

UNLOCKING THE POWER OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE

What are the secrets to unlocking the vault to experiencing God's sanctifying power and His holy presence in one's life?



- It has nothing to do with religious accomplishment.
-like serving as an usher, or on the deacon board.
- It has nothing to do with intellectual or scholarly achievements.



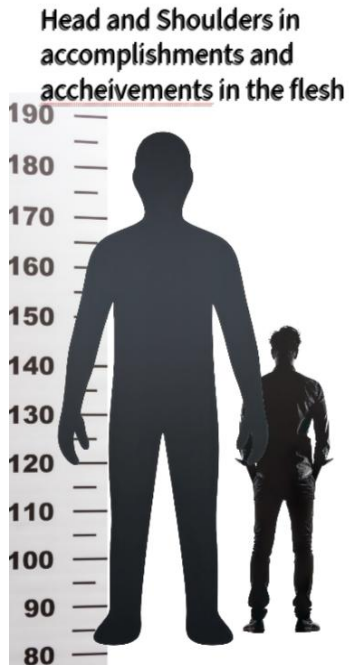
1Corinthians 1:26-27

“For consider your calling, brethren, that there are not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the

foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong.”

Example:

The apostle Paul was both educated and well-established religiously.



*The Apostle Paul had an elite, learning background. He has strict rabbinic Jewish training and a Hellenistic (Greek) education. He was a Pharisee trained in Jerusalem under the renowned rabbi Gamaliel, a Roman citizen from Tarsus, fluent in Greek, and familiar with rhetoric and Stoic philosophy.

*Paul describes himself in **Philippians 3:4-6**

“Although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the Church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless.”

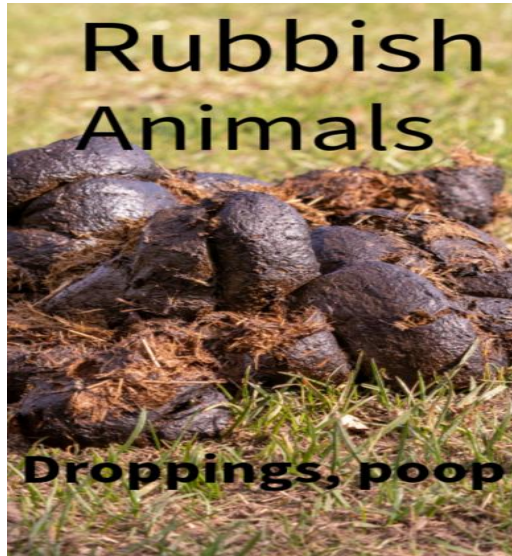
*The very religious accomplishments that people take pride in for achieving are the same things that hinder them from having an intimate relationship with God.



To know Christ intimately, Paul viewed those things that puff one up with pride as hurdles he needed to clear.



Pride is a blockade that Satan places on our course to trip us up and hinder us from having an intimate relationship with God



Philippians 3:7-8

“But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but **rubbish** so that I may gain Christ.”

Rubbish in the Greek refers to (garbage or waste and can even be translated “dung” or “manure.”

Satan has lined our course with several hurdles to prevent us from living a spirit-filled, victorious life.

- **Materialistic**/ cares for this world's goods
Matthew 13:22; Matthew 19:23
1Timothy 6:9-10;
- As we already mentioned, **Pride**.
God opposed those who are self-reliant. God extends His undeserved favor, strength, and blessing to those who recognize their need for Him.
James 4:6; Psalms 138:6; Matthew -23:12;
1Peter 5:5
- **Sins in general**. You cannot be practicing known sin and expect to see and hear from God. Sin disrupts and derails us from our course.
Hebrew 12:1; Ephesians 4:26-30.



*When one becomes overtaken or caught in the snare of sin, don't ignore it as if something didn't happen. Keep a short account by confessing it and repenting.

By maintaining short accounts of your sin, you maintain the continuity of your fellowship with God.

1John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”



The principle of keeping short accounts is symbolized in the story of Jesus washing His disciples' feet.

John 13:3-11

Key points

- Peter's initial refusal **vs8**
- Jesus response to Peter's refusal **vs 8**
-“**You have no part with Me.**” Symbolizes the continuity of fellowship.
- Peter's overreaction **vs9** (wash me then from head to toe).
- Jesus ' response to Peter's overreaction **vs. 10.**
-To fully understand what is happening here, we need
To understand this story in the context of its culture.

During the time this story was told, there was no plumbing in people's homes. So bathing was done in public lakes. People wore sandals, and as they traveled through the day on dirt paths, their feet would get dirty. They didn't need to take a whole bath over again; just the feet needed washing. Bath represents our cleansing from our sin nature. The washing of the feet represents the sins we commit as we travel on our Christian journey. Washing our feet keeps short accounts of our sin, so our continuing fellowship with Christ may not be interrupted.



- The last hurdle I want to mention is **mediocrity** (half-heartedness).

This describes the person walking the fence. The person who wants to have the best of both worlds.

Matthew 6:24

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Matthew 22:37

“YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.”

James 1:8

“Being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”

Reaching the pinnacle of faith depends on how much you want it. What price are you willing to pay?



