

Christ (see Eph. 2:6).

Consider this: In the beginning only God existed; then at

some point, He created the angels. This was God's first act of

creation. Then God created earth and its inhabitants: This was

God's second act of creation. The third and most recent act of

creation in all of eternity past was when through Christ's bloodline

God created new creatures in Christ Jesus (see 2 Cor. 5:17). You,

as a new creature in Christ, are literally the most recent creation

God has made in all of history, and we are the only new thing on

this old planet. We have been left on this planet as ambassadors,

priests, kings, and oracles to mold and transform this planet until

God comes back and performs His fourth and final act of creation,

giving us a new Heaven and a new earth that is more suitable for

such amazing new creatures to inhabit

with Him eternally.

Until our perspective shifts to seeing ourselves and each

other properly through God's eyes, we will still be overly

impressed with those who have seen angels and operate in the

spirit realm. The spirit realm needs to be demystified and

understood by the average Christian, keeping in mind that the

average Christian is much more amazing than we have been made to

believe.

A FINAL WORD

In this chapter I have responded to eight very difficult and

interesting questions regarding the angelic. I may have caused more

questions to come to mind as you read this chapter. M y goal was

not to answer every question about angels; this book is not an in-

depth study of angels. I just wanted to get you, the reader, curious

and thinking more about this subject. It is fine if you disagree with

my answers, I have tried to answer not from a personal preference

or bias; my desire is to base my answers upon a biblical

foundation. If you would like to know more of what the Bible

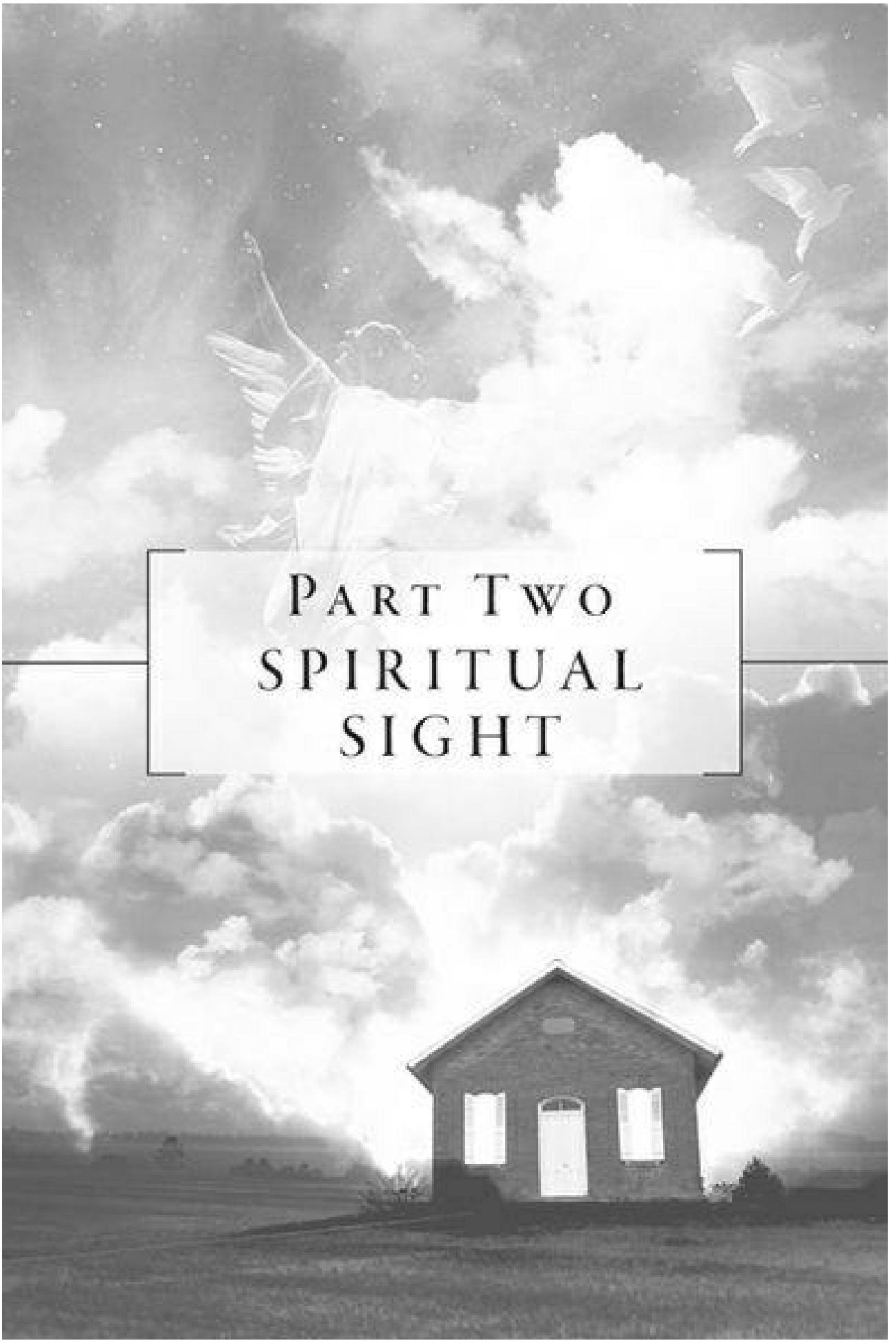
teaches about angels, I would highly recommend above all the

others, *Angels, Elect and Evil* by Fred Dickason.

ENDNOTES

1. C. Fred Dickason, *Angels, Elect and Evil* (Chicago, IL:

M oody Press, 1975), 37.



Part Two
SPIRITUAL SIGHT

CHAPTER 8

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS is the most misunderstood of all the

spiritual gifts. Because of the confusion surrounding this gift, clear

biblical teaching on discerning of spirits would be beneficial. The

gift of discerning of spirits and the natural ability of discernment

are not the same thing. There are many people who have a high

level of sensitivity in the natural or emotional realm. This can even

be taught through a heightened self-awareness to your emotional

state, as explained by Daniel Goleman in his groundbreaking work,

Emotional Intelligence. [1]

The main difference is that one of the main attributes of the

nine spiritual gifts listed in First Corinthians 12 is that they are

supernatural in nature. For example, a "word of knowledge" is

something supernatural, not something that could be attained

through natural means. The same is true of the supernatural gift of

healing; it supersedes the laws of the natural world. This applies to

all nine of the gifts, but our focus here is on the gift of discerning of

spirits.

In our culture, we have accepted that someone can be very

discerning, but this is a natural intuitive ability. The spiritual gift in

First Corinthians 12 is something unique. There is a correlation

between natural and supernatural discernment in that both gifts

help to inform an individual what is in the atmosphere or

environment surrounding them. Natural discernment informs what

is in the natural, emotional, or interpersonal realm, whereas

supernatural discernment informs what is in the spiritual realm.

Supernatural discernment typically

divides that information

into four different areas: (1) the working of the Holy Spirit, (2) the

working of the demonic, (3) the working of the human spirit, and

(4) the working of heavenly beings.

Another reason that the gift of discerning of spirits has been

misunderstood is that the gift has been abused. M any believe that

discerning of spirits is the ability to know another person’s secret

sin and have used it as justification for harboring attitudes of

suspicion, criticism, and accusation. Good-hearted people don't

want to operate in this distorted version of discerning of spirits.

I have heard major church leaders comment that if they had to

choose to remove one of the nine gifts of the Spirit, they "would

absolutely choose to remove the gift of discerning of spirits

because no other gift has singlehandedly

caused as much damage to

the Body of Christ." That comment only makes sense in light of

the misuse of this gift. Let's look closer at what the gift of

discerning of spirits truly is.

THREE ROOT WORDS

In the Bible the words *judgment* and *discernment* can be used

synonymously at times. There are actually three root words in the

Greek for the word *judgment*.[2] This

gives us a strong insight into the nature of discernment.

The first root word in the Greek is *anakrino*. In *Vine's*

Dictionary, the base meaning of this word is the ability to

distinguish. We should always operate under this type of

discernment.

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that

come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him,

and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually

discerned [anakrino] (1 Corinthians 2:14).

The second root word in Greek is *dokimazo*, the base

meaning of which is to test or prove.

Hypocrites! You can discern [dokimazo] *the face of the sky*

and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern [dokimazo]

this time? (Luke 12:56 NKJV).

This use of discernment is sometimes appropriate as a

Christian. For example we are told to test the spirits (see 1 John

4:1) or judge our prophecies (see 1 Thess. 5:21).

The third root word for judgment in Greek is *krino*, which

actually means to condemn. This is never the role of a Christian!

We should distinguish good from evil, and we should even test and

prove at times, but condemnation is off

limits for the believer.

Do not judge [krino], *or you too will be judged* [krino].

For in the same way you judge [krino] *others, you will be*

judged [krino], *and with the measure you use, it will be*

measured to you (M atthew 7:1-2).

From these three root words for judgment, we learn that there

are two types of judgment that are good and one that is not. As we

move in discernment, we need to remember that Jesus said that we

are to judge with *righteous* judgment.

Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with

righteous judgment (John 7:24).

THE FOUR CATEGORIES

Because of a lack of biblical teaching, the gift of discerning of

spirits has been misunderstood in the Church to be criticism,

suspicion, and condemnation. The truth

is it is a supernatural gift

from the Holy Spirit to be operated through love. There are four

types of spirits you can discern: The Holy Spirit, heavenly spirits,

the human spirit, and demonic spirits. Discerning of spirits helps

us know which of these four spirits we are interacting with.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT

During the mass confusion on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2),

Peter, having discerning of spirits in operation, stood in front of

the crowd and declared that what was happening was a move of

the Holy Spirit. In Acts 8, the church sent Peter and John to go

check out Philip's conversion of Samaritans. It required

discernment on the part of Peter to acknowledge that what was

happening with Philip was the work of the Holy Spirit. It took

obedience and discernment to bring

salvation and baptism in the

Holy Spirit to the house of Cornelius. When God is showing you

something that is outside your comfort zone, it usually requires the

operation of discerning of spirits to accept new truth.

John the Baptist also discerned the presence of the Holy

Spirit before baptizing Jesus:

Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come

down from heaven as a dove and remain on Him. I would not

have known Him, except that the One who sent me to baptize

with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come

down and remain is He who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." (John

1:32-34).

Another example of discerning the Holy Spirit comes from

my wife, Karen Welton:

One night, a group of seven or eight of my friends and I

got together at one of our homes. We originally intended to

play board games, but I felt like doing something different. I

had a lingering desire to invite the presence of God into the

room, so I suggested we put on some worship music instead. I

could feel the atmosphere was pregnant with a potential

visitation. M y friend put on some worship, and the presence

of the Lord filled his living room. We found ourselves face

down on the floor worshipping Jesus.

In the spirit, I saw water filling up the room. It started as

only a couple inches deep as we all lay on the floor, but the

water grew deeper as we worshipped. I was aware of the

presence of angels in the room, seven in total. In the center of

the room, I sensed something different. I thought, “There

must be a large angel standing there because I sense something

powerful swirling around in the middle.” I tried to discern

what kind of angel could be this powerful, and why was it

different from all the others? I realized it wasn’t an angel at

all, it was a vortex of water about 4 or 5 feet wide swirling

around powerfully and overflowing from

the top and filling

the room. I was seeing the manifest presence of the Holy

Spirit.

By now the water had reached shoulder level, and I moved

to the center of the vortex and laid face down. Within ten

minutes, without me saying anything, three others moved and

laid down in the center of the room with me. The water grew

deeper as the power source overflowed, filling the room with

more water. God was literally pouring out His Spirit on us!

At this point the water was higher than our heads. I saw

one of my friends stand up in the middle of the room and

place a flattened hand at the top of where I saw the water

level in the spirit, just over his head. I looked at him

incredulously and said, “That’s exactly

where the water level

is! You see the vortex of water, too?" No one had said

anything this whole time, and I didn't know if anyone else

had seen the water filling the room in the spirit realm.

M y friend said, "There is a pillar of water right here, and

it's this high; on top of the pillar of water, it turns into a pillar

of fire coming down from the ceiling. If you put your hand

right here, you can feel a change in pressure." He held his hand

flat in the air, bouncing it a little with the water. I knew about

the large pillar of water, but had not realized there was a pillar

of fire on top.

M any of us put our hands at the same level, and we all

felt a slight change in pressure where the pillar of water turned

into a pillar of fire."

M y friend Ben Valence shares one of his experiences of

discerning the presence of the Holy Spirit:

It was like any other week at youth group, when, during

worship, the Lord asked me to do something. As I pressed in,

the Lord told me I was holding a bucket and to go around and

pour something over everyone. Feeling kind of silly, I went

over to Jon and told him what the Lord

had told me, and he

just said to do it. I went around the whole church pouring

something over people, thinking that I must look crazy.

When I got back to Jon, I asked what he was seeing. I was

amazed when he told me that there were two big angels on

stage and that there was water running over the stage down

onto the whole sanctuary. The water was mixed with oil, and

being only ankle deep even the people lying on the ground

praising the Lord were not fully submersed in it. I was going

around with the bucket actually scooping up this water and

oil and washing it over everyone there. Even though I looked

silly in the physical, I was doing something in the spirit realm

that was much more profound. All that the Lord told me was

that I had a bucket, but I believed and

obeyed, and after

hearing what was going on the spirit realm, I am so glad I

followed.

2. HEAVENLY SPIRITS

The Bible is full of references to angels and other heavenly

creatures. Some of the clearest examples of discernment functioning

would include Elisha seeing the heavenly host while his servant did

not (see 2 Kings 6), or Balaam's donkey

seeing the angel in the

road three times before Balaam's eyes were opened (see Numbers

22). When this operation of discernment is taking place, one

individual may be aware of the presence of the heavenly spirit,

while others around are not aware. This happened several times in

the Word, such as when Jesus was being spoken to by the Father

and those around only heard thunder (see John 12:28-29). Another

example is when Jesus knocked Paul off his donkey, and the

soldiers with Paul couldn't tell what was happening (see Acts 9:7).

One day in autumn I was driving home from work when I

saw a large angel dressed in purple appear very abruptly in the

road ahead of me. He had a large sword, which he gripped with

both hands and pointed at me. I heard him say to me in my spirit,

"Slow down now!" This was not a

request, but rather, a command.

As soon as I saw him in purple, I thought to myself, “Purple is a

royal color, so this must be important.” I slowed down

immediately. As I arrived at the point where he had been standing,

there was a sharp turn that I was familiar with. The only difference

was that the car that had been ahead of me had completely stopped

on the other side of the blind corner. If I had not slowed down, I

would have plowed into his car at 40 to 50 miles per hour, most

certainly killing the passengers of the other car and, likely, myself

as well.

EQUIPPING ANGELS

Another time around the Christmas of 2002, I attended a

conference with about 6,000 youth in Niagara Falls, New York.

During worship I began to see something I had never seen. In the

center of the packed-out civic center, I saw four large angels, easily

100 or more feet tall. They each had a branding iron in their hand.

At first, I could not see what the brand said, but then they began to

use the brand on specific individuals. They placed the branding

iron across the chest of a person and left a label branded on them. I

saw words like *sanctified, Holy unto the Lord, nazarite*, and

prophet to the nations. I could see this

brand on different

individuals for the remainder of the conference. On rare occasions I

come across other individuals who have this brand on their chest.

Not that they were in this specific meeting, but I believe that this

is occurring at many times and places as a commissioning—similar

to Isaiah 6, when the angel consecrated Isaiah with coal from the

fire.

Karen and I were attending a conference a couple of years ago

in Columbus, Ohio. There were several well-known prophetic

ministers there as speakers. As one of them finished his message

and moved into ministry time, I saw something very unusual. The

minister said that God was going to commission fivefold ministers

that night. When he said this, a large angel appeared near the front

of the sanctuary. This 15-to 20-foot-tall

angel had the word

equipping written across his chest. He was standing very properly

with cloths draped over his arm, which he held in front of him,

reminiscent of a waiter at a fancy restaurant. The minister had the

whole congregation line up and come to the front to have hands laid

on them. As he did this, the “equipping” angel would lay one of his

cloths over the shoulders of specific individuals. Once the cloth

was laid on a person, I was able to read it. The cloths read *apostle,*

prophet, evangelist, pastor,

or *teacher*. The Lord gave me

understanding that these were mantles He was placing on His

leaders for the service of equipping the Church.

3. THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The Book of Acts contains many clear examples of this

operation of discernment. For example,

Peter confronts Simon the

sorcerer about his evil heart motivations, Peter confronts Ananias

and Sapphira about their lying, and Paul confronts the sorcerer

Elymas for his evil heart. In other books, we find Paul confronting

Peter about his hypocrisy, Jesus speaking of Nathanael's nature

when first meeting him, and the many times that Jesus perceived

the thoughts of others. These are all clear examples of discerning of

spirits operating to discern the state of the human soul or spirit.

On one occasion, when I was praying for the sick, I saw

something unique about the woman I was about to pray for. Before

she told me what illness she was suffering with, I saw spears stuck

in her from all directions in the spirit realm. They were about ten

feet long and literally stuck out of her in every direction. I got the

sense that she was okay when she didn't

move, but that any

person coming close to her would cause pain by unintentionally

moving the spears in the unseen realm.

The woman told me she had anxiety, depression, chronic

fatigue, fibromyalgia, Epstein Barr virus, and many other similar

ailments. I described to her what I had seen in the spirit, and she

said that what I saw perfectly described her. She literally did not

want hands laid on her when I prayed for her because it would

cause her pain.

Some of the spears had writing on them that explained what

they were and how they had arrived there (such as hate,

disappointment, and fear). We spent some time forgiving

individuals who had hurt her, releasing word curses, and dealing

with many heart issues. As we processed these issues, the spears

were being removed in the spirit. By the time we finished that

night, she was able to give me a big hug without pain. I later

received an e-mail from the group leader testifying that this

individual has received a tremendous breakthrough in her health.

Consider how many times the Church has read the following

passage and yet we have missed a big clue into discernment. *"In*

addition to all this, take up the shield

of faith, with which you can

extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one" (Eph. 6:16). The

evil one is shooting spiritual, not literal, arrows at believers. I often

see believers riddled with arrows from the evil one; we need to

discern in this realm so that we can bring healing to one another.

The Lord gave me an insight into why I see so many swords,

spears, and other weapons stuck into people in the spirit. We see

in Ephesians 6:17 that when words are in the hands of the Holy

Spirit, those words are the sword of the Holy Spirit: *"...the sword*

of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Simply stated— *in the spirit, words equal swords*—so with

our mouths we also wield swords. We can use our words with the

Holy Spirit as a scalpel to bring healing and restoration into the

lives of others, or we can use words in a

destructive manner that

spiritually stabs and injures others. *"Reckless words pierce like a*

sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing" (Prov. 12:18).

I commonly see objects stuck in individuals that represent

emotional wounds and words that have been released against them.

Often, these are blocking an individual's ability to receive a

physical healing they need. Forgiveness is often all that is needed.

Other times, the words that have been spoken against them need to

be renounced, rejected, or condemned (see Isa. 54:17). This is one

way that discerning of spirits can

operate to bring emotional and

physical healing.

Another example of discerning the human spirit comes from

my friend Ben Valence.

I have had back problems for over five years. Every six

months to a year, I would blow out my back, and the pain was so

intense that I would have to take a month off from work. It hurt so

bad I could barely make it out of bed

even with help. In addition to

the back problems, I was getting random fevers and other

sicknesses. I finally went to the doctor, but he could not find a

cause for the problems. It got to the point where I was getting

fevers once a week and losing sleep. One night we were at Jon's

house having a time of worship and prayer. Jon then led us in a

time of activation, praying over each of us. As I was standing in

the middle with my eyes closed, everyone else stood behind me

saying, “It’s right here; do you feel it? As they were saying this, I

could feel something piercing my back and going through my chest

to my stomach. I could feel it being poked in and out, and it hurt

badly. I told them to stop and asked what they were doing,

because it hurt. They pointed out that they were seeing something

in the air behind my back. When Jon put

his hand in the air and

pressed down on this invisible object, I could feel him touching

something that I could not see with my physical eyes, but could

definitely feel in the natural, piercing my flesh. After asking the

Lord what caused this item, which seemed to be a pipe or sword,

we stopped and prayed. Then Jon grabbed the sword (in the

unseen realm) and slowly pulled it out of my back. As he pulled, I

felt the blade slide through my chest and then through my back.

After he removed the item from my back, he prayed over me again.

As soon as the blade was gone I felt a relief wash over my body

and a peace flood my senses. Waking up the next morning, I could

not believe how good I felt. Since that night the fevers and all other

sicknesses have left me, but best of all, I no longer have any

problems with my back. God is so good.

M y back has been healed

now since 2005.

IS THE HUMAN SOUL/SPIRIT

ESSENTIALLY GOOD OR BAD?

There is a teaching in the Church that has caused much

confusion as to how we view the human spirit/soul. This teaching

says that the spirit of a believer is perfected, but the soul and body

of a believer is “fleshly.” This stems from the belief that the

physical world is evil and only spiritual things are good. Biblically,

there are two fundamental flaws in believing that the human spirit

is always good and that the soul is always bad.

First of all, the Bible states that the spirit of a believer can

still be defiled after salvation. *Therefore, having these promises,*

beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and

spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of

God (2 Cor. 7:1 NASB).

This contradicts the idea that the spirit of a believer is already

perfected.

Second, the Lord never condemned the human soul as an evil

thing. In fact, He made the human soul before the fall of mankind.

Adam and Eve both had souls and it was a good thing. The human

soul is not inherently evil or it would not have existed in Eden.

When Hebrews 4:12 says that the Word of God divides the

soul and the spirit, it is not saying that the Word divides the soul

from the spirit as if one is good and one is bad. The Word divides

through *both* the soul and the spirit. M any have taught that the

“flesh” is composed of the soul and body. This puts the spirit in a

battle against the soul and body; this is a division that God never

intended.

What, then, is the flesh? The *flesh* is the carnal nature of the

spirit, soul, or body. Imagine three circles in a row representing the

body, soul, and spirit. Under the previous understanding, the

sword of the Word is vertically dividing the soul and body *from*

the spirit. The correct understanding is that the sword is

horizontally piercing *through* all three circles at the same time. The

three half circles *below* the sword form

the “flesh,” whereas the

three half circles *above* the sword represent the godly walk of the

spirit.

In practical application, when we discern the human

spirit/soul, we may discern the good things about someone that

reside in the part above the sword, or the Lord may show us the

negative things that are below the sword in their “flesh.”

Discerning in the area of the human spirit/soul can acquire either

good or bad information in the spirit realm.

4. DEMONIC SPIRITS

There are many examples of discerning of spirits in operation

throughout the Gospels, especially if we look more closely at the

healing miracles of Jesus. For example, consider this story again

closely:

And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of

infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no

way raise herself up. But when Jesus saw her, He called her to

Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your

infirmity." And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she

was made straight, and glorified God (Luke 13:11-13 NKJV).

In the physical realm, the only thing that

could be known

was that the woman was bent over and that she had been in that

condition for 18 years. With the gift of discerning of spirits in

operation, Jesus identified the root cause as *a spirit of infirmity*. So

often, the operation of discerning of spirits is overlooked, but it is

in clear use all throughout the Word.

A HAUNTED BATHROOM

One of the weeks that I was in Brazil in

2002, our team was

staying in a very nice four-star hotel. The only problem was that

my bathroom was haunted. Seriously, the bedroom was fine I slept

fine and I had no nightmares. But when I was in the shower,

something odd began to happen. The shower was a four-wall glass

shower stall. I had a general creepy feel about the bathroom from

the beginning, but it was not until I turned on the water that things

escalated. When I stepped into the shower and turned on the

water, in the natural there was nothing out of the ordinary, but my

spiritual sight saw the water as blood. Instead of seeing water

splash off the glass walls, I was seeing blood splashing on the glass

and running down. This was absolutely terrifying. I had the sense

that someone had been stabbed to death in this shower stall. I told

my roommate; we prayed over the

bathroom all week, and by the

end of the week, the feelings and sight had subsided considerably.

This was one of my very first encounters like this, so although I

did not have a full breakthrough victory, I did learn a lot that week.

In the end, I do not know whether someone had actually been

killed there or if the spirit of fear was harassing us.

Another example of discernment and the demonic realm

comes from my friend Ben Valence:

A group of us had gathered at Jon's house for a night of

prayer and worship when the Lord tugged on my heart to

come outside. Soon after stepping out the door, the Lord told

me to take off my shoes and socks and go for a walk. I found

it a little weird, but I followed his instructions. I was amazed

to find myself feeling and sensing what was going on in the

spirit at every house I passed. It is hard for me to explain

what I mean; it was like I was feeling with my feet instead of

my hands, and it was amazing. Even though it was cold

outside, I could feel heat rushing through my toes and up my

legs at houses where the Holy Spirit was moving. As I

pressed on, the feelings got more intense until finally I came

to a bridge. The bridge crossed over to

the east side of town,

and after passing over the bridge I could feel the atmosphere

change for the worse. I not only felt the demonic, but I could

even hear them sneering and hissing. I turned and ran all the

way back to Jon's house. It was a very intense experience

that is engraved into my memory forever.

WHAT DISCERNING OF SPIRITS IS NOT:

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF CRITICISM

M any people claim no responsibility for their criticism of

others, under the guise of saying that they "discern such and such."

The truth is that we are always responsible for our words because

"from the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks" (M att. 12:34).

If we are gossiping, backbiting, dishonoring, or smearing anyone,

we need to stop and repent. Be careful

not to make discerning of

spirits an ugly thing to others by misrepresenting it in this way.

Ty p ically, when criticism and complaining about others is taking

place, discernment is not in action. Where there is a lack of prayer,

complaining will fill that void.

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF SUSPICION

Whether out of emotional wounds or a bad past experience with

an individual, we can easily slip into suspicion. First Corinthians

13:5 says, *"Love keeps no record of wrongs."* M ost often,

suspicion is built on a record of some sort, whether from firsthand

experience or secondhand gossip from someone else. If we are

going to look at people through Jesus' eyes, then we can't be

carrying a record of wrongs and suspecting wrong of others. Please

—for your own sake and for clear

discernment, forgive the record

and repent for having held it.

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF MANIPULATION

This is a question of motives. When someone says, “I discern

that you should such and such,” it carries more weight than if

someone just gives you his or her opinion. If they are not really

listening to the Holy Spirit and speaking out of discernment, then

they are actually using the Lord's name in vain. M y definition of

using the Lord's name in vain is putting the weight of *"God said"*

behind anything He didn't actually say.

This also happens frequently with the gift of prophecy.

Unfortunately, people who don't feel that they will be listened to

will sometimes make it seem like the Lord gave them a "word" or

discernment. This is dangerous ground to be on. These gifts are not

to be used to control or manipulate others. The gifts are to be used

to build up the Church (1 Cor. 12:7) not to tear it down.

IT IS NOT THE GIFT OF CONDEMNATION

Romans 8:1 says, *"There is now no condemnation for those who*

are in Christ Jesus." I would say that since there is no

condemnation for us, then we should have none in us to give to

others. We are not carriers of

condemnation—we see the world

through Jesus' eyes and He is the one who said that He did not

come to condemn the world. *"For God did not send his Son into*

the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through

him" (John 3:17). It is never the job of a Christian to condemn.

IT IS NOT "ONLY A DELIVERANCE TOOL"

This is a common misunderstanding. M any in the Church have

been taught to relegate the gift of discerning of spirits to

deliverance ministry only. I believe that this has caused the gift to

be minimized and ignored.

The truth is that this gift picks up on four different categories

of spirits, only one of them being the demonic. We are in great need

of this gift in all four areas, and to say that it only relates to

deliverance is wasteful.

What if I truly discern something negative about someone?

It is true that a small percentage of discerning of spirits will

discern the sinful or negative parts of other individuals. We must

properly process this information. In no way should this

information turn into slander. The only reason the Holy Spirit is

entrusting it to you is so that you can either pray on their behalf or

bring them into healing (Gal. 6:1-2). The

best example of this is in

the story of Jesus speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well in

John 4. He did not bring condemnation, just pure love. He spoke

directly to *her*. He in no way slandered her to others.

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back" "I

have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are

right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have

had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your

husband. What you have just said is quite true." "Sir," the

woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet" (John 4:16-

19).

FIVE FILTERS

How do we work with our discernment to determine the good

from the bad? To answer that question, we will look at five filters

that can help us understand what our discernment is telling us.

1. AGREEMENT WITH SCRIPTURE

Since there are so many false teachings, personal opinions, and

just plain bad theologies that exist, how do we know what is right

from what is wrong? The Bible is immovable, unchanging truth,

and everything else has to be compared against the Word. No

matter what anyone else teaches, we have the more accurate Word

of God according to Second Peter 1:19, quoting Psalm 12:6:

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you

do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the

day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

"And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver

refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times."

2. OUTWARD FRUIT OF THE

SOURCE

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's

clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit

you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn

bushes, or figs from thistles? (M att. 7:15-16).

If the fruit is the same in nature as the fruit of the Spirit, then

perhaps God is the source. Galatians 5:22-23 tells us the nature of

God's fruit: "But *the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,*

kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Against such things there is no law."

3. THE ANOINTING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHICH WILL

GUIDEUS TOWARD THE TRUTH.

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of

you know the truth….I am writing these things to you about

those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the

anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you do

not need anyone to teach you. But as His anointing teaches you

about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—

just as it has taught you, remain in Him. (1 John 2:20, 26-27).

These verses could be confused as a contradiction of

Ephesians 4:11-13, where Paul set in

place the role of a teacher,

but this is just not the case.

In practical terms, if two teachers who are equally equipped

to handle the Word are teaching two opposite views, the anointing

of the Holy Spirit can guide you toward the truth of the right view.

I would add a caution that with any of these filters, you may have

a personal hindrance to the filter working properly. Perhaps you

were raised in a church that taught you something that was wrong.

When you hear the truth preached, you may not be able to filter

correctly because of your past doctrine. Ultimately, if your

discernment is going to be supernatural, you have to be humble

enough to let the Holy Spirit change, guide, and direct you.

4. PEACE OF CHRIST IN YOUR HEART

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your

hearts, since as

members of one body you were called to peace. And be

thankful" (Colossians 3:15).

Interestingly, the root word for *rule* in this verse is the same

root word from which we get our word *umpire*. In baseball, the

umpire is the closest official to the home plate; therefore, he is the

best person to make an impartial judgment call. He is the one

person who has the authority to decide if a player is “safe” or out.

In a similar manner, when we have a choice or decision in

front of us, the indwelling peace of Christ in our heart will help

guide us. If you are tempted, the peace of Christ within you will be

disturbed. If you are going to make the right decision, even though

it is a scary step of faith, the peace of Christ will increase your

confidence. When you are faced with a

situation, you should pause

for a moment and take stock of the condition of your peace. Let

the Holy Spirit tell you if you are “safe” or if you are “out.”

5. THE WAYS AND NATURE OF GOD

If you look at the nature of God, there are many things that are

easy to filter. It is not in God’s nature to approve of abortion,

murder, homosexuality, adultery, stealing, lying, witchcraft,

disease, injustice, and so on. The Bible is our basis for

understanding the nature of God. By setting aside opinions and

bias, answers can be found in the Word about everything in the

nature and ways of God.

Passages like this one show us so much about the ways and

nature of God:

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:

who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases,

who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with

loving-kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth

with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the

eagle's. The Lord executes righteousness and justice for all

who are oppressed. He made known ***His ways****to Moses,* ***His***

acts*to the children of Israel* (Psalms

103:2-7).

FINAL WORD ABOUT FILTERS

There are many voices in the world that are clamoring for your

attention. It is so important to have a system to filter through the

voices that you are hearing. We want to be able to know clearly

that we are hearing the voice of the Lord and not being deceived by

the voice of another. I picture this process of filtering as if I have a

handful of mud, and I only want the water. If I were to take a

window screen and mash my handful of mud against it, then I

would prevent some of the mud from getting through, but much of

it would still get through. The best plan of action would be to place

multiple window screens, say five for example, in layers over each

other, then mash the mud against them. I would then get mostly

water. This is how I imagine that these

filters work for us.

ACTIVATION

This exercise may take some time. Start by getting a sheet of

paper and a writing implement. Now write a letter from Jesus to

yourself. Jesus abides within you, so all you have to do is focus on

listening to Him speak to you and write a letter of what He says.

The Scripture tells us that all prophetic words are to be

tested and proven. The next step is to examine the letter under each

filter to be sure that every sentence lines up with the filters. If a

filter is violated, scratch out that sentence from your letter. This is

a good practice for what you should do with each prophetic word

that you receive and each word that you believe that you are

hearing from the Lord.