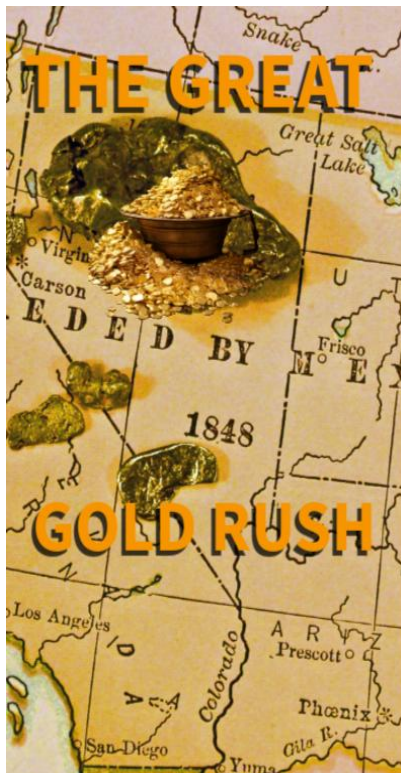
THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH

- The California Gold Rush was triggered by James W. Marshall's discovery of gold flakes at Sutter's Mill in Coloma in 1848. News of the discovery spread rapidly, prompting a massive influx of fortune seekers.
- Estimates suggest that over 300,000 people migrated to California between 1848 and 1849, including Americans, Europeans, Chinese, and South Americans.



[Britannica Editors](#) Apr. 20, 2026 • [History](#)

- What the history book doesn't tell us about this period is an estimate of how many people died on their voyage and journey to California.
- These gold seekers were willing to risk their lives and take the lives of the Indians who occupied most of the territory on their path.



- They were willing to take on the treacherous terrain and the Appalachian Mountains. The tornadoes and inclement weather of the Central Plains. Nothing was going to deter them from reaching the pot of gold.

WARNING

DO NOT CROSS
▲ RESTRICTED AREA

SERIOUS ZONE

DO NOT ENTER
AUTHORIZED
PERSONNEL ONLY





Jesus warned would-be disciples not to scare them, but to warn them of the cost of following Him. Jesus was highlighting the immense sacrifice and lack of earthly comfort involved in following him.

Matthew 8:20

“The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

- Following Christ carries the highest priority and comes second to absolutely nothing.

YOU HAVE BEEN



WARNED



Matthew 10:37-28

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not Worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.”

- Kingdom business outranks any other type of business. There was a would-be disciple who desired to become a follower of Christ but wanted first to wait on the death of his father and to bury him.

Luke 9:59

“And He said to another, 'Follow Me.' But he said, “Lord permit me first to go and bury my father.” But Jesus said to him, **“Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.”**

“Allow the dead to bury their own dead / implies that the spiritual dead can bury the physically dead. The point was that proclaiming the Kingdom of God was so important that it could not wait.



So, do you think you're ready?

Step one: Look in the mirror and ask yourself, "Am I ready to pay the price?" One must count the cost.

In this battle, the enemy plays for keeps. He doesn't fight clean or fair. He will use anything or anyone he can get his hands on.

There are **CASUALTIES** in this battle.

You might lose relationships with your mother, father, and children. There is even the possibility of a broken marriage and loss of a long-time friendship. Losing your job and home. It's only fair to be up front with you

Luke 14:25-33

"Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 'Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is

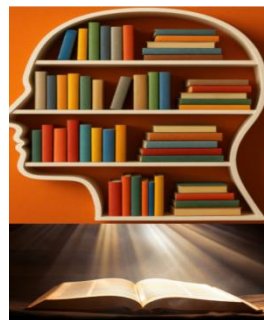


still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.



The road and path that leads to the pinnacle of faith is called Suffering.

- The Apostle Paul knew this more than any other, yet his desire to know Christ outweighed his being comfortable.



Philippians 3:10

“That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”



The phrase, “May **know Him,**” is not the kind of intellectual knowledge one requires from reading books.

This knowledge doesn't come from school settings or being under a preacher.



Know/ this is the Greek word, “ginosko”, which means (to know or understand from experience) (it’s experiential knowledge) It’s one thing to know what God did through

Joseph, Daniel, and Moses.

But it’s completely a different story when you can mention what God has done in your own life.



Example:

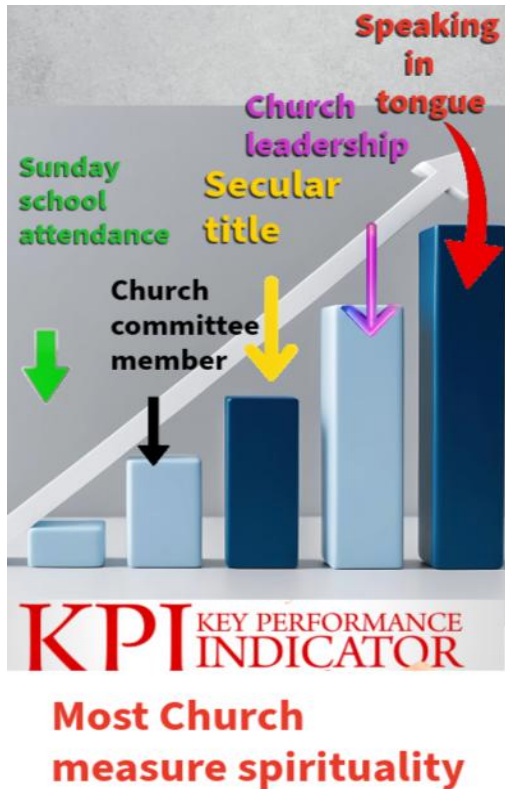
You all see this family photo. It’s my son and his lovely family. The reason I am mentioning him at this moment is that this picture

would not have been possible if I had aborted the pregnancy, as the doctors advised my wife and me.

It was in the early stages of my wife's pregnancy that she had a sonogram, when it was discovered that she had a tumor the same size as the baby. Doctors who were afraid of the prognosis, advised us of the possibility of death for the kid and my wife. They urge us to abort the pregnancy.

But the God I serve had a different outcome in mind. Through fasting and praying for a whole week. The following week, another sonogram was performed, and the baby was doing fine, and the tumor could not be found. Won't He do it? We sometimes don't have it because we don't ask for it, and when we ask, it's for the wrong kind of stuff (**James 4:2-4**). That's just one of many faith stories God has given to me over the years.

Next: the power of His resurrection (Philippians 3:10)



This word **power** in Greek is “**dynamis**,” from which we get our English word for **dynamite**. It’s a force to overcome resistance.

Paul's aim in the church was not the watered-down version we use today in churches to measure spirituality.

The things we use to measure church members' spiritual growth bear no indication of their true spirituality.

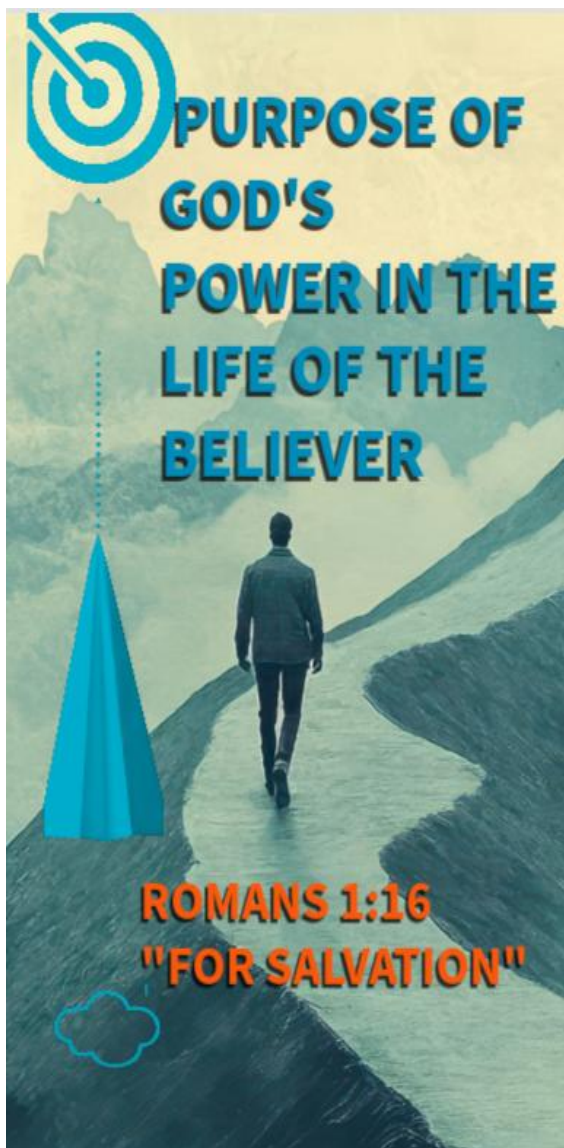
You can attend church seven days a week and be no more saved and filled with the Holy Spirit than your neighbor who attends the local bar for the same amount of time.

Speaking in an unknown tongue makes you no more spiritual than a parakeet speaking in a known tongue. **I will have a page on tongue** coming soon. It has nothing to do with the prestige we place on titles given in the church: Pastor, Elder, Deacon, and First Family, or the First Lady. Don’t let me forget the founder of the church, which I thought Christ was the founder of the Church.

THE APOSTLE PAUL’S AIM FOR SPIRITUALITY WAS THE HIGHEST EXPECTATION, GOAL, OR CRAVING ANYONE COULD EVER DESIRE.

To

Let's take a closer LOOK



Paul wanted to experience the power of Christ's resurrection. **The power** that overcame the death grip on the life of Christ. This **power** now operates in believers.

Colossians 3:1 "Therefore, if *you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.*"

Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power** of God for **salvation** to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

According to Romans 1:16, God's power for the believers is so that they can be saved.

Salvation is the Greek word "Soteria," and it means deliverance, rescue, and safety)

God's power delivers us from three phases of Sin's consequences.



One: God's power delivers us from the penalty of Sin. **Justification**

Romans 3:23

"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Read (Romans 5:9; 8:1).

TWO: God's power delivers us from the presence of Sin. **Glorification**



2Corinthians 5:8

“We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”

1Thessalonians 4:16-17

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.”