Go back to Activation II from Chapter 6, "The Unseen

Realm," and apply the five filters to your letter. Then deliver this

letter of love and encouragement to that individual. Whether you

have to call, mail, or deliver in person, do not underestimate the

value of giving this to the other person. It is not only good for

growing your personal gifting, but I have found many people who I

have given letters to who have come back to me years later and told

me that they still carry that letter in their

backpack or purse and

read it regularly. This exercise can be done regularly and will

continue to grow and stretch your faith and gifting, and you will be

leaving a trail of blessing others behind you as you do it.

ENDNOTES

1. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter*

More Than IQ (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1995).

2. This information comes from W. E. Vine and F. F. Bruce,

Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament

Words (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company,

1981), 314, 315, 222.

CHAPTER 9

HINDRANCES TO DISCERNMENT

THERE ARE MANY THINGS that can hinder us from operating

clearly in discerning of spirits. We

should be protective of what we

allow our eyes to see and our ears to hear. There are things that can

violate us spiritually. We must also watch over our heart and

motives so that our ability to discern is not distorted. The

following nine categories are just a sampling of the most common

things that distort discernment.

SCARY MOVIES

M ovies can powerfully stir the

imagination. As those who want

to operate in the highest level of accuracy in discerning of spirits,

we have to be careful of the food that we feed our imagination.

There are hundreds of wonderful movies, and they can be a great

way to relax and unwind after a long day, but there are also very

evil movies.

M ovies that are intended to scare, cause fear, and keep you in

constant suspense can be very influential on your discernment. As

for which movies this would apply to, I believe it is person

specific, not a legalistic rule imposed by others. For example, I first

realized the power of scary movies when I saw *Signs* with M el

Gibson. To most people this was not a scary movie. I, however,

had recently received a powerful impartation that had caused my

discernment to be heightened, and as a

result I had some scary

encounters with the demonic after watching this movie. When a

film is watched for enjoyment, our spirit is open and can receive

defilement that we did not intend to receive.

However, I have no problem watching such movies as *The*

Exorcism of Emily Rose, because as a minister, I want to be aware

of what is influencing America's understanding of deliverance.

When I watch such a film, I watch it as research and I have my

heart guarded. M y standards are personal, and I would recommend

that you prayerfully consider which movies you need to avoid.

Fear-inducing movies will hinder your discernment.

PAST EMOTIONAL WOUNDS

As humans living in a fallen world, we tend to carry around a lot

of emotional “baggage.” We can pick up baggage from family,

friends, coworkers, and church leaders. This baggage can cause our

discernment to be inaccurate. Let us make sure that our heart is the

same as Jesus toward those around us. If anything is preventing

you from loving someone the same way Jesus loves them, you

may need to repent or forgive.

Consider the emotional response of James and John when

they wanted to call down fire upon the Samaritan village (see Luke

9:54-56). Jesus very specifically told them that they didn't realize

what spirit they were operating under. This can happen very

easily—one moment your discernment is sharp; then suddenly a

personal wound causes discernment to be far from accurate.

Practically speaking, this happens when there is a room full

of people and there is a person present from whom you received a

personal wound. The presence of this

one person can cause

interference in your ability to operate with the heart of the Lord.

The best remedy is to deal with your hurts, offenses, and wounds

by extending forgiveness. You will know when you have truly

forgiven someone, if, when you look at them, you have

compassion for them in your heart. The healthier you are

emotionally, the healthier your discerning ability will be.

BAD DOCTRINE

The presence of bad teaching can drastically limit your ability to

operate in discerning of spirits. If you have been taught that you

don't have authority over the demonic, you may be too afraid to

use discernment. Perhaps you have been taught that it is not your

gift and it is unavailable to you. M aybe you had been trained in the

occult or New Age before you became a believer. These can all be

hindrances to operating fully and correctly in discerning of spirits.

The best idea is to find excellent, biblically based teaching to clarify

and improve your understanding. Always remember to remain

humble enough in your beliefs that the Holy Spirit can gently

correct or guide you to greater truth. Someone once said, “Bad

doctrine is like bad breath; you are usually the last one to know

you have it, and no one wants to tell

you.”

INTERNAL STRESS

The stress of work, family, lack of sleep, health issues, finances,

deferred hopes, and a host of other issues can interfere with our

discernment. We must have an up-to-date, abiding relationship

with Jesus to handle stress correctly. We must operate out of a

heart of peace. Without this, we will be inaccurate in our

discernment gift.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by

prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests

to God" (Philippians 4:6).

THE FEAR OF MAN

"The fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever

trusts in the Lord is kept safe" (Proverbs 29:25).

The only thing that we are allowed to

fear as Christians is

God Himself. If we are afraid of man or man's opinion, it will

hinder our ability to discern accurately.

"Does Job fear God for nothing?" satan replied. "Have

You not put a hedge around him and his household and

everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so

that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land"

(Job 1:9-10).

The principle is this, *"What you fear will hedge you in."* If

you fear the devil, he will hedge you in. If you fear the Lord, He

will put His hedge of protection around you. This same principle

can also hedge in your ability to discern correctly. Fear only the

Lord, and let Him hedge you in. Entrust yourself to Him fully; cast

all your cares on Him for He cares for you (see 1 Pet. 5:7).

DISOBEDIENCE

The more obedient we are to the Lord, the more He can entrust

to us: *"Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an*

abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken

from him" (M att. 13:12).

By obeying the Lord and being good stewards, He can give us

more and more discernment in the spirit. Conversely, the more we

stray, and are disobedient, lazy, or wicked, our gift will be much

hindered. Choose obedience.

EVIL MOTIVES

Your motives can taint your gift. Jesus rebuked Peter about his

heart motives:

But when Jesus turned and looked at His disciples, He

rebuked Peter. "Get behind Me, satan!" He said. "You do not

have in mind the things of God, but the

things of men” (M ark

8:33).

Jesus also rebuked James and John for not having a right

heart.

“And He sent messengers on ahead, who went into a

Samaritan village to get things ready for Him; but the people

there did not welcome Him, because He was heading for

Jerusalem. When the disciples James

and John saw this, they

asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to

destroy them?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them" (Luke

9:52-55).

Apparently, Peter learned his lesson from Jesus about having

right motives. Peter later rebuked Simon the sorcerer in Acts 8,

because he had evil motives in his heart. After Peter had learned his

lesson from Jesus about heart motives, he was then equipped to

correct others.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on

of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give

me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands

may receive the Holy Spirit."

Peter answered: "May your money perish with you,

because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!

You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart

is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to

the Lord. Perhaps He will forgive you for having such a

thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness

and captive to sin." Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord

for me so that nothing you have said

may happen to me"

(Acts 8:18-24).

We have to be careful that our operation of the gifts is used in

selfless love, not out of some form of self-promotion or financial

gain.

SUPERSTITION

... with whom the Lord had made a covenant and charged

them, saying: ***"You shall not fear other gods.*** *… [and again]* **…**

you shall not fear other gods. *And the covenant that I have*

made with you, you shall not forget, ***nor shall you fear other***

gods" (2 Kings 17:35-38 NKJV).

There are far too many Christians today who think they are

spiritual because they can "sense" the presence of evil spirits, or

"discern territorial demons." It is good that we can discern the

presence of something evil, but what many have done with the

information has bordered on superstition.

Jesus finished out His 40-day fast (see M atthew 4) with a

face-to-face visitation by satan himself, yet we don’t see any fear

on the part of Jesus. No spookiness, no nonsense—He just stood

in His personal identity, as we should, and rebuked the devil out of

Scripture as we should. There are many Christians today who have

become so spooky spiritually that they

do not stand in the

confidence of their identity.

LUST ISSUES

"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit

adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman

lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart"

(M atthew 5:27-28).

The vast proliferation of pornography, especially through the

Internet, is the enemy's plan to pollute our eyes spiritually. He is

more aware than the Church is that the Lord intends to raise up the

gift of discerning of spirits throughout His Body in the earth.

The Body of Christ has been blind to the spirit realm around

us for too long, and God is bringing restoration to discernment. The

enemy would like to entrap the Church in a sinful bondage to lust,

thus preempting the Lord's restoration.

We must not be hindered.

If this is an issue in your life, get wise, godly help and deal

urgently and aggressively with it. This is an issue for which you

will need help and accountability in order to gain complete victory.

I strongly recommend the book *Purity: The New Moral Revolution*

by Kris Vallotton. 1 I also recommend the Web ministry of the

Triple X Church (www.XXXChurch.com). It contains

many

excellent resources and computer-filtering software.

ACTIVATION

Jesus said,

"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good,

your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad,

your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within

you is darkness, how great is that

darkness!" (M atthew 6:22-

23).

And Psalm 101:3 says, *"I will set before my eyes no vile*

thing."

M any of us have darkened our spiritual eyes with the filth of

sin. Put the following prayer in your own words to cleanse your

spiritual eyes.

Lord Jesus,

I confess that I have put certain things in my sight and

hearing that are sinful. I ask for Your forgiveness and

cleansing. I forgive any individuals who have hurt or offended

me [include their names and be specific about what they did].

Wash my eyes clean and give Me your grace to walk in

freedom and wholeness.

As a prophetic act of cleansing, splash running water over

your eyes.

ENDNOTES

1. Kris Vallotton, *Purity: The New Moral Revolution*

(Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2008).

CHAPTER 10

THE FORCE OF LOVE

Why a Chapter on Love?

WHEN WE LOOK AT the apostle Paul's first letter to the

Corinthians, we must remember that it is a letter, not a book with

chapters. The thoughts throughout the whole letter are actually

connected and build on one another. In our world of chapters,

verses, and endless Bible versions, it is easy to forget the original

fluidity of Paul's letters.

Remembering that the letter was not divided into chapters

originally, we will focus on chapters 12 to 14, specifically.

Chapter 12 contains the list of the nine spiritual gifts.

Chapter 13 is the "love chapter."

Chapter 14 explains the application of the spiritual gifts in the

church congregation.

What we often fail to recognize is that Chapter 13 is in

between 12 and 14 on purpose. Every spiritual gift has to be used

in love, *"whether you speak in the tongue of men or angels, or*

have the gift of prophecy, or can fathom all mysteries" (see 1 Cor.

13:1-2). This is why the "love chapter" is in the middle of the

discussion of the gifts.

The gifts have to operate through love. M any people have a

wimpy understanding of love, or they lean the other way into a

harsh understanding of so-called "tough love."

I recommend the following as a guide. Discerning of spirits is

looking at anything in life through the eyes of Jesus. It is like

putting on a pair of glasses that would enable you to see people

and situations as if you were looking through Jesus' eyes. Jesus

looks at everything through a lens of perfect love. If you want to

know when discerning of spirits is not in operation, remember this

definition.

WHAT IS LOVE?

One of the most well-known sections of Scripture is First

Corinthians 13. It is frequently spoken at weddings all over the

country. The fact is, First Corinthians 13:4-8 gives one of the best

definitions of love that has ever been written. This passage gives

16 key points about what love is: *(1) patient, (2) kind, (3) does not*

envy, (4) does not boast, (5) is not proud, (6) is not rude, (7) is not

self-seeking, (8) is not easily angered,

(9) keeps no record of

wrongs, (10) does not delight in evil, (11) rejoices with the truth,

(12) always protects, (13) always trusts, (14) always hopes, (15)

always perseveres, (16) never fails.

We have another definition of love in Galatians that many

have overlooked. When we refer to the fruit of the spirit mentioned

in Galatians 5, often the thinking is that this is a list of character

traits. The passage starts with verse 22 saying, *"But the fruit of the*

spirit is love…" Notice that the fruit is singular. If you look in the

original language of the text, the fruit of the spirit is truly singular,

it is not the fruit(s) of the spirit. Love is the one fruit of the spirit.

The eight words that come after, *"…joy, peace, patience, kindness,*

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" are merely

further descriptions of the one fruit of the

spirit. In other words,

love is full of joy, full of peace, full of kindness, and so on.

M any have a weak notion of love as simply a feeling. A

closer look at the Word shows us that love is a choice. God so

loved the world, that He made the choice to do something (see

John 3:16). We need to choose to walk in the lifestyle of love. The

following three verses make it very clear that love is a decision:

"But since we belong to the day, let us be self-controlled,

putting on faith and love*as a breastplate, and the hope of*

salvation as a helmet" (1 Thessalonians 5:8).

"But you, man of God, flee from all this, and ***pursue…***

love…" (1 Timothy 6:11).

"Flee the evil desires of youth, and ***pursue…love.*** *along*

with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2

Timothy 2:22).

Love is not only a choice that is made once, but it is a choice

that we make daily. We should be known for having our whole

lifestyle revolve around love. It is the filter that all of our words,

attitudes, and actions have to go through before we speak or act.

"As you have heard from the beginning, His command is

*that you **walk in love**"* (2 John 1:6b).

*"**…live a life of love,** just as Christ loved us and gave*

Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God"

(Ephesians 5:2).

"Keep yourselves in God's love…"
(Jude 1:21).

"Let all that you do be done with love"
(1 Corinthians

16:14 NKJV).

Love has a certain way that it treats others. As we have seen,

it is kind, patient, gentle, keeps no record of wrongs, etc. Love also

has a unique quality about it, in that it can cover sin: *"Above all,*

love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of

sins" (1 Pet. 4:8).

We are called to love each other deeply, and many have been

hindered from doing that because sin has been left exposed. Sin

needs to be repented of, forgiven, and the record destroyed.

Without love, we will still see each other through the lens of that

past violation. Love literally gives us back the eyes to see each

other without the sin.

Even in the cases where confrontation and exposure are

needed to deal with sin, we have a model for how to handle that.

The truth must be spoken in love. This pertains to our

motivations. We are not to speak the truth just to validate

ourselves; we don't speak the truth to injure others; we speak the

truth out of a heart of love—a heart that desires healing and

restoration: *"...speak the truth in love..."* (see Eph. 4:15a).

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly

loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility,

gentleness and patience. And ***over all these virtues put on***

love, *which binds them all together in*

perfect unity"

(Colossians 3:12,14).

Love is put in the chief place above all other virtues in

Scripture. It is of the utmost importance. Not only is it the number

one priority, but it also is the glue that holds all the other virtues in

perfect balance. It would be easy for someone whose highest value

is courage to mistreat others. But courage will function at its

optimum capacity when used under love.

Love is as powerful as two evil forces in the world, fear and

death. Song of Songs 8:6 says that love is as strong as death, and

First John says that there is no fear in love: *"There is no fear in*

love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment.

But he who fears has not been made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18

NKJV).

Love is literally a force in the spirit realm. It is as strong as

death, and perfect love casts out fear. M any in the Church have

pursued greater faith, but even faith does not function correctly

without love: *"...faith works through love"* (see Gal. 5:6b NKJV).

Speaking of faith, Jesus said, "I *tell you the truth, if you have*

faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain,

'Move from here to there' and it will

move. Nothing will be

impossible for you" (M att. 17:20b; see also Luke 17:6).

Faith has a power or force great enough to move a mountain;

now consider the following truth: *"And now these three remain:*

faith, hope and love. But ***the greatest of these is love"*** (1 Cor.

13:13).

This is an amazing statement: Love is a greater force than

hope or even faith. Thousands of sermons and books have been

written about the incredible power of faith, but the even greater

power of love has not received as much focus. If a mustard seed of

faith can move a mountain or uproot and cast a tree into the sea,

then what kind of magnificent power dwells in love? What if we

lived our life with even a mustard seed of love? It would be way

beyond moving mountains. This is the

realm that I believe God is

calling the Church worldwide to step into.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,

may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how

wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to

know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be

filled to the measure of all the fullness of God (Ephesians

3:17b-19).

This builds on our previous thought about love being greater

than faith. Only by grasping and being firmly rooted in love can we

be filled with all the fullness of God. Like Ephesians 3 says, *"the*

love of Christ…surpasses knowledge."

What would "being filled with the fullness of God" look like?

I would say that it would be the purest form of being like Jesus.

Because the Word says, *"God was pleased to have all His fullness*

dwell in Him [Jesus]" (Col. 1:19).

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

We have probably all heard the term *unconditional love*. As

Christians, we should have the best understanding of what this

phrase means because Jesus is the only person who has ever

perfectly demonstrated unconditional love. When the word

unconditional is used, it is referring to how we as humans typically

set parameters for our relationships, such as, “If you do this, then

I will respond in this manner.” Jesus broke the transactional nature

of relationships by requiring nothing of us. He did not ask anything

from us when we were lost in sin. As John 3:16 says, *“For God so*

loved the world that He sent His one and only Son, that whoever

believes in Him shall not perish but

have eternal life."