Read 1Corinthians 15:50-58

THREE: God's power delivers us from the practice of sin. **Sanctification**



Paul wanted to experience God's miraculous power of deliverance from the thing he didn't want to do anymore. **Romans 7:21-25**

- Those of us who are in Christ Jesus have been set free and delivered from the power grip of sin and death. **Romans 8:1-5**

Galatians 2:2.

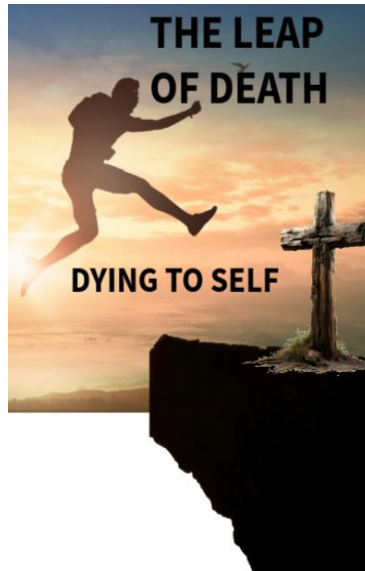
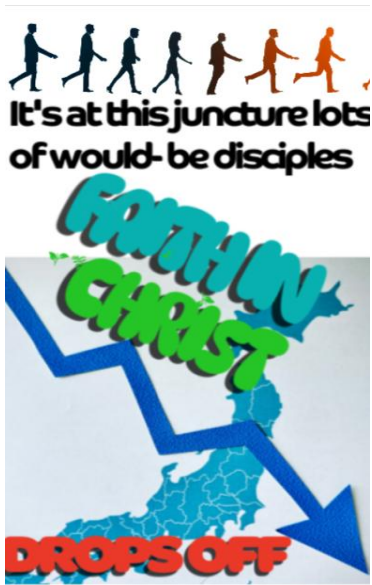
“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Philippians 4:13

“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

NOTE: I HAVE A WHOLE PAGE ON SANCTIFICATION COMING OUT NEXT, SO BE LOOKING OUT FOR IT.

The dividing factor that separates the would-be disciples from the true followers of Christ the death of the cross.



Mark 8:34

“And He summoned the crowd with His disciples, and said to them, **'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.'**”

Philippians 3:10

The fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”

*Something Paul understood very well that you and I must understand if we are going to grow and become useful for the kingdom. The greatest lesson we will learn will mold and shape our faith will come from outside of the comfort zone of the church settings, if we don't crack up first.



It's like the old cliché, everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die. Everyone wants to know God and have a closer walk with God, but no one wants to walk in the footsteps of God. No one wants to pay the cost.

We will examine some of the major contributing factors to the enormous drop-off rate of faith seekers and would-be disciples.

One: Those who have faith laid on a foundation of deception

Churches are sometimes like military recruiting officers; they paint a picture as if everything is a bed of roses. They will tell you anything and everything you want to hear to get you in the numbers. They will tell you a marvelous story of folks who gave their lives to God, and everything has been just lovely ever since.



- Jesus was just disciples to to become a

Matthew

the opposite; he advised would-be consider the cost before deciding follower.

8:18-20

- He told Paul up front what lay ahead of him in his calling.
Acts 9:3-16
- Jesus, knowing His time left on earth was drawing to a close, warned His disciples that difficult days were ahead. **John 16:30-33**
-Jesus didn't promise us home ownership, but He did promise, "He will go to prepare a place for us in heaven."
- Jesus, in the parable of the Sower of seeds, tells the story of the ones whose seed did not have a firm foundation because it wasn't sown properly. When the first sign of trouble appeared, they ran.

Matthew 13:20-21

"The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no *firm* root in himself, but is *only* temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he ^a falls away. ¹



Two: The double-minded man, also known as the half-hearted man.

- We have already covered this person, but it is worth reiterating him. Because of his disloyalty, he is unable to become a true, devoted, and committed follower. Satan will always dangle something in his path that will be able to lure him away from the things concerning God. Therefore, he will have little or no faith.

Must read the story of the man Jesus told in a parable. He chases after riches rather than after God. **Luke 12:13-21**

Three: Faith seekers who focus attention on man, rather than God.

The charisma of an individual lures them; Their loyalty is to man rather than to God.



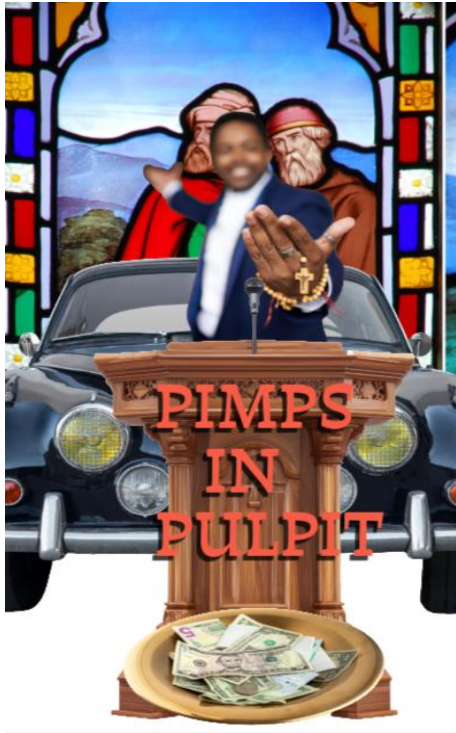
Let's examine some of the traits of the ramification that characterizes the relationship between these leaders and their followers.



One: Their relationship is like that of a pimp and his prostitute.

- You may ask yourself why a woman would go and sell her body, and give the money to a man who uses and mistreats her?

-Prostitutes pay their pimps for insurance of protection from Johns who would otherwise, take advantage of them.



-Paul gave us a sign that would indicate we are in the last days, the great **apostasy**.

-**Apostasy**/ The abandonment, the act of refusing to continue to follow, obey or recognize a religious faith.

-What scripture teaches about this **apostasy**?

2Timothy 4:3-4

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires and will turn away their ears from truth and will turn aside to myths.”

- They will not **endure** sound doctrine.
-**endure**/ means (to put up with, or tolerate); they will not submit to **sound doctrine** (means literally healthy teaching)

Example:

They would rather jump in their car on Sunday morning and ride across town to visit a pimp in the pulpit, than to attend a church right on their block that is teaching God’s truth.

The reason for this is that these pimps preach watered-down truths. Teachings that are not offensive, but allow their followers to have their cake and eat it too. Pastors like Joel Osteen teach that God is a God of love. Never mention that He is a holy God and that He expects us to be holy also.

1Peter 1:16, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

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- Instead of enduring healthy, sound teaching, they accumulate or heap on themselves a teacher who will give them what they want to hear.

(Tickle their ears, talk about people with itching ears. Those who want to be entertained by teachings that will produce pleasant sensations and leave them with good feelings about themselves.

In other words, preachers who are going to tell them exactly what they want to hear.



Example: If I want to practice homosexuality, I find a church that has no problem with me being a homosexual.

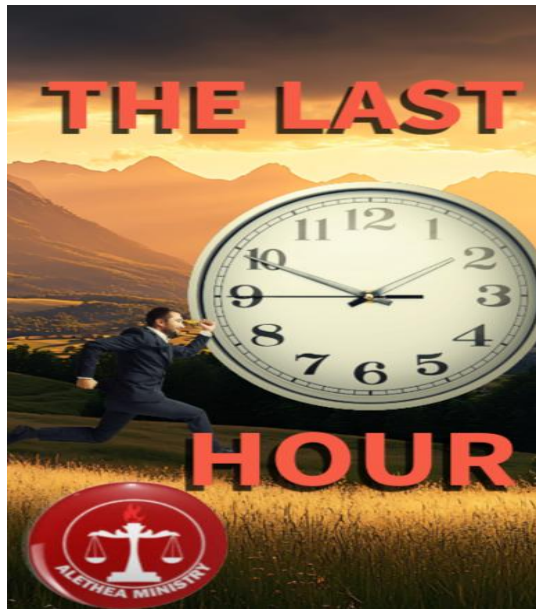
- This apostasy is not physical, but spiritual in nature. These are the tares and not the wheat in Christ's parable about the wheat and tares.



The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares Matthew 13:24-30

The whole point of this parable is that the enemy planted counterfeit seeds called tares. Jesus told the servant to wait for the harvest to pick them, because you might mistake wheat for a tare. It's at harvest that you can better distinguish the two plants. Wheat produces fruit, and tares don't.

Because the tares resemble the wheat, their negative behavior in churches is ascribed and associated with the true body of Christ.



The Great Apostasy is nothing more than the tares, no longer enduring sound preaching and teaching of doctrine.

Satan has migrated them to where their itchy ears can be scratched and pleased. He has raised a flock of preachers who are anti-God. This is the mark of the end of time.

1Timothy 1:10

“And immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching.”

1John 18-19

“Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared from this, we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.” **Read Matthew 7:20-21**



Not every church is approved by God, and not every mega Church is built by God. We make the mistake of thinking that God has blessed Churches that are seemingly financially well off and attended by celebrities, politicians, and so on.

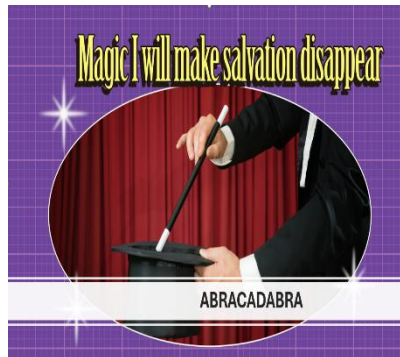
**Example: The Church of Laodicea
Revelation 3:14-22**

- This was a modern-day Mega Church during that time. They were so endowed that they thought to themselves, they didn't need anything or anyone.

Vs 17, “Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,’ and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.”



Do not allow Satan, the greatest illusionist to have ever lived.



The father of lies, or his false teachers, deceive you by

impersonating a fraud, pretending to be servants of God.

2Corinthians 11:13-14

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.”

Acts 20:30

“And from among your own selves, men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.”

Titus 1:10-11; 2Peter 2:1; Galatians 1:6-8

DO NOT PUT YOUR FAITH OR TRUST IN GOING THROUGH THE OPEN DOORS OF THE CHURCH, AND ESPECIALLY IN A CHURCH WHERE GOD HIMSELF ISN'T PRESENT.