God did not ask you to do anything before He would love

you; without conditions, He chose to love us and act in love

toward us. The apostle Paul reiterates this point in Romans 5:6-8:

"You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless,

Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a

righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly

dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this:

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

Unconditional love is a kind of love that is hard to grasp as a

human. M any people spend their life trying to live and act in such

a way that they will be acceptable to others, yet Jesus (God the

Father and the Holy Spirit included) loves us without condition.

Ephesians 3:19 says that this love

"surpasses knowledge," and

Romans 8:39 says that nothing can separate us from the *"love of*

God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

INCREASING THE FORCE OF LOVE

The next logical thought would be, "How can I have more of this

love in my life?"

I would like to share a great story that Kenneth Hagin Sr.

wrote, which illustrates an important

point about growing in love.

I was holding a meeting one time, and three pastors came to

visit my services. After the meeting, we all went out to eat and

fellowship together. These pastors began talking about the subject

of the love of God. I was just listening to their conversation. I

wasn't talking much. You know, sometimes you can learn more by

listening than you can by talking because you already know

everything *you* know!

Anyway, these pastors got to talking about how much

believers fail in the love walk. And one of the pastors spoke up

and said, “I’ll tell you what! We need to pray! We need to pray

that God would give us love. We just don’t have the love of God as

we ought to have.”

I didn’t say anything. But I thought to myself, “Since the love

of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, then if a person doesn't

seem to have love, he's just got to learn to walk in the light of what

he already has. That's where the problem is." (See Rom. 5:5.)

Finally, one of the pastors asked me, "Brother Hagin, what

do you think about it?" I asked, "Do you really want to know?"

"Yes!" he said. "Well, if you fellows don't have any love, as you

just got through saying, then you need to

get saved!" They looked

at me in astonishment—sort of like I'd slapped them with a wet

dish rag.

I continued, "The way you talk, we don't have the love of

God. But the Bible says, *'We know that we have passed from*

death to life, because we love the brethren.' And if we're saved,

we've got the love of God in our hearts because the Bible says the

love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy

Ghost" (1 John 3:14 NKJV; Rom. 5:5 KJV).

"It's not a matter of needing to pray that God would send us

love, because He's already given every believer a measure of love,

just like He's already given every believer a measure of faith. It's

just a matter of stirring up and using what's already on the inside!"

I said, "If you're saved, you already

have a measure of love.

You can pray until you are blue in the face that God would give

you more love, but the love you have will never be increased until

you feed it on God's Word and exercise it so it can develop.

"If you develop it, then it will be increased. Feeding it on the

Word and exercising it is the way you increase love. Love has to be

exercised before it will produce results. But if you will be faithful

to exercise love, it will produce great fruit”1

HOW DO WE WALK IN THE LOVE THAT WAS POURED INTO OUR

HEARTS?

*“And so we **know and rely on the love God has for***

***us.** God is love. **Whoever lives in love**lives in God, and God in*

him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we

will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this

world we are like Him" (1 John 4:16-17).

First, we must acknowledge and have confidence that God

loves us. And second, we must live our life pouring out that love to

others. M any Christians try to walk in love toward others,

without a constant acknowledgment of the love God has toward

them. When you keep your focus on the love God has for you,

then you overflow with that love toward

others.

WITHOUT LOVE THERE IS NO

DISCERNMENT

"Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts,

especially the gift of prophecy" (1 Corinthians 14:1).

I have found that you have to have the foundation of

"following the way of love" before the gifts that you "eagerly

desire" will function correctly. You may

be able to see some

limited operation of the gifts without walking in love, but

ultimately they will be missing the heart of God.

WHEN LOVE LEAVES, SO DOES

DISCERNMENT

I personally have a hard time operating in the gifts when I am

not walking in love. For example, if someone with a difficult

personality is in the vicinity and I am

trying to focus my

discernment, I run into a problem. M y spirit is troubled by the

difficult individual, and I am not able to step into love and function

properly. I am trying to aim my love toward one person, while my

discernment is picking up my bad attitude toward the other. I am

literally getting in my own way.

LOVE IS DISCERNABLE

"By this all men will know that you are

My disciples, if you

love one another" (John 13:35).

While it is true that having a faith so powerful that it can

move mountains is a sign that someone is walking under God's

favor and anointing, the trait that Jesus established to discern one

of His disciples is love.

ACTIVATION

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in

him" (1 John 4:16).

Close your eyes and engage your imagination. Focus on the

fact that God has shed His love abroad in your heart. Recall to

your mind that you rely on God's love. Acknowledge the love that

is within you. Picture it welling up, healing every wound, bringing

freedom, healing your memories. The truth of God's love for you,

and in you, will set you free. This love gives your eyes the ability

to see the world through the eyes of Jesus.

Picture the people in your life who you need to forgive—the

ones who have hurt you—and see them through these eyes of love

and forgive them. Take 5 to 10 minutes right now and give it to the

Lord. Focus on the love of Jesus and meditate on these truths.

ENDNOTES

1. Kenneth Hagin, *Love, the Way to Victory* (Tulsa, OK: Faith

Library Pub., 1994), 25-27.

CHAPTER 11

HEALING SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS

IN THIS CHAPTER we will look at four eyewitness accounts of

the physically blind having their eyes opened and healed. We are

going to examine each of these stories and see if there are clues,

principles, and commonalities that teach

us about having our

spiritual sight restored. (1 endnote reference)

In 1 Corinthians 15:44-49 a principle is stated, *"...the*

natural came first and after that the spiritual." This is in reference

to Adam being created first and then Jesus coming to earth as a

second Adam. I am going to expound on the concept of the natural

being followed by the spiritual and apply it in an unusual way. I

want you, the reader, to understand that this is done with great

care not to violate the original intent of the passages, which we will

look at.

The four Gospels are eyewitness accounts of actual events;

they are not allegorical in nature. Neither can we spiritualize

everything and negate the context and original meaning. There are

several categories that are used to understand the Word; here are

three of the most common.

1. PARABLES

When Jesus taught, He frequently used parables of things in the

natural to explain the Kingdom of Heaven. Consider how many

times He said, “The kingdom of heaven is like…”—then He would

give a natural illustration. The natural realm can give us insight into

what the spiritual realm is like.

2. TYPES AND SHADOWS

The Word communicates with us in the form of types and

shadows, such as M oses building the sanctuary as a shadow of

what he saw in Heaven (see Heb. 8:5; 9:23-24). Also, the Old

Testament feasts and festivals were mere shadows of things to

come; the reality is now found in Christ (see Col. 2:16-17).

3. NATURAL PRINCIPLES THAT HAVE A

SPIRITUAL EQUIVALENT

A good example of this is found in sowing and reaping (see Gal.

6:7-9). God taught His people that the spiritual reality of sowing

and reaping could be understood in the natural principles of

agriculture.

CASE#1

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and His disciples,

together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind

man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by

the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of

Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have

mercy on me!” Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet,

but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on

me!” Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the

blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet!

He's calling you."

Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to

Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked

him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." "Go," said

Jesus, "your faith has healed you," Immediately he received

his sight and followed Jesus along the road (M ark 10:46-52;

Luke 18:35-43).

The first trait we recognize about Bartimaeus is that he was a

very persistent individual. When he heard that Jesus was coming

by, he began to shout, and when he was rebuked for shouting, he

shouted even more. He had the opportunity to be offended at their

rebuke, but he chose to metaphorically climb over the offense to

get to Jesus. Jesus stopped, called for him, and waited in the street

while Bartimaeus came to Him.

Culturally, it is interesting that Bartimaeus threw aside his

cloak. His cloak was his legal license to be a beggar. By throwing it

aside, he was declaring by faith that he wouldn't need it anymore.

If he had not been healed of his blindness, how would he have even

found the cloak again after he threw it aside?

Jesus asked Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for

you?" He responded, "I want to see."

Jesus then said, “Your faith

has healed you.” There are a few principles from this story that are

important for us: be persistent, overcome the offense, pursue

Jesus, throw aside your cloak (or your comfort zone), and desire to

see. Jesus is waiting for you, and it is your faith that will open

your eyes.

CASE#2

As Jesus went on from there, two blind

men followed him,

calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he had

gone indoors, the blind men came to Him, and He asked them,

"Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they

replied. Then He touched their eyes and said, "According to

your faith will it be done to you;" and their sight was restored

(M atthew 9:27-30).

As with Bartimaeus, pursuit is one of the main traits of this

account. Two blind men were stumbling down the street crying out

for Jesus. They even managed to follow Jesus indoors and come

face to face with Him. Jesus asked, “Do you believe that I am able

to do this?” “Yes,” they replied. Then Jesus laid hands on their

eyes and told them that according to their faith, they had been

healed.

Again, it was the faith of the individual that opened their

eyes. In this case, laying on of hands took place, and sometimes

this can be an element to receiving sight. As always, faith was the

connector to receiving sight.

CASE#3

They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a

blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind

man by the hand and led him outside the village. When He had

spit on the man's eyes and put His hands on Him, Jesus

asked, "Do you see anything?" He looked up and said, "I see

people; they look like trees walking around." Once more

Jesus put His hands on the man's eyes. Then his eyes were

opened, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly

(M ark 8:22-25).

In this case, unlike the first two, the blind man was brought

to Jesus; he didn't pursue Jesus. Instead of shouting at the blind

man to be quiet, his friends "begged Jesus" to heal him. Jesus led

him outside the village, but why? Jesus spat on the man's eyes,

but why? Jesus didn't declare to the blind man that his faith had

healed him, but rather asked him if he could see. This is a unique

story indeed.

By taking the man outside of the village, Jesus removed the

comfort of the familiar. A blind man who is used to feeling his way

around familiar areas has created a specific comfort zone. When he

is brought into new and unfamiliar surroundings, expectations can

be altered. The next step was to provide an offense.

At this point the blind man had done nothing to show faith

and pursuit. Jesus provided an obstacle

for him by spitting on his

eyes. Spitting on blind people was a common and degrading

practice in Israel at the time. Bill Johnson says, “At times, God

offends the mind to reveal the heart.” Then Jesus laid His hands on

the man and released healing.

The final part of the story is one of the most encouraging

sections in the Gospels for anyone involved in healing ministry. It

shows us that Jesus had at least one progressive healing in His

ministry, and this is not considered a failure. Progressive opening

of eyes is perfectly acceptable. This is important for our study

because your spiritual eyes and discernment may not instantly be

opened. Perhaps it will be a progressive opening. God may have to

take you out of your comfort zone, and even provide an offense to

push through.

CASE#4

Having said this, He spit on the ground, made some mud

with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," He told

him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means Sent). So

the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His

neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging

asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?"

Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks

like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then

were your eyes opened?" they demanded. He replied, "The

man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He

told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and

then I could see" (John 9:6-11).

As with Case #3, Jesus put spit on the eyes. Again, this was

an offense to the blind man. Here we find that Jesus commanded an

activation of faith by sending him to the pool to wash.

An interesting detail is that those who daily saw the blind

man didn't recognize him. He was so transformed that others

couldn't even recognize him. When you begin to operate in

discernment and your spiritual eyes open, some who thought they

knew you, might not recognize you

(metaphorically speaking). The

blind man didn't physically change other than receiving sight, yet

he was unrecognizable. The story continues with another offense.

Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and

opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath…. Some of the

Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for He does not

keep the Sabbath" (John 9:14,16).

The blind man attributed his experience to God, yet the

spiritual leaders around him claimed that the experience was not

from God. This is common for those who have their eyes opened,

whether it is the offense of God healing today or the offense of a

Christian having his or her spiritual eyes opened. There will

always be “leaders” who claim that it couldn’t be God, for a host

of reasons.

Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this

fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that

God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even

know where He comes from." The man answered, "Now that

is remarkable! You don't know where He comes from, yet He

opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners.

He listens to the godly man who does

His will. Nobody has

ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this

man were not from God, He could do nothing." To this they

replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you

lecture us!" And they threw him out (John 9:28-38).

There is a saying that the "Pharisees could only honor their

dead prophets." 2 The Pharisees could not accept the new move of

God that was happening in their midst. It violated their paradigm,

and they were not willing to update to a new wineskin.

The now-healed blind man offered an excellent apologetic for

proof of Jesus' M essiahship, and because the Pharisees had no

worthy response, they switched gears. They turned to character

defamation against an innocent man who did nothing wrong other

than receive healing on the wrong day of

the week.

Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when He

found him, He said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

"Who is He, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may

believe in Him." Jesus said, "You have now seen Him; in fact,

He is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I

believe," and He worshiped Him (John 9:35-38).

This man was willing to step through all these offenses, and

Jesus came back and revealed Himself again in a deeper way. The

principle to pick up from this story is that persecution and

hardship will follow the blessings that are received from Jesus. If

there is endurance and persistence, you will be proven to be a good

steward of the gift of sight that God has given, and subsequent

revelation will come. He will reveal

Himself in even greater

measures, which is ultimately our goal.

ACTIVATION

Declare each one of these statements out loud ten times:

Jesus, I will pursue You no matter what.

I will overcome offense and disappointment to follow You.

I will follow, full of faith.

ENDNOTES

1. On a speculative side note, it is likely

that Adam and Eve—

before sin—had the full use of their spiritual senses. And

if you remember what we learned in Chapter 2, we all

have spiritual eyes; we just need them restored. In that

sense we are like blind men—having eyes, yet being

without sight.

2. Joel C. Elowsky and Thomas C. Oden write in their

commentary on the Book of John, “While alive their

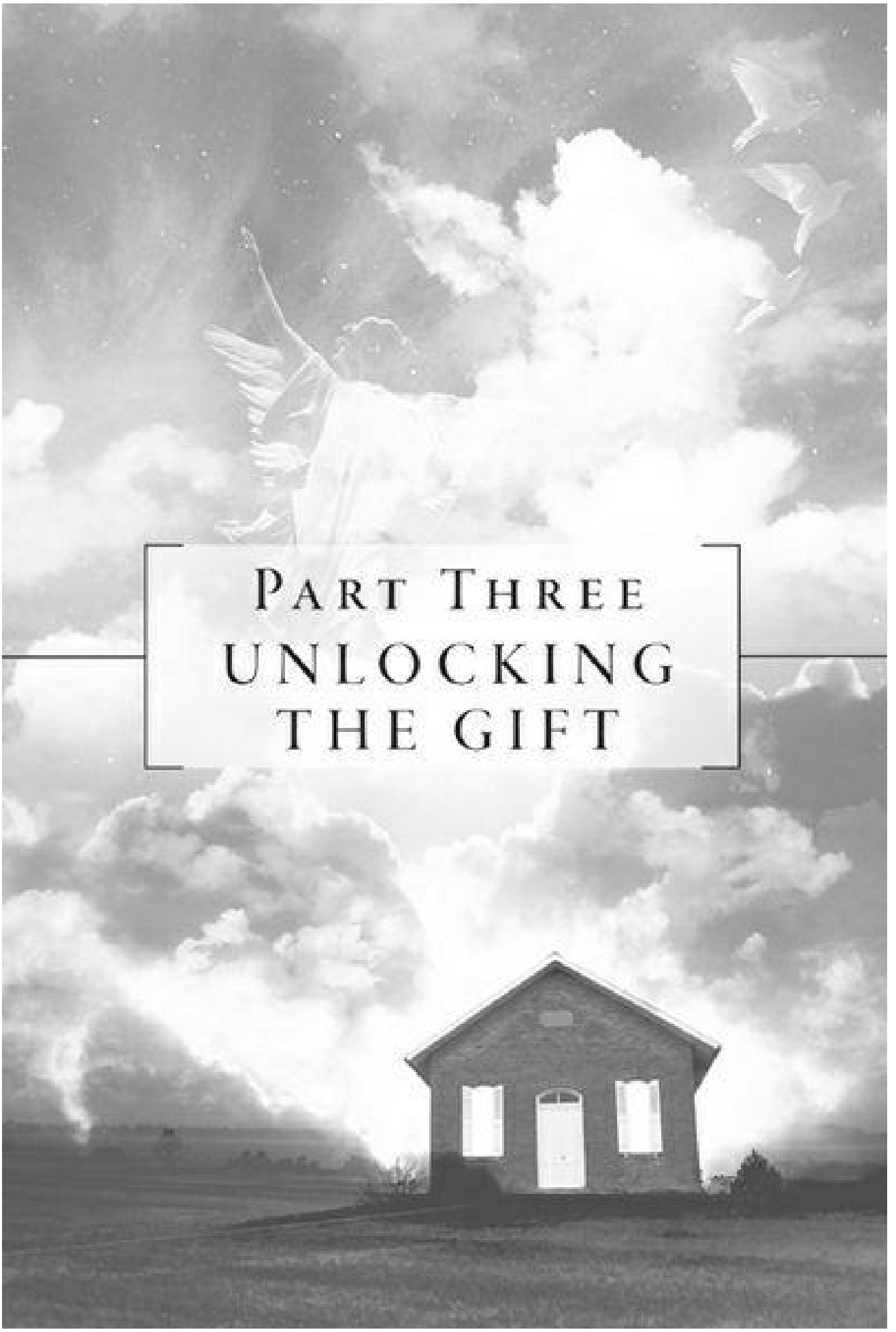
fellow citizens dishonored them (the prophets), but dead

they respect them by building and adorning their tombs.”

From *John 1-10, Ancient Christian Commentary on*

Scripture (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press,

2006), 173.



Part Three
UNLOCKING THE GIFT

CHAPTER 12

FOUR KEYS TO INCREASING FAITH

THE LORD SHOWED ME a picture of a long hallway with doors

on both sides, like you might see in a hotel. Each door had the

name of a biblical experience on it. The first door said on it, “The

door of salvation.” The next door said on it, “The door of baptism

in the Holy Spirit.” There were endless

doors, each with different

labels such as, “The door of healing,” or “The door of deliverance.”

Each one of these doors had a lock. In order to access these

experiences, you needed a key. The Lord showed me that one key

will open all these doors, and that key is faith. Even though the

Word is filled with promises and truths, the key of faith is required

to open every door of promise.

Faith should always lead us into an experience of what we are

having faith for. If I have faith for salvation, I should experience

salvation. If I have faith for baptism in the Holy Spirit, I should

experience baptism in the Holy Spirit. Every promise in Scripture

is experienced by faith. Faith is the key that unlocks every door to

experiences. *"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer,*

believe that you have received it, and it

will be yours" (M ark

11:24). Faith brings us into an experience.

Scripture is filled with promises of what can be received and

walked in by faith. Looking at Hebrews 11, which has been

nicknamed "The Hall of Faith," each person mentioned had an

experience with God, and each story was remembered as by faith.

The key to their experience was that they entered in by faith. If we

want to experience greater discernment, we will need greater faith.

T his requires not just mental agreement, but an active faith that

turns the key in the doorknob. I can say in my mind that I believe

God can heal me, but if I don’t have an active faith, then I will lack

the experience.

DOORS OF EXPERIENCE

These are ten examples of truth that can be realized, felt, lived,

enjoyed, and experienced in life by faith.

salvation—We are saved by grace, through faith (see Eph.

2:8).

Healing—By His stripes, we are healed (see Isa. 53:3-5; 1 Pet.

2:24).

Abiding—We are with Christ hidden in God (see Col. 3:1-3).

Insight—We have the mind of Christ (see 1 Cor. 2:16).

Power—Your will be done on earth as it

is in Heaven (see

M att. 6:10).

Joy—In His presence is fullness of joy (see Ps. 16:11).

authority—We are seated with Him in heavenly places (see

Eph. 2:1-10).

hearing God—M y sheep hear M y voice (see John 10:27).

Fruit of the spirit—Since we live in the Spirit, let us walk in

the Spirit (see Gal. 5:22-25).

intimacy—Those joined with the Lord are one spirit with Him

(see 1 Cor. 6:17).

By now you might be thinking that this is good, but what

does it have to do with seeing into the spirit? The connection is

that *"we walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Cor. 5:7 NKJV). Faith is

what enables our spirit eyes. Faith helps us see the unseen. We do

not make spiritual decisions by what can be seen with physical

eyes. Faith reads the Word and sees the angels who surround us.

Faith sees the presence of Jesus each day, as He said, “I will never

leave you nor forsake you.” M ost people are content hearing these

truths and standing outside the door of truth, never entering in.

Faith cannot be satisfied with the mental knowledge of truth. Faith

is only satisfied when one enters into truth.

It must be remembered that the Word of

God is living and

active. It is alive and waiting for you to experience its glorious

riches. Experiencing angels, Heaven, the manifest presence of God,

visions, trances, and dreams are available to us through faith. I will

put one caution here for balance. You can't take a Scripture and

wield it without the direction of the Holy Spirit. Remember, the

Word of God is the sword of the spirit, which means it is the Holy

Spirit's sword, not your sword. We need to submit to the Holy

Spirit for its wielding to be safe and powerful.

STEP INSIDE

M any of us have stepped through the doors of salvation,

baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, deliverance, and hearing the

voice of God, and have had these experiences. This is about as far

down the hallway of experience as the Western Church has been

willing to venture.

These are the doors that are commonly preached about,

believed in, and entered into. Yet the Scripture is not exhausted by

these few wonderful experiences alone. God has given us a whole

book of truths to enter into, and none of us will ever exhaust all

that can be experienced through faith.

Have we yet experienced to the fullest what it means to be

“in Christ,” or “seated in heavenly places,” or being “one spirit

with Him,” or “walking in the spirit,” or “having the mind of

Christ”? Let me encourage you; there is so much more! Keep

pushing down the hallway.

SOME DOORS ARE HARDER TO OPEN

The door of salvation has been in active use and teaching for

centuries. M artin Luther was a pioneer in pushing this door open

for the Body of Christ. Nowadays, salvation by grace through faith

is easily experienced.

Now salvation is taught in every true church and can be

brought with confidence to anyone, anytime, even to a homeless

person on the street or a rich person on Wall Street. Yet, some of

the doors seem harder to experience. Prophecy, for example.

Perhaps I have faith to believe, *"My sheep can hear My voice,"* but

I don’t always seem to experience hearing His voice.

One explanation could be that some of the infrequently used

doors have rust on them, metaphorically speaking, which makes

them squeaky and hard to open. This may be why some people

still don’t get healed or delivered; a certain level of breakthrough

has not been obtained and maintained in the Church.

WITHOUT FAITH, DOORS DO

NOT OPEN

"For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to

them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not

being mixed with faith in those who heard it" (Hebrews 4:2).

The Word of God can be negated by the response of the

hearer. In this verse, the Word going forth was not lacking, but

faith was lacking on the part of certain hearers. Those who heard

with faith received the promise, whereas those who heard and did

not mix faith with the message received nothing. This concept is

summed up in the phrase, “You get out what you put in.” If you

do not mix faith with the Word of God that you hear, then you will

not receive the promises of the Word. God has given you the

authority to receive or negate His promises dependent upon your

response.

PRACTICAL KEYS

Experience is what all relationships are made of. If you desire a

closer relationship with God, then your desire includes greater

experience with Him. Since we understand that faith leads us to

greater experience, we should desire greater faith. Our heart should

be the same as the disciples' who said to the Lord, *"Increase our*

faith!" (Luke 17:5). Here are four practical keys in the Word that

build greater faith.

1. FASTING AND PRAYER

“Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures

and is suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the

water. I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not heal

him.” “O unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus

replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put

up with you? Bring the boy here to Me."

Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and

he was healed from that moment. Then the disciples came to

Jesus in private and asked, ***"Why couldn't we drive it out?"***

He replied, "Because you have so little faith. *I tell you the*

truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can

say to this mountain, 'Move from here

to there' and it will

move. Nothing will be impossible for you." But this kind does

not go out except by prayer and fasting (M atthew 17:15-21).

Jesus says it is because of their little faith, and then He gives

them the remedy of prayer with fasting. This will get them the

faith they need for the healing and deliverance of the child. Fasting

is one of four specific things that we can do to build greater faith.

Great faith leads to greater experience.

MORE ABOUT FASTING

Often when I fast, people ask me, “Did God tell you to fast?” I

have been considering why people ask that, especially since I

commonly respond, “No, He didn’t tell me to fast; I just decided

to fast.” There is nothing that commands us as New Testament

believers when to fast, how long to fast, and so on. There were

specific times to fast in the Old Testament, but the New

Testament does not command us in these things.

The same is true of praying in the Holy Spirit or listening for

a “rhema” word from the Lord. The Word tells us that these things

will build our faith, but the Lord doesn’t command us to activate

them; He just makes them available.

I believe that each one of these will build our faith, thereby

bringing us greater ability to enter experience.

God has given us the tools to build enough faith to access any

door, yet He leaves us our freewill to decide when to fast, when to

pray, and when to listen. When we decide to build our faith, it is

something we initiate, and then in response He increases our faith

so that we can experience more of His Kingdom. This is a

fundamental element in our relationship

with God; He gives us the

choice of the relationship we want: *"Draw near to God, and He*

will draw near to you" (James 4:8 NKJV). Another way to say it

would be, "The ball is in our court."

2. PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most

holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit" (Jude 1:20 NKJV).

Praying in the Spirit is different from

fasting because if you

come across a situation where you need to access faith

immediately, you can begin praying in the Spirit at a moment's

notice. However, fasting is done ahead of time, to store up faith.

We can fill ourselves up daily by praying in the Spirit, but it is

always on call as well.

3. HEARING THE PROPHETIC WORD OF GOD

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word

[rhema] of God" (Romans 10:17 NKJV).

The "rhema" word of God is when the Lord prophetically

applies His words to you, in your situation. He speaks these

things directly into your spirit and encourages, strengthens and

comforts you. This gives you greater faith. Prophet Bill Hamon

says,

A *rhema* is a word or an illustration God speaks directly to

us, and it addresses our personal, particular situation. It is a timely,

Holy Spirit-inspired Word from the Logos (the Bible) that brings

life, power, and faith to perform and fulfill it. Its significance is

exemplified in the injunction to take the *"sword of the Spirit, which*

is the word [rhema] of God" (Eph. 6:17).

It can be received through others such as

by a prophetic

word, or be an illumination given to one directly in [his or her]

personal meditation time in the Bible or in prayer. The logos is the

fixed Word of God—the Scriptures—and the rhema is a particular

portion in line with the logos brought forth by the Spirit to be

applied directly to something in our personal experience. 1

4. FELLOWSHIPING WITH PEOPLE OF FAITH

"That you and I may be mutually encouraged by each

other's faith" (Romans 1:12b).

Proverbs 27:17 says, *"Iron sharpens iron."* Being around

someone who has greater faith than you prods you to greater faith.

The encouragement can also come from two equals, who provoke

each other to greater faith in the Lord. Personally, I am

tremendously encouraged by listening to teachers with great faith,

such as Bill Johnson or Heidi Baker. I choose to listen regularly to

recordings of their teachings to keep my faith lifted up. I also make

conscious decisions to have lunch with people of faith so that we

can mutually encourage each other.

"GOOD WORKS"

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith

but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a

brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of

you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well

fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is

it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by

action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have

deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you

my faith by what I do (James 2:14-18).

I have found that every time I teach on the four keys of faith,

I always get a naysayer who comes to warn me after the service.

His or her basic premise is that I need to be careful how I teach the

four keys because they could be interpreted as a formula of "good

works." The implication is that grace and works are mutually

exclusive entities.

This is fundamentally not true.

After we have received salvation by grace, good works should

flow out of us as a natural byproduct. The Book of James implies

that an individual's salvation is questionable if good works are not

flowing out. Good works are the fruit and evidence of grace and

faith.

You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without

deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered

righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the

altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working

together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And

the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God,

and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was

called God's friend. You see that a person is justified by what

he does and not by faith alone. In the

same way, was not even

Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did

when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a

different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so

faith without deeds is dead (James 2:20-26).

The four keys are not about good works gaining salvation; the

keys only work after salvation is received. Once we have come into

the Kingdom there are specific things that we can choose to do to

build our confidence and faith substance in the spirit realm (see

Heb. 11:1). The keys are just four examples of many things that

can be done to strengthen faith. This is not about earning salvation,

so the “good works” argument is not applicable.

FAITH IS CONFIDENCE

There has been a lot of teaching surrounding the word *faith*.

Sometimes it can seem like the very definition of the word might be

convoluted. I would suggest that we can use another word when

we are trying to express ourselves regarding faith.

The word *confidence* is an excellent substitute that the world

understands much more clearly. In fact, the word *confidence* can be

traced back to two Latin root words, *com-* and *fidere*, which

together mean "with faith." So when I

speak to a non-Christian on

the street and tell them that I have confidence that God wants to

save their soul, I am literally saying that I have faith that God

wants to save them. Also, when I say that fasting builds my faith,

I am saying that it builds my confidence, as does praying in the

Spirit, or hearing the prophetic word. This change of terminology

will bring much clarity for some of us.

ACTIVATION

To build your faith, follow the next four suggestions:

1. Pick a time to fast, perhaps a meal, a day, or a week, then

follow through.

2. M ake a habit of praying in tongues. Set your watch for three

minutes and pray right now.

3. Read the Word until the Holy Spirit lifts a verse off the page

to you. This verse may speak to you in

an intimate way, or it may

seem to have revelation for you. Carry this Word around in your

heart all day, and the next day repeat.

4. Call someone who encourages your faith, someone you look

up to. Invite them to have lunch with you. Pull on their faith—and

be provoked to a greater walk with the Lord. Ask them questions.

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CHAPTER 13

BIBLICAL MEDITATION

A Different Kind of Meditation

THE FALSE RELIGIONS of the world —Hinduism, Buddhism,

Islam, and the New Age to name a few —teach that meditation is

emptying the mind to have spiritual experiences. This is their

understanding of meditation.

The Bible teaches us to meditate in a fundamentally different

way—it directs us to meditate on the Word and wait on God. The

Bible even tells us what to fill the mind with. In the Word there are

five categories on which we are to meditate.

1. MEDITATE ON GOOD THINGS

M any people suffer from various mental and emotional illnesses

because they only meditate on bad and negative things. Proverbs

23:7 says, *"For as [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he"* (NKJV).

We must choose what thoughts we entertain. Because our thoughts

influence and change us, they can make or break us; they manifest

as the life that we live.

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever

things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are

pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good

report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything

praiseworthy—meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8

NKJV).

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my

heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord…" (Psalms 19:14

NKJV).

"May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the

Lord" (Psalms 104:34 NKJV).

2.MEDITATE ON THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible is *"God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking,*

correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God

may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-

17). The importance of meditating on the Word is self-evident to

many of us. But for good measure, consider Joshua 1:8:

"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth;

meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do

everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and

successful."

One of my favorite books of the Bible is Proverbs. When I

read it and a verse speaks to me, I repeat it out loud several times. I

ponder it, and I chew on it. Then I carry that verse in my heart and

mind all day long. It becomes my bread for that day. The next day

I open Proverbs again and pull out another piece of bread. If I can

find a way to incorporate that word for the day into a conversation

with someone, this helps me remember the verse for the future.

The true value of Scripture

memorization is in application.

3.MEDITATE ON PROPHETIC WORDS

There are many things that should be done with prophetic

words: testing, judging, proving, warring with, praying over them,

and walking them out. One aspect that seems to be under-taught is

that we should meditate upon our prophetic words. First Timothy

4:14-15 says, *"Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was*

given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the

eldership.

Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them,

that your progress may be evident to all."

I take this category very seriously. In fact I have a three-ring

binder containing sheets of paper on which I have printed all the

prophetic words that I have received. I take this with me when I

travel; I read it before meetings, after meetings, when I am tired,

and so forth. This is a constant source of encouragement, and it

keeps my vision focused on the calling of my life. Just as Paul

advised Timothy, I give myself to my prophecies.

4. MEDITATE ON THE LORD HIMSELF

"When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night

watches" (Ps. 63:6). By keeping our

mind focused on the Lord, we

encourage our abiding relationship with Him. There are many ways

to meditate on the Lord. One of the most practical that I have

found is focusing on the names of the Lord. Names equal nature, so

by revealing His names to us, God has revealed His nature to us. If

He says that His name is, *"Jehovah Rapha, the Lord our healer,"*

then He is sharing with you that His nature is that of a healer.

Here are some of the names of the Lord with which to begin

your study:

El-shaddai—The almighty god (see Gen. 17:1-2)

Jehovah-Jireh—The Lord Our Provider (see Gen. 22:14)

Jehovah-Rapha—The lord Our healer (see Exod. 15:22-

26)

Jehovah-Tsidqenu—The lord Our righteousness (see Jer.

33:16)

Jehovah-Nissi—The lord is My Banner (see Exod. 17:15)

Jehovah-shalom—The lord Our Peace (see Judg. 6:24)

Jehovah-shammah—The lord is There (see Ezek. 48:35)

Jehovah-sabaoth—The lord of hosts (see Rom. 9:29)

I regularly go on walks around my neighborhood. As I walk, I

pray and talk with God. I tell Him everything I am thinking and

what is on my heart. At these times the Lord usually reminds me

of one of His names. Perhaps I tell Him that I am upset and

confused because someone I prayed for didn't get healed. He

settles my heart and reminds me that He is Jehovah Rapha, The

Lord M y Healer. Sometimes while praying I share how weak I am

in a certain area, and then I declare, "Lord You are my…

(righteousness, healer, provider, etc.—

fill in the blank). M editating

on God Himself has been a large part of my prayer life.