- Remember the first-century mega church of Laodicea, which had all the things that money could buy. They had everything except for the God of the church.
- Christ stood outside trying to get into their worship service.

Revelation 3:20

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.”



AVOIDING THE PITFALLS OF THE BLIND LEADERS.



Don't deceive yourself into being misled by false prophets and teachers. Telling you that you are safe, because God is a God of love. Many misled souls are in for a rude awakening. Do not take

comfort in their false sense of protection.

Matthew 7:22-23 “Not everyone who says to Me,

‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name

perform many miracles?’ ‘And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’

CONFIDENTIAL

KEEP OUT

THE TRUTH SATAN DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT.





THE SECRET TO UNLOCKING EXPERIENCING THE PRESENT AND THE POWER OF GOD, AND ANSWER PRAYERS.

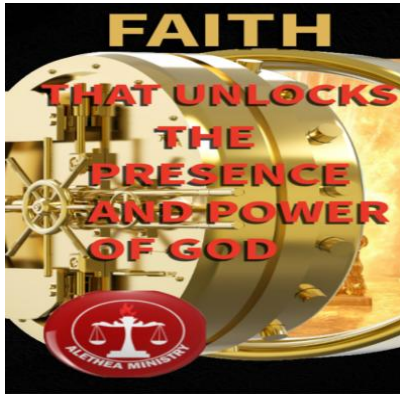
- We have been told what faith was.
Hebrew 11:1
- We were told that we must live by faith.
Romans 1:17
- What they didn't tell us was **HOW** to live by faith!

FAITH ALONE WONT CUT IT.



There is a fundamental Biblical principle to the functionality of faith that somehow seems to have gone unnoticed or flying under the radar.

A. The Biblical principle



***MORE IS BETTER**

Once you understand the principle and how it is applied to walking by faith, you will be on your way to unlocking God's power and presence in your life.



Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

“Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. Furthermore, if two lie down together, they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.”

B. Biblical Example

Two heads are better than one

Proverbs 11:14

“Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory.” **Proverbs 24:6; 15:22.**



Proverbs 27:17

“Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”

Note: When iron is rubbed against another piece of iron, it shapes and sharpens it. Similarly, people can help each other improve through their discussions, criticism, suggestions, and ideas. The Bible Knowledge Commentary.

C. Biblical Picture



Read-Exodus 17:8-13

The lesson from this battle

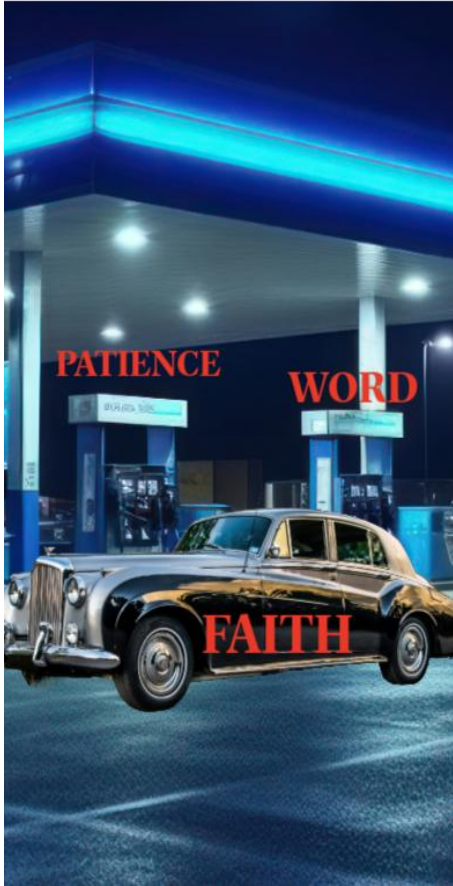
- When Moses lowered his hands, it symbolized Israel's lack of dependence on God.
- When Moses held his hands above his head, it symbolized dependence upon God
- Victory was secured by the aid of Aaron and Hur.

FAITH IS MORE SUFFICIENT WHEN IT IS AIDED BY THESE THREE ACCOMPLICES. (PATIENCE & PRAYER AND THE WORD OF GOD)



- Faith that is supplemented with patience, prayer, and the word becomes a faith that is super-sized.

A. Faith is the vehicle, and patience and the Word, and prayer are what fuel it.



1. The worst thing you can do when under attack or being challenged in your faith, it is to isolate yourself from God and His people.

Illustration

What is the very first thing you would do if your gas light came on while driving on the highway?

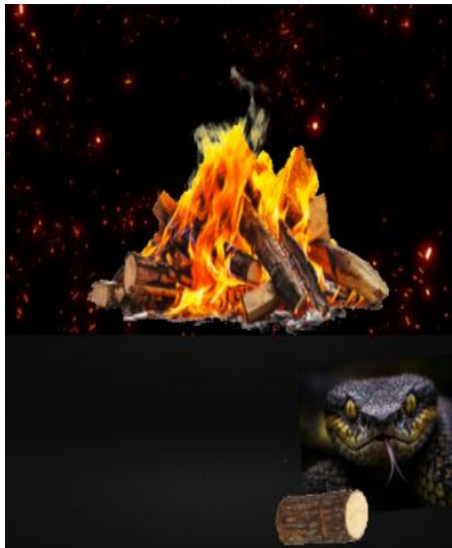
-Would you drive home and wish it had never come on?