5.MEDITATE ON THE WORKS OF GOD

“In the Old Testament the word *testimony* comes from the word,

“do again.” The implication is that God wants to repeat His

wonderful works when we speak of what He has done. In the New

Testament we have a confirmation of that principle in Revelation

19:10 *"...the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* [1] This means that when we bring a testimony of the works of God to

remembrance, we are actually prophesying that He can do it again

now, because *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and*

forever" (Heb. 13:8).

M editating on and remembering the works of God are major

keys to seeing them repeated. King David understood this well.

That is why when he was in a period of suffering he would

meditate on God's past works. This not only encouraged David,

but it also prophesied into the atmosphere that God could do it

again.

"And I said, "This is my anguish; but I will remember the

years of the right hand of the Most High." I will remember the

works of the Lord; surely I will remember your wonders of

old. I will also meditate on all your work, and talk of Your

deeds" (Psalms 77:10-12).

"I remember the days of old; I meditate on all Your

works; I muse on the work of Your hands" (Psalms 143:5).

It is incredibly important to carry the works of God with

you. Some of my favorite conversations are the ones where I can

tell a new friend stories of when I have seen God at work. For

example, when I recount to a new person my story of how a

lemon-sized tumor disappeared under my hand as I prayed, the

story reinvigorates my spirit with life. It stirs the Spirit of God

within me. When I speak into the atmosphere of something God

has done, the atmosphere becomes charged for God to do that same

work again, and the faith level rises. Carrying the testimonies of

what Jesus has done brings life to dead

Christianity. I have found

that non-Christians perk up and become interested when I tell the

stories of what I have seen God do. Legalism and quoting Scripture

without love has turned the world off toward us, but people listen

eagerly if we are sharing the stories of the works of God.

THE IMAGINATION IS THE MEDITATION

ORGAN OF YOUR SPIRIT

"I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be

enlightened*in order that you may know the hope to which He*

has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in the

saints"(Ephesians 1:18).

If Paul is going to tell the Ephesians that he is praying for

them, don't you think he would choose his words carefully? This

shows the value that Paul put on receiving enlightenment for the

spiritual eyes. The eyes of the heart refer to the human

imagination. Clearly this was understood as important in the first

century, whereas in the modern Church the imagination has been

made a low priority and moved to the fringes of Christendom. In

fact people commonly invalidate anything that comes from the

imagination with statements like, “Oh that is *just* my imagination.”

This is unfortunate and we need to stop

stifling what God is trying

to say to us through our imagination. Adam and Eve had an

imagination before the fall of mankind. Therefore, the imagination

is not inherently evil. Now that we are believers, we need to take

back the realm of the imagination and stop invalidating everything

that comes from it. Even Jesus validated the power of the human

imagination.

You have heard that it was said, "Do not commit adultery.

"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has

already committed adultery with her in his heart" (M atthew

5:27-28).

Jesus said that simply using the imagination is as valid as

having done it in real life. Understand that if a person sins in the

imagination realm, when they step back into the natural realm, they

bring back with them the stain of the sin they just committed. The

imagination realm releases actual realities in the physical. It is clear

that Jesus is speaking of this in a negative context, but in general

this validates the power and legitimacy of the imagination. When

He says that adultery is committed in the heart, He is referring to

the human imagination. This would be an example of using the

imagination in meditation in the negative

sense. Yet it validates the

power and reality of the imagination.

The imagination is the creative organ of your spirit. For

example, all inventions in the earth have come from someone's

imagination. It has been said that "everything that now exists was

once imagined." Even when God determined to create the earth and

each person on the earth, He would have imagined first what He

was creating. God has quite an imagination!

If you are constantly invalidating your imagination while you

are awake, then many times God will begin to open your spiritual

eyes while you are asleep and dreaming. When the senses of your

physical body and soul are at rest, then God is able to bypass any

resistance and speak directly to your spirit. *"For God may speak*

in one way or in another, yet man does

not perceive it, in a dream,

in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while

slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals

their instruction" (Job 33:14-16 NKJV).

Another author made a great point about invalidating the

imagination of children. "What child has not heard something in

their room during the night? What youngster has not seen

something in the closet? Desiring to comfort their children, but

without an appreciation for spiritual encounters, parents

inadvertently taught their children that their perceptions were

irrational. They turned on the lights to "prove" that nothing was

there, or opened the closet door and demonstrated that it was just

their imagination.

This is often the beginning of our schooling in Western

rationalism, which trains us to doubt our experiences, attributing

them to the mere antics of a hyperactive imagination.

It is time to retrain ourselves in the innocent belief of early

childhood. When young Samuel heard a voice calling his name in

the Temple, Eli did not respond, “You’re just hearing things. Look,

I will light this oil lamp and prove no one is there. Your

imagination is getting the best of you!”

Thankfully, Samuel did not

have to “undo” bad teaching based on Eli’s lack of understanding of

the supernatural. This was a great advantage to him on his journey

to becoming one of Israel’s great prophets[2] (see 1 Sam 3:1-10).

USE YOUR IMAGINATION

The imagination is similar to a television set; it is not essentially

good or evil. As with a television, evil can be projected on the

imagination, but this does not make the imagination evil.

Conversely, Christian and educational programming can be

projected on the television, but this doesn't make the television

righteous. The television and the imagination are always just

conduits.

The imagination is like the television screen, and there is the

opportunity to project the things of the flesh or the things of the

spirit upon it. The goal is to project on the imagination the

righteous things of the spirit. This is done by biblical meditation.

God put an imagination inside every person; it is not a

byproduct of the fall of Adam. Adam's imagination is evidenced

by his naming all the animals before the fall into sin. We need to be

careful that we don't invalidate the voice of our discernment if it

comes by way of the imagination. God

put your imagination in

you, and He is trying to talk to you through it.

EXPERIENCE THE WORD

The goal of operating our imagination through biblical meditation

is to enter into an interactive experience.

*"For **the word of God is living and active.** Sharper than*

any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul

and spirit, jointsand marrow; it judges

the thoughts and

attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

Consider carefully what this verse says. It makes an amazing

statement that has far-reaching effects. If something is alive and

active, then you can interact with it, and it will be responsive and

communicate with you. If someone is dead, I can talk to him or her

all day, but we won't experience each other. If he or she is alive,

then we can talk to each other and interact. If I have a statue of a

dog, then I do have a dog, but it is not living and active. This is

similar to how many people approach the Word. In reality, the

Word is like having a living puppy; it is alive and active, and when

you draw near to God, He draws near to you (James 4:8). When I

open the Word and am ready to experience it, the Word greets me

like a puppy welcoming home his owner.

This life and activity that

the puppy exhibits gives us a picture of how the Word "jumps" on

us and wants us to interact with it.

Jesus also stated that *"The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts*

for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are

life" (John 6:63). The Word is alive, and it dwells in the spirit

because it is spirit. We cannot read the Word only with our fleshly

mind; we must engage it in our spirit for it to be properly read. It

must be meditated on in our spirit and our imagination.

In John 17:17, Jesus prayed for His disciples: *"Sanctify them*

by the truth; Your word is truth." An interesting insight about this

verse is that the root word for "truth" can also mean "reality"

(Greek: *aletheia). Vine's Expository Dictionary* definition of *truth* is

"the reality lying at the basis of an

appearance; the manifested,

veritable, essence of a matter. ”3 (I will go into this more in the next

chapter.)

Therefore, the Word of God has a reality or realm inside it,

and we can enter into the reality of each verse. The Word was

given to us so that we can enter into this reality regularly. The

Word and the Holy Spirit are our guides in this realm; Jesus said

that the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth.

So, the Holy Spirit is our guide in the reality or realm of the

Word. There are countless testimonies of Christians who have had

prophetic experiences where they entered into one of these realms

of the Word. These should encourage and inspire us to enter in and

experience the realities of the Word for ourselves.

HEAVENLY ROOMS

If you are still wondering how you can enter into the realms of

the Word, let me share a personal example. I was attending a

conference in November 2005, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. A

friend of mine laid his hand on my chest in prayer, and I had a very

powerful reaction. In the physical, it felt like a fire had entered into

my chest—it hurt so much I was almost scared. I slumped forward

onto the floor, and I entered into a

prophetic experience. I came

back to my physical awareness two hours later. During this

experience, the Lord showed me four different rooms in Heaven.

The first room looked like a warehouse with shelves full of

body parts. I sensed that these could be used for people who need

physical healing. I believe that when we pray, God already has the

parts ready, and somehow He just deposits these into people, and

they get healed.

The second room was full of diamonds. When I picked one

up and looked closely, I could see the face of a person in each one.

I understand this to be the way that Jesus sees each of us. As I

turned the diamond in my hand, I could see through it in a new

way and see different facets of the person's character. You are

literally one of God's gems; He treasures you like a diamond.

The third room was full of paper money of all colors, shapes,

and sizes. I sensed that I was looking at a representation of all the

types of money in the earth. The Lord was showing me His

finance chamber; this was a prophetic vision of "His riches in

glory" (Phil. 4:19 NKJV). As He showed me this, He gave me

peace that He has all the provision and can always take care of me;

this strengthened my faith greatly.

The last room was warm and moist; it seemed round, like

being inside a ball. The walls were pink and somewhat flesh-

colored. I saw Jesus standing next to me, and I asked Him what

this room was. He replied, “This is the reality of Colossians 3:3.” I

heard the verse resounding in my spirit, *“For you died, and*

your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). I

realized that in the vision I was inside

the heart of God the Father,

hidden with Christ. I was actually standing inside the heart of God.

This is one example of how we can enter into the realms of

the Word. But this is only one verse. I believe that every verse has

a prophetic potential, that all of the Word is living and active and

ready to engage us, that all of God's Word is truth and has a realm

that we can enter into. Now Colossians 3:3 will always have a

personal meaning to me because I have experienced it.

IS THE IMAGINATION DANGEROUS?

When we are pursuing the Lord in the person of Jesus Christ,

we have no reason to be afraid. Jesus said,

Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give

him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a

scorpion? If you then, though you are

evil, know how to give

good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father

in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! (Luke

11:11-13).

Yes, it is true that there are scorpions and snakes in the world

of the evil imagination. But when we are pursuing God in the Word

through the imagination, it would be an insult to the nature of God

to be afraid that you are going to receive something dangerous. God

is big enough to protect us, and we need not fear. This fear of the

imagination stems from a weak view of God and an inaccurate view

of the strength of the devil. God wants us to enter in, and He will

protect us when we do.

ACTIVATION

Use your imagination to engage in meditating on each of the five

categories of biblical meditation. I encourage you to activate your

spirit and engage in the Word every time you read the Bible; make

this a regular practice.

1. Good Things

2. The Word of God (Good visionary passages to start with

include the following: Isa. 6; Rev. 1; 4; 22; Ezek. 37; 47; Dan. 10.)

3. Prophetic Words

4. The Lord Himself

5. The Works of God

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CHAPTER 14

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

I WAS WITH 5,000 home group leaders at a church in M anaus,

Brazil. The presence of God was incredibly tangible during

worship. Then Gary Oates got up to speak, and the presence of

the Lord overwhelmed him and knocked him to the floor on the

platform. Randy Clark turned to Gary's wife, Kathi, and told her

to take over the service. As she took the microphone, she began to

prophesy over the nation of Brazil, and a powerful wind began to

blow through the church.

Gary Oates described the wind in his own words:

Inside, the wind was whipping around just like on the day

of Pentecost—a mighty rushing wind had come into the

house.1

It blew the potted plants on the stage wildly and even blew

open two large arched doors on the stage. While this was

happening, I stepped outside the church to see if there was any

natural explanation for the wind. Outside, it was eerily calm and

peaceful, no wind and no movement. What was happening inside

the church was clearly supernatural; the wind was so powerful that

it actually blew over a section of 400 empty chairs. Randy got up

and called for the ministry team to pray for the sick while the wind

continued.

Team members would later talk of strong winds blowing in a

circular motion around them as they ministered. Reports would

also come back that virtually everyone prayed over that day was

instantly healed.2

The deaf, in particular, seemed to receive healing. This wind

lasted for approximately two hours while we continued to pray for

the sick.

I believe that exceptionally strong worship was a major key in

the manifest presence that came down that day. They had a high

level of breakthrough in the realm of worship. There is more in

New Testament worship than much of the Church has realized.

Jesus brought an incredible shift in worship in the New Testament.

LOCATION IS THE KEY TO WORSHIP

In John 4 we find Jesus sitting at a well talking with a Samaritan

woman. Jesus, as always, is not concerned with the cultural taboos

that He is violating. Interacting with a Samaritan was a disgrace,

and to be interacting with a woman was

a double strike. Jesus

proceeds to engage her in a discussion about worship. She then

brings up a culturally controversial question. Where is the proper

place to worship—where the Jews worship or where the

Samaritans worship?

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that You are a prophet.

Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim

that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem" (John

4:19-20).

Jesus, always being one step ahead, gives her a totally

unexpected answer. He tells her of a whole new location for proper

worship. He says that the place of the Jew's worship and the

place of the Samaritan's worship are both being voided, and a new

place is being set up.

Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming

when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor

in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know;

we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true

worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they

are the kind of worshipers the Father

seeks. God is spirit and

His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." (John

4:21-24).

This woman's question concerns the location of our worship.

Jesus says that the previous locations of worship, whether on this

mountain or in Jerusalem, were no longer going to be used. Then

He speaks of a new location of worship that was coming in the

future. Worship must take place in spirit and in truth. Because

God is a spirit, our worship must be in the spirit realm.

We need to recognize the strong imperative of this statement:

*"Those who worship Him **must**…"* Our worship is missing a

fundamental element unless we gain insight into what the verse is

telling us we must do. Take a moment and consider how you have

understood this passage in the past or

how you have heard it

taught. M ost people have never been trained to look closely to find

out how to properly worship God as a spirit, and yet the key lies

right under our nose.

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH

The word *spirit* in John 4:24 could refer to the human spirit, the

Holy Spirit, or the spirit realm. In Greek there is one word for

spirit *(pnuema)*, and it can be difficult to

determine which meaning

of *spirit* is being conveyed. To determine the meaning of the word

spirit, we must always look at the context. The best way to do that

would be to understand what the word *truth* means.

The prolific author and teacher Watchman Nee gives the

following insight into John 4:

What then is spiritual reality? The Lord said that “God is

Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and

truthfulness" (John 4:24). The word truthfulness can be translated

as reality. As mentioned in the previous chapter, *Vine's Expository*

Dictionary defines truth [Greek: *aletheia]* as "the reality lying at

the basis of an appearance; the manifested, veritable, essence of a

matter."]3 The Lord also said, "But *when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality"* (16:13). First John 5:6

say s, *"The Spirit is He who testifies, because the Spirit is the*

reality." This shows us that God is Spirit, and everything related

to God has to be in spirit. The Spirit of truth is the Spirit of

reality. Hence, spiritual reality must be in the Holy Spirit.

Spiritual reality is something that transcends people and

things. Only that which is in the Holy Spirit is spiritual reality. All

spiritual things are sustained in the Holy

Spirit. Once a spiritual

thing moves away from the Holy Spirit, it becomes letter and form,

and it is dead. All spiritual things must be in the Holy Spirit before

they can be real, living, and organic. The Holy Spirit leads us into

all reality. Hence, any experience that we can acquire without the

guidance of the Holy Spirit is surely not spiritual reality. Anything

that we acquire through our ears, our mind, or our emotion alone is

not spiritual reality. Only the things that the Holy Spirit guides us

into are spiritual reality. [4]

We do not worship God merely in the physical realm; we are

to touch and tap into the spiritual reality. It is the spiritual reality

of Jesus that brings life, not just the physical knowledge.

Everything in the Kingdom of God is about entering into spiritual

reality. It is the Spirit that brings life, and we are ministers of the

Spirit.

"...God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the

new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter

kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:5-6 NKJV).

The Book of Revelation shows us that John practiced this

new worship in his personal life: *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's*

Day..." (Rev. 1:10). At this point, he was exiled on the island of

Patmos without a church or fellowship to support him, but he still

entered into the Spirit in worship. We can see from his example

that we can enter into the spirit realm and worship anytime and

anyplace

THE TENT OF DAVID

One of the most incredible corporate worship events in the Old

Testament occurred under the leadership of three seers—Asaph,

Heman, and Jeduthun. These were the same three seers who led the

constant worship in David's Tabernacle for 40 years. They also

each wrote psalms, which are contained in our modern Bibles (for

more information, review Chapter 5, "Prophets and Seers"). At the

dedication of the Temple of Solomon, as the people praised the

Lord in unison, the glory of God came down as a cloud:

"...the house of the Lord, was filled

with a cloud, so that

the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for

the glory of the Lord filled the house of God" (2 Chronicles

5:13b-14 NKJV).

The focus of our attention is on the three seers who were

leading when this occurred. God so enjoyed the worship that these

three men created in the Tabernacle and in the dedication service

that He released His manifested presence. The Lord so loved the

worship in the Tabernacle of David that it is the only Old

Testament model for worship that is carried over into the New

Testament.

All the animal sacrifice and all of the Old Testament altars are

left behind in the New Testament in favor of what the Book of

Hebrews calls a better covenant (see Heb. 8:6-13). The only

exception is an obscure prophecy in Amos that says that God will

raise up David's tent again:

"In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair

its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to

be" (Amos 9:11).

Hundreds of years later, the day finally came where the New

Testament declares that God has reestablished David's tent. Peter

stood before the Gentiles in Cornelius's house and, in essence, told

them that God had set up a place of worship that is accessible by

all people, at all times.

The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as

it is written: ***"After this I will return and rebuild David's***

fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, *that*

the remnant of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles

who bear My name, says the Lord, who does these things"

that have been known for ages" (Acts 15:15-18).

One part of this restoration, which is commonly overlooked,

is the restoration of seers in the worship realm. God desires to

restore the constant interactive worship of David's tent. Seers need

to be restored to the Body of Christ for Davidic worship to be

fully restored. Prepare to hear more

about worship leaders writing

songs from Heaven, seeing angels during worship, and being

directed by the presence of the Lord. This restoration is on the

move.

ACTIVATION

Set aside this book and put on your favorite worship music.

Close your eyes and engage in worship. As you do, ask the Lord to

show you what is happening in the spirit

realm around you.

Perhaps there are spiritual beings or objects in the room with you.

The next step is to ask the Lord if you should do something to

engage in the spiritual experience of worship. Perhaps if you see

water in the room in the spirit, the Lord might direct you to kneel

down in the water and be refreshed. Step out in faith and do what

the Lord directs. You can enter into an interactive experience in

worship whenever you want, by faith.

ENDNOTES

1. Gary Oates, *Open my Eyes, Lord* (Dallas, GA: Open

Heaven Publications, 2004), 100.

2. Ibid.

3. W. E. Vine and F. F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of*

Old and New Testament Words (Old Tappan, NJ:

Fleming H. Revell Co., 1981), 159.

4. Watchman Nee, *The Holy Spirit and Reality* (Anaheim, CA:

Living Stream M inistry, 2001), 7-8.

CHAPTER 15

ENTRUSTED WITH SECRETS

I HAVE WONDERFUL NEWS! The Lord has secrets, and He wants

to entrust them to His people! He even limits His movements and

activities until He has someone to share with what He is about to

do. The prophet Amos said it this way:

"Surely the Lord God

does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the

prophets" (Amos 3:7 NKJV).

A clear example of God revealing His secret before He would

move is found in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord

spoke first to His servant Abraham about what He was going to

do, and it gave Abraham the opportunity to intercede on behalf of

the two cities: *"Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to*

do?" (Gen. 18:17). He desires to share with us His secrets and

hear our input. There were also times that God shared His secret

plan to annihilate disobedient Israel, and M oses asked God not to

destroy them (Exodus 32).

When we begin to move into seeing and the prophetic, the

Lord at times will begin to reveal more of His secrets to us.

Remember, God does nothing unless He reveals His secret to His

servants the prophets. Note that this refers specifically to His

servants the prophets, not His servants the priests or His servants

the kings. Those who are leaning into God to hear His voice and

see into the spirit are the ones to whom He will entrust secrets.

We are under the New Covenant, where Jesus said that all of

His sheep can hear His voice (see John

10:27). I am not saying that

only prophets can hear the Lord and receive secrets. But the Lord

takes notice of those whom He can trust with His Word. The

apostle Paul goes so far as to define our identity in this way:

"...men ought to regard us as ***servants of Christ****and as*

those entrusted with the secret things*of God"* (1 Cor. 4:1).

EXAMPLES OF THE LORD HAVING

SECRETS

"The secret of the Lord*is with those who fear Him, and He*

will show them His covenant" (Psalms 25:14 NKJV).

"You have heard; see all this. And will you not declare it?

I have made you hear new things from this time, ***even hidden***

things, *and you did not know them"* (Isaiah 48:6).

"At that time Jesus answered and said, I *thank You,*

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that ***You have hidden these***

things*from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to*

babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight’”

(M atthew 11:25-26).

“Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new

things I declare; ***before they spring forth I tell you of them”***

(Isaiah 42:9 NKJV).

“But as it is written: ‘Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor

have entered into the heart of man the things which God has

prepared for those who love Him.’ But God has revealed them

to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes,

the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:9-10 NKJV).

“The secret things belong to the Lord*our God, but the*

things revealed belong to us and to our

children forever, that

we may follow all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy

29:29).

"It is the glory of God to ***conceal a matter,*** *but the glory of*

kings is to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25:2 NKJV).

PROPER STEWARDSHIP

The secrets that the Lord shows to us each carry a weight of

responsibility. Bill Johnson says, "By

keeping revelation from

those without hunger, God actually protects them from certain

failure to carry the responsibility it would lay on them. And so He

conceals." 1 Be careful what you ask for, because you have a

responsibility for the revelations that the Lord shows you.

For example, when Saul had a powerful revelation of the Lord

Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, it became his responsibility

to properly carry that revelation. The greater the revelation, the

heavier the responsibility we have. Be careful what level of

revelation you ask for, because you will be held accountable for it:

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be

demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much,

much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48b).

Later, in a similar manner Jesus said,

“Whoever can be

trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and

whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with

much” (Luke 16:10).

Jesus also said, *“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not*

throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them

under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces”

(M atthew 7:6).

If Jesus shares a secret with you, it should be treated as a

pearl. Be a good steward of what He reveals. There are some

people who, through ignorance or close-mindedness, would not

receive our sharing the secrets of God with them as a good thing.

They would trample what we have shared under their feet and then

turn and tear us to pieces. Jesus is warning us to use wisdom and

discernment about with whom to share secrets.

Ecclesiastes 3:7 tells us that there is *"a time to be silent and a*

time to speak." Not every secret that the Lord shows us is

intended to remain a secret forever. Perhaps there is timing for

when that revelation is to be released. M any people share what

God has shown them too soon, and this cuts them off from deeper

revelations because they cannot be

trusted.

We need to be sure that it is okay to share our information

before we get ahead of God. Ask Him if it is wise to share your

revelation. If you feel any sense of hesitation in your spirit, hold

back until you have a peace about sharing. This could save much

criticism and broken trust from happening. There is a time to be

silent and a time to speak, and some secrets are revealed over time.

To reveal them early would be like having a premature baby, very

dangerous and much more work than if time had been given for

maturation.

I've heard Larry Randolph say, *"The true test of a prophet is*

not what he knows, but what he dies knowing." There are

revelations that God will entrust us with, and we will be tested on

the basis of our faithfulness in keeping His secrets. Some of these

things will be between us and Him for our entire life, and He will

hold us accountable for these secrets. There are things that, out of

relationship, I share only with my wife. These are things that only

she will carry all of her life and a portion of her faithfulness can be

proven by how she keeps these secrets. Our relationship to Jesus

our bridegroom is similar.

JOSEPH

The story of Joseph is a familiar one for many. In Genesis 37,

we learn that Joseph, as a young man, had two prophetic dreams

from the Lord while he slept. He told his family of the dreams, and

they were divided into two reactions. His father rebuked him for

what was most likely arrogance, and his brothers hated him even

more:

His brothers said to him, "Do you intend to reign over

us? Will you actually rule us?" And they hated him all the

more because of his dream and what he had said…. When he

told his father as well as his brothers, his father rebuked him

and said, "What is this dream you had? Will your mother and

I and your brothers actually come and bow down to the

ground before you?" ***His brothers were jealous of him, but***

his father kept the matter in mind

(Genesis 37:8-11).

His brothers and dad responded very differently to the same

revelation from God. Imagine if Joseph had not told his brothers,

but had only told his father. His life may have been very different.

The only difference in the story was the listener. Know your

audience before you share your secrets.

Another principle from this story is that your spiritual father

may be safer to share secret revelations with than those who are on

your same level. Envy is often an issue between siblings (Jacob and

Esau, David and his brothers, Rachel and Leah).

THE APOSTLE JOHN

Over the last 2,000 years, millions of people have read the Book

of Revelation. In chapter 10, only the apostle John was privy to

hearing what the voice of the seven thunders spoke. Jesus trusted

John with this revelation and told him not to write it down for us.

This was a very intimate thing for the Lord to do for John. It was

private revelation meant only for John's ears.

"When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke.

And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but

I heard a voice from heaven say, 'Seal up what the seven

thunders have said and do not write it

down’” (Revelation

10:3-4).

SAMSON’S HAIR

The Lord sent an angel to Samson’s parents before he was born.

He brought them a prophetic message about their coming child and

told them that their son would be a Nazarite, which means that

they were not to cut his hair, nor let him drink alcohol or touch a

dead body. It is important to note that the

angel never spoke of

Samson's incredible strength, or the secret of his weakness.

Samson's parents would be as surprised as anybody.

A certain man of Zorah, named Manoah, from the clan of

the Danites, had a wife who was sterile and remained

childless. The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said,

"You are sterile and childless, but you are going to conceive

and have a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other

fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean,

because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor

may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazarite,

set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance

of Israel from the hands of the Philistines (Judges 13:2-5).

I believe that the secret of Samson's

strength was a personal

revelation to Samson from the Lord. At some point he came to

understand the secret, keeping in mind that the angel never revealed

the secret of Samson's strength. Samson's downfall would be the

result of him sharing his personal revelation with Delilah:

"So he told her everything. 'No razor has ever been used

on my head." he said, "because I have been a Nazarite set

apart to God since birth. ***If my head were shaved, my strength***

would leave me, and I would become as weak as any other

man'" (Judges 16:17).

I would conjecture that the power was not only in the hair on

his head, but was also contained in his ability to steward the secret

revelation from the Lord. When he shared the revelation, the

ultimate result was that the secret was used against him.

Having put him to sleep on her lap, she called a man to

shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue

him. And his strength left him (Judges 16:19).

If God entrusts private revelation to us, then we should be

careful about being a good steward of His trust. If God can trust

us, then He can give us power, but if we betray that trust, we

"become as weak as any other."

Not only did he become as weak as any other man, but the

enemy took advantage of the situation, gouged out Samson's eyes,

and put him into laborious bondage. This is a prophetic image of

what can happen to us spiritually when we fail to steward the

secrets of the Lord correctly.

KING HEZEKIAH

King Hezekiah was extremely blessed in material goods from the

Lord. He had riches, favor, silver, gold, spices, armor, gems, cattle,

grain, and so on. One day, the rulers of Babylon sent out envoys to

investigate what was taking place in Israel. The Word says that

God left Hezekiah to test him and to know what was in his heart

(see 2 Chron. 32:27-31).

Hezekiah received the messengers and showed them ***all***

that was in his storehouses*— the silver, the gold, the spices*

and the fine oil—his armory and everything found among his

treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his

kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them (2 Kings 20:13).

King Hezekiah exercised no discretion in revealing the riches

that God had given him. The handling of the riches was the test

that the Lord used to prove his character. Hezekiah failed the test

big time.

Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked,

"What did those men say, and where did they come from?"

"From a distant land," Hezekiah replied. "They came from

Babylon." The prophet asked, "What did they see in your

palace?" "They saw everything in my palace," Hezekiah said.

"There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show

them" (2 Kings 20:14-15).

As with Samson, Hezekiah received judgment for failing to

steward properly. It is imperative that we learn to be good

stewards who the Lord can trust. Tests will come; may we all pass

through the fire unscathed.

Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Hear the word of the

Lord: The time will surely come when everything in your

palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day,

will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the

LORD. And some of your descendants, your own flesh and

blood that will be born to you will be taken away, and they will

become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon" (2 Kings

20:16-18; Isaiah 39:1-8).

SECRETS ARE A BLESSING

This chapter has had a lot of teaching about caution. I want to

reemphasize that it is a blessing to receive the secrets of the Lord,

and if we steward correctly, then we can enjoy the blessing

without worry. Let us diligently pursue revelation from the Lord:

"But 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 diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

ACTIVATION

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit will tell us of things to come (see

John 16:13). Ask the Lord to show you a secret about your future.

Once He has shown you something, ask Him if you can share this,

with whom, and when.

Write down today's date, the guidelines the Lord gave you,

and when (or if) you can share the secret.

ENDNOTES

1. Bill Johnson, *Dreaming With God* (Shippensburg, PA:

Destiny Image, 2006), 60.

CHAPTER 16

FROM GLORY TO GLORY

M UCH HAS ALREADY BEEN SAID about how to press in by faith,

walk in love, increase discernment, and so on. At this point, I want

to end the book on this final note—continually push forward for

more. Before you read this book, you

had certain views, opinions,

and understandings; hopefully, you have been stretched and

challenged.

M y goal has not been just to give you more information, but

to create a hunger within you, to reawaken that desire to obtain

more spiritual life in Jesus. We need to press in for progression, for

growth, for more! I want to take this chapter to exhort you and

remind you that it is the very nature of the Kingdom of God to

progress. The Word says that we move:

From grace to grace (John 1:16)

Strength to strength (Ps. 84:7)

Faith to faith (Rom. 1:17)

Glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18)

And grow brighter and brighter (Prov. 4:18)

In Ezekiel 47:1-5, Ezekiel had a prophetic experience with

the river of God. He waded into the water and took four

measurements. The first measurement had the water at ankle level,

the second at the knees, the third up to the waist, and the final

measurement had the water over his head. This is a clear picture of

the nature of the Kingdom of God; we should be progressing until

we are in way over our heads in the river of God.

One of the messianic prophecies over

Jesus was, *"Of the*

increase of His government and peace there shall be no end..."

(Isa. 9:7). Jesus set in motion a Kingdom that is still progressing

and being established more and more each day.

Jesus said it this way: " *The Kingdom of Heaven is like*

a mustard seed planted in a field. It is the smallest of all seeds,

but it becomes the largest of garden plants; it grows into a

tree, and birds come and make nests in its branches" (see

M att. 13:31-32).

Jesus also used this illustration:

The Kingdom of Heaven is like the yeast a woman used

in making bread. Even though she put only a little yeast in

three measures of flour, it permeated every part of the dough

(see M att. 13: 33).

The Kingdom of God is never

stagnant; it is always

progressing forward and taking ground.

THE NATURE OF GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH US

Sometimes we in the Church have said that if God wants us to

grow, then He will just do all the work. I hope that nobody

consciously thinks this, but it is declared loud and clear by the

actions and lifestyle of many. This lazy approach to the Christian

walk is connected to an extremely inaccurate view of the

sovereignty of God. We find a great example of God Himself

correcting this view in the story of M oses.

Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm

and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today.

The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. ***The***

Lord will fight*for you;* ***you need only***

to be still” *Then the*

Lord said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the

Israelites to ***move on.*** *Raise your staff and stretch out your*

hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can

go through the sea on dry ground (Exodus 14:13-16).

Our understanding of the sovereignty of God will determine

whether we continue to progress with God. He reigns over all, but

He has given us authority that He wants us to operate in so we can

move forward in our call and destiny. If we sit by and just say that

God will handle everything, then we don't understand the nature of

God's relationship with us, and we will not move forward with the

Lord. The Word says that He has given us everything we need for

life and godliness and that we are to walk out our salvation with

fear and trembling. We need to hunger

and thirst for righteousness,

to press in for more, to pursue love and the spiritual gifts.

OLD TESTAMENT PRINCIPLES

Even before Jesus established the Kingdom of God on earth in

the New Testament, He gave us a major clue in the Old Testament

as to why the Kingdom would be progressive in nature:

I will send the hornet ahead of you to drive the Hivites,

Canaanites and Hittites out of your way. But I will not drive

them out in a single year, because the land would become

desolate and the wild animals too numerous for you. Little by

little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased

enough to take possession of the land (Exodus 23:28-30).