OR

-Would you drive to the nearest gas station and say, "Fill it up!"

Why does Satan want you to stop attending church, reading your Bible, and forsaking the fellowship of believers, especially when you are struggling?

He wants to get you alone!



It makes it much easier to put out your fire.

Hebrew 10:23-25

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the

habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” Read **(Acts 2:42)**



2. We must fuel our faith with continuous fellowship and seeking God.

James 4:7

“Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Ephesians 4:25-28

“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth to each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. Be angry and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.”

Pouring the word into one’s faith is like pouring gas onto a fire. It intensifies the flames and makes it burn hotter.



- God’s word, when it is properly taught and preached, is an **inferno**. Read **Luke 24:13-35**
- The prophet Jeremiah, because of constant rejection and persecution of the people refused to speak God’s word.



Jeremiah felt the burning sensation of the word.

Jeremiah 20:7-9

“O LORD, You have deceived me, and I was deceived; You have overcome me and prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me. For each time I speak, I cry aloud; I proclaim violence and destruction, because for me the word of the LORD has resulted in reproach and derision all day long.

But if I say, ‘I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name,’ Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I am weary of holding it in, and I cannot endure it.”

Job 32:18-20

“For I am full of words; The spirit within me constrains me. Behold, my belly is like unvented wine, like new wineskins it is about to burst. Let me speak that I may get relief; Let me open my lips and answer.”

True Bible expounders are not people pleasers, but obedient servants of God.

- We need more than ever before, straight shooters. Preachers and teachers who will not compromise or water down God’s truth. Not perfect individuals, but those who are seeking perfection.



EXAMPLES



Because of the rise of pimps in the pulpit and the steady decline of straight shooters, the church is suffering from spiritual malnutrition.

The person who is neglected in proper nourishment or eats junk food all the time will suffer malnutrition and become underdeveloped. The same applies spiritually.



Hebrew 5:12-13

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary 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 not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.”



Spiritual development relies on proper teaching and nourishment of the word.

Psalm 1:2-3

“But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law, he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by the streams of water.

- A tree planted by rivers of water roots goes deep into the ground to tap into the source of the nutrients provided by the water.



-A characteristic of a tree planted by the river of water is its stability.

Joshua 1:8-9

“This book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do

according to all that is written in it; **for then** you will have success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

*In other words, God is saying, did I not tell you to have faith, and not to worry, because I am with you? Joshua's success and stability were contingent on his getting into the word of God and God's word getting into him.



*Putting first things first. (for then you will have success).

* Good preaching and teaching are a must for faith to benefit the believer, and any other way is like putting the cart before the horse.

*The word must come first to stimulate faith
Romans 10:17

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER



1Thessalonians 5:17

“Pray without ceasing.”

- It’s maintaining an attitude of dependence on God and open communion with Him, rather than just verbal prayer.



God, and the Word was God.

• John 1:1

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with



- Its enduring trials, waiting on God’s timing, and displaying endurance.

REACHING THE MOUNTAIN TOP, THE SUMMIT OF OUR FAITH.

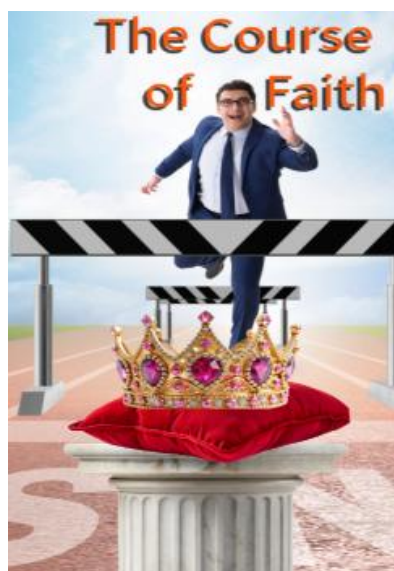
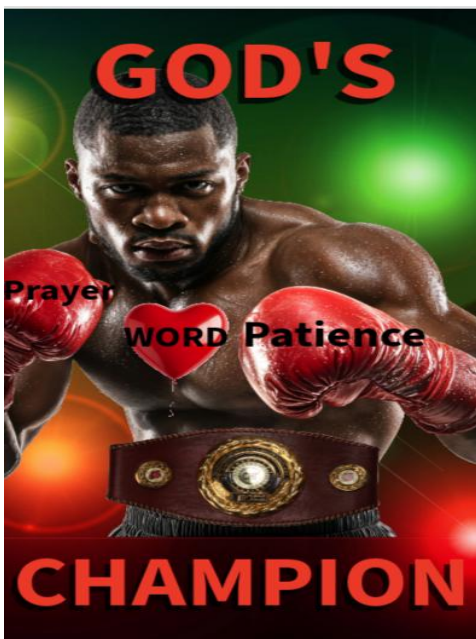


- Having your name added to the list of Faith Fighters' Hall of Fame in Hebrews chapter 11.
- Becoming a vessel of Honor.