God desires a systematic, progressive destruction of the

enemy through us. He wants to walk with

us while we take ground

for Him in this world, inch by inch. The Lord even left certain

enemies for His children to fight, so that His children would be

grown and developed. This idea of God not doing all the work for

us and actually wanting us to be involved may be difficult for

some, so let's look deeper in the Word.

These are the nations that the Lord left in the land to test

those Israelites who had not experienced the wars of Canaan

(He did this only to teach warfare to the descendants of the

Israelites who had not had previous battle experience)…*They*

were left to test the Israelites to see whether they would obey

the Lord's commands, which He had given their forefathers

through Moses (Judges 3:1-4).

There are many places in the Word where we find the Lord

leaving difficult circumstances for His children to press through.

This is not meant to discourage or defeat us; this is a setup for

victory. You don't have a victory without a battle. Think about the

battles of the Old Testament, such as Gideon and his 300 men

defeating a vastly larger foe (see Judg. 7:1-25). If God hadn't left

an enemy, then they would never have had such a testimony of

victory. Again, after Joshua and the

people marched around Jericho

for seven days, the walls collapsed, and the Israelites had another

testimony of victory (see Josh. 6:1-27). If God were to do all the

work and destroy every enemy without our involvement, then

what value would we place on that victory?

Before we were saved, we were hopeless and without any

ability to defeat satan. Jesus had to pull us out completely of His

own power and forgive us and then seat us in heavenly places with

Him. But that is our history. We are now in the Kingdom, and our

call is to work with Him to progress this Kingdom forward

together. Do not ever stop pushing and claim that you have it all,

because God always wants to give you more revelation,

understanding, and victory.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Because I am a seer, people often ask me about spiritual warfare.

M y understanding of this topic revolves around three words,

identity, authority, and *triumph*.

In the life of Jesus we observe a face to face encounter with

satan himself. M ost would agree that this is the highest level of

spiritual warfare that any individual could ever encounter. If you

look closely at the warfare plan of satan, he spent his time focusing

on Jesus' identity. Satan says twice to Jesus, *"If you are the Son of*

God…" (M att. 4:3, 6) The battle revolved around Jesus being

secure in His identity. This is also true of us as well. M uch of the

so-called "spiritual warfare" in the Church would be more healthy

if the Church firmly grasped its identity in Christ.

AUTHORITY

The authority we have been given as believers is contained in our

identity. The truth is that we have been put into Christ. *"In Him*

we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). *"We abide in*

Him and Him in us" (John 15:4). *"We have been seated with Him*

in heavenly places" (Eph. 2:6). *"Greater is He who is in me than*

he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). *We should experience the*

truth of being "more than conquerors" (Romans 8:37). Christians

should be able to truly declare I *"can do*

all things through Christ

who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:13). The Word tells us that we are

one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). Therefore, the authority that we

see in the life of Jesus is the authority that we have been given. He

gave us the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (M att. 16:19).

There is no question about us having all authority so long as

we comprehend our identity. If we understand that we abide in

Christ, which also means that we abide in His authority, then our

spiritual warfare is very different. We are not fighting for victory,

we are fighting from victory. Jesus already fought and won the

battle against satan, and then Jesus put us inside Himself so that

we can walk in this same victory. If you are not living your life

inside of Jesus, then you have not received eternal life; the only

way that we have eternal life is by being

in the Son.

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life,

and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who

does not have the Son of God does not have life (1 John 5:11-

12).

TRIUMPH

It is important to grasp the difference between two specific

words: *victory* and *triumph*. For

example, at a soccer game when

the end of the game comes, the team with the most goals wins and

the winning team has achieved victory. Triumph is what takes

place after victory has been achieved. Triumph is the celebration in

the streets, the pubs, and the workplace. Triumph is the jumping

up and down, the yelling and the obnoxious, grandiose boasting

that occurs in the face of the losing opponent. We are not still

fighting a battle against satan and we are not looking for victory;

we are enforcing and reveling in the victory that is already ours; we

are triumphing in our King Jesus. *"He always leads us in triumph*

in Christ Jesus…" (2 Cor. 2:14).

We know that satan wants the Church to think that she is

fighting him, because he does not want the Church to understand

that he has been defeated. We are currently on earth as

ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:19, 20) enforcing and advancing

the application of Jesus' victory.

Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He

Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death

He might render powerless him who had the power of death,

that is, the devil*, and might free those who through fear of*

death were subject to slavery all their lives (Hebrews 2:14-

15).

Then the end will come, when He hands over the kingdom

to God the Father after He has destroyed all dominion,

authority and power. For ***He must reign until He has put all***

His enemies under His feet. *The last enemy to be destroyed is*

death (1 Corinthians 15:24-26).

But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice

for sins, He sat down at the right hand of God. ***Since that***

time He waits for His enemies to be made His

footstool, *because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever*

those who are being made holy (Hebrews 10:12-14).

These verses show that satan has been rendered powerless

and that Jesus' Kingdom is advancing and placing all of satan's

works under His feet. As the Book of

Romans says, *"The God of*

peace will soon crush satan under your feet." (Rom. 16:20)—satan

cannot even stand eye to eye to fight us because he is being put

under Jesus' feet and under our feet.

The apostle Paul wrote much on the subject of spiritual

warfare in the New Testament. Yet because of cultural differences,

we have overlooked some of his best insights. For example, we

miss a lot of the meaning in Colossians 2:15:

"And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he

made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the

cross."

When Paul uses the word *disarmed* in this passage, he is

making a first-century cultural metaphor. Paul is saying that Jesus

totally stripped satan of all his power and authority. It was a term

used for the disarming of a defeated foe. When a Roman general had

a notable victory, he was allowed to march his victorious armies

through the streets of Rome. Behind his chariot were chained all

the kings and the leaders he had vanquished. They were stripped

naked, chained, and pulled behind the conquering general through

the streets. They were publicly humiliated and openly branded as

his spoils.

Paul thinks of Jesus as a conqueror enjoying a kind of cosmic

triumph. In Jesus' triumphal procession are the powers of evil,

beaten forever, for everyone to see and we have been put in Him,

so we are in the chariot with Jesus, and satan is now naked and

powerless. The answer to all questions about spiritual warfare

comes back to this: Triumph is the foundation of my theology.

ACTIVATION

M ake a plan for integrating godly habits for growth. Start with

what you have learned here and then expand upon it. This is only

the beginning.

Enter worship in S pirit and in Truth.

Regularly behold Jesus.

Pursue impartation.

Keep your spiritual eyes clean.

Write a letter to yourself from Jesus.

Acknowledge the love shed abroad in

your heart.

Ask the Lord to share secrets with you.

PRACTICE THE FOUR KEYS:

1. Fasting and prayer

2. Praying in the Spirit

3. Hearing from God

4. Fellowshiping with people of faith

DECLARE TO THE LORD:

1. *Jesus, I will pursue you no matter what*.

2. *I will overcome offense and disappointment to follow You.*

3. *I will follow, full of faith.*

FIVE MEDITATIONS

1. Good Things

2. The Word of God

3. Prophetic Words

4. The Lord Himself

5. The Works of God

CONCLUSION

I RECENTLY WAS READING through a “spiritual gifts for

dummies” type of book. As I looked at the table of contents, I

noticed that there was a chapter listed for each of the nine gifts.

Discerning of spirits and prophecy had been grouped together in

one chapter. I flipped through the 20 pages of this combined

chapter and found that the first 18 pages were about prophecy

only, and the last 2 pages were about

discerning of spirits. In this

165-page foundational book, there were only 2 pages on this

neglected gift of the Spirit. Within the two pages there were at least

five noncommittal statements about what this gift “might be,”

“could possibly be,” or “perhaps could be.” The author wasn’t

even sure what this gifting is.

Then I did a search online for discernment ministries. The top

ten results on a Google search yielded the most anti-Holy Spirit,

judgmental and harsh Web sites. Filled with hatred and bearing

false witness, these sites offer a discernment that originates from

the flesh and not the supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit. I say all

this to reinforce that discerning of spirits desperately needs to be

restored to the modern Church.

Of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit, eight of the gifts have

each gone through a process of being restored (Acts 3:21) into a

place of prominence in the Church. Let me explain.

The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues both went

through a process of being restored to the Church starting in 1906

at the Azusa Street Revival. Since then, these two gifts have gained

normalcy in many denominations. The gifts of healing and word of

knowledge were restored to the Church

through the 1948 Voice of

Healing movement. After this, the gift of faith was brought back to

the Church by such wonderful teachers as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth

Copeland, and the Word of Faith movement. The gifts of prophecy

and word of wisdom were brought back by the ministry of

Christian International, the Kansas City Prophets, and the

Vineyard movement in the 1980s.

The only two gifts that have not yet been through a full

restoration are the gift of miracles and the gift of discerning of

spirits. I believe that the gift of miracles has started to be restored

as of the mid-1990s. Consider the vast miracles that have

happened under such ministers as Heidi Baker, David Hogan, Bill

Johnson, Randy Clark, and many others. There have been

thousands upon thousands of miraculous

physical healings taking

place around the world. Also, there have been hundreds of people

raised from the dead in the last 15 years. I believe that we are

currently experiencing the restoration of the gift of miracles to the

Body of Christ. Consider the unexplainable manifestations of

God’s glory, such as gold dust, heavenly manna, heavenly

gemstones, feathers falling in meetings, limbs growing out,

instantaneous weight-loss, and others.

FORERUNNERS

Every gift that has gone through restoration has had a group of

people working to restore the gift. Whether prophets, apostles,

healers, teachers, or evangelists, God always raises up forerunners

before He initiates the restoration. Currently, He has set in the

Church those with the spiritual gifting as seers to train others in

the gift of discerning of spirits. In this next move of the Holy

Spirit, because it is their primary gifting, God will be using seers to

teach the rest of the Body of Christ how to operate in the gift of

discerning of spirits. Prepare to hear more about seers in the years

ahead.

WHY IS DISCERNMENT LAST?

I believe that the gift of discerning of spirits is purposefully the

last gift on God's agenda for restoration to the Church. Let me lay

a foundation for why I would make such a statement.

First, we know that we are looking forward to a day where

the Church will come to the *"unity of the faith"* (Eph. 4:11-13). A

day will come when the Church has risen in unity and glory to the

full stature of Jesus Christ.

Second, Jesus prayed that we (the Church) would be one as

He and the Father are one (see John 17:21). I believe Jesus' prayer

will be answered. The Church will walk in the same unity that

Jesus and the Father walked in.

Third, and most importantly, for true unity to be restored to

the last day's Church, there has to be a restoration of the love of

God in the Body of Christ.

These verses point to a day of unity and love in the Church

like we have not yet seen. Remember that one definition I gave of

discerning of spirits is, “Seeing the situations and people around

you as if you were looking through the eyes of Jesus.” We need to

have this gift restored for us to see others properly through pure

eyes of Jesus’ love. True love among brothers must be restored

before true unity will manifest. Not only do we need to have this

gift in place for that day to come, but it

is also the last of the nine

gifts that still needs restoration.

LOVE AND DISCERNMENT

As we learned in this book, discerning of spirits is always hand

in hand with love. I believe that the restoration of discerning of

spirits is the final bridge to the movement of love and unity in the

Church.

*And this I pray, that your **love**may abound still more and*

more in knowledge and all ***discernment*** (Philippians 1:9

NKJV).

The revelation is this: “When the Body of Christ sees through

the eyes of love (discernment), then we will be walking in true love

and unity.” Love and discernment are irrevocably linked.

Here is the spiritual progression to be looking for in the next

few decades:

1.

Seers are being set in the Church by God.

2.

Seers are going to teach and train the Church

about discerning of spirits.

3.

The Church will then begin to see each other

through the eyes of Jesus.

4.

This will bring about an unprecedented movement

of God-like love.

5.

True God-like love will bring about a move of true

God-like unity.

6.

T he *"unity of the faith"* (Eph 4:11-13) will be

fulfilled, and *"we* [the Church will] *be one as He and*

the Father are one" (John 17:21) will also be fulfilled.

7.

This completes one of the final prophecies that

must be fulfilled before Jesus can bring about the

New Heaven and New Earth (see Rev. 22).

A WORD FROM THE LORD

I am going to conclude with a declaration I believe is from the

Lord about the next move of the Holy Spirit:

The gift of discerning of spirits will be the next gifting

restored to the Church. As the Lord's people see each other

through the eyes of Jesus, a great unity will come forth. The

breaking down of denominational divisions and walls will

continue with great increase. Brothers

and sisters throughout

the Church will come together as one body like never before.

Then the Lord's heart of love will be fully expressed through

His Bride, His people, His Church. 1

ENDNOTES

1. Jonathan Welton, October 20, 2008.

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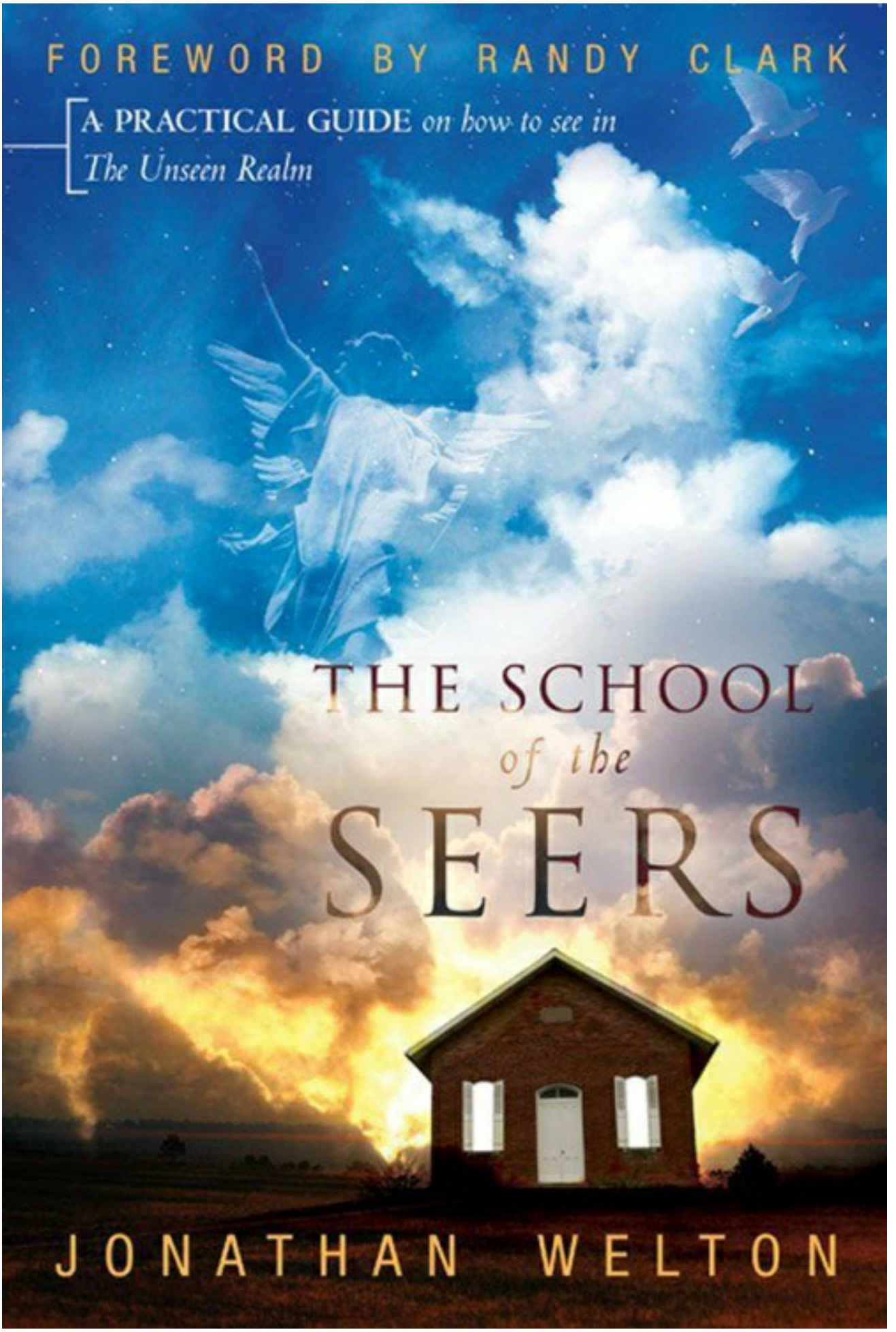
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A PRACTICAL GUIDE on how to see in The Unseen Realm
THE SCHOOL of the SEERS
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