2Timothy 2:21

Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

STRIVING TO HEAR THOSE WORDS, WELL DONE, MY GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT. EARNING THE CROWN OF FAITH AND BECOMING A CHAMPION OF FAITH.



James 1:12

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

A Faith Fighter utilizes all his tools to supplement his fighting.



King David, the giant slayer and one of the greatest faith fighters in the Bible, says this in the book of Psalm.

Psalm 119:11

“Your word I have treasured (hid) in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”

Treasured / is the Hebrew word, “Sapanti,” and it means to (hide, protect, reserve). It’s the idea we use when we put our valuables in a safe box at a hotel.



The heart is the seat of our emotions, compassion, and feelings.



Matthew 22:36-37

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And He said to him, **‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’**

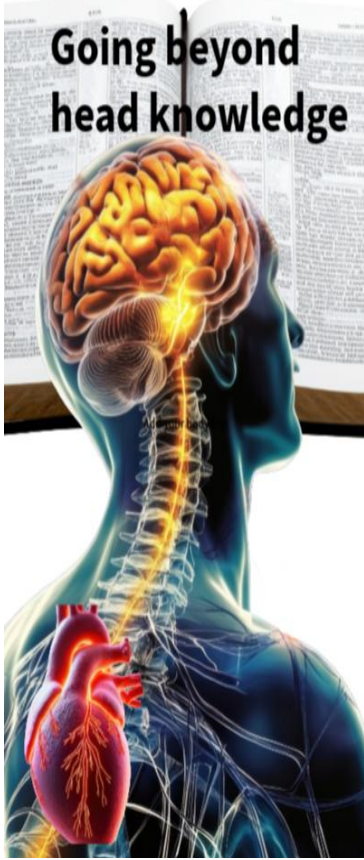
- **God’s word has transforming power when taught and received properly.**
- David says, “That I might not sin against You.”



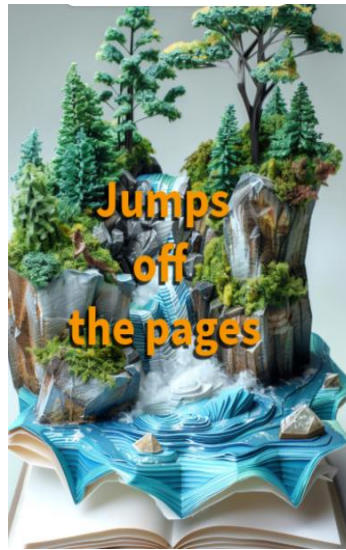
- **The capability of the Bible**

Hebrew 4:12

“For the word of God is **living and active** and sharper than any two-edged sword and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.



- The word of God is living and active, as we already covered. When we mention Jeremiah and the two men on the road to Emmaus. They felt the burn of its fire.



- Living and being active literally means it's jumping off the pages. Living / it has vitality Active / The Greek word is “Energēs,” from which we get our English word “energy.” It means, “operative.”
- When the living word of God penetrates and permeates the heart and mind of a faith fighter, it activates its transforming power in that believer.

2Corinthians 5:17

“For the love of Christ control (constraints) us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore, all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.”

Romans 12:1-2

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Renewing of your mind / changing the way you view and think about something by the word of God.



THE WIRE



Born and raised on the streets of West Baltimore, Popular Grove Street, the home of the HBO TV. series “THE WIRE. You learnt quickly how to fight back or be bullied all your life.



Patience & Prayer are the tools Faith Fighter uses to defend and ward off an opponent's attacks.

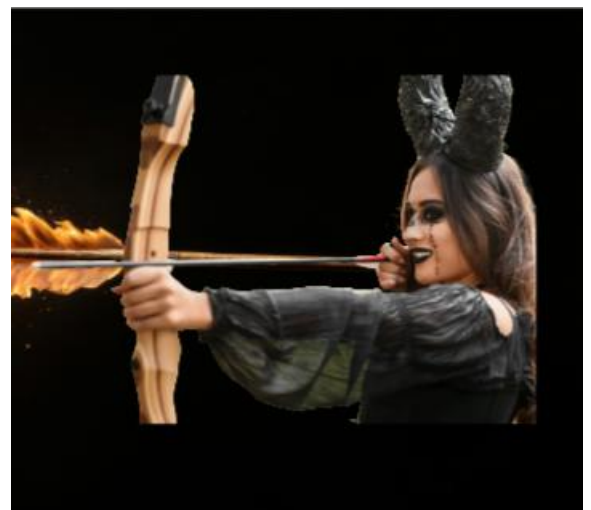
Ephesians 6:17

“In addition to all, taking up the shield of **faith** with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Extinguishing the flaming arrows.

- During this time, most shields were made out of wood. The enemy would shoot arrows that had been wrapped with a piece of cloth, dipped in tar, and set on fire.
- To counteract this tactic, the soldiers would cover their shields with animal skin and wet it, thereby nullifying the enemy attack.

We can't stop the Devil from shooting his **flaming arrows** of doubt, fear, not trusting God, insecurity, and whatsoever that is anti-god. But we don't have to let it burn by entertaining it with our thoughts. We can counteract it and ward them off with the tools of faith, **patience**, and **prayer**.



warding off our opponent with



Rights and Lefts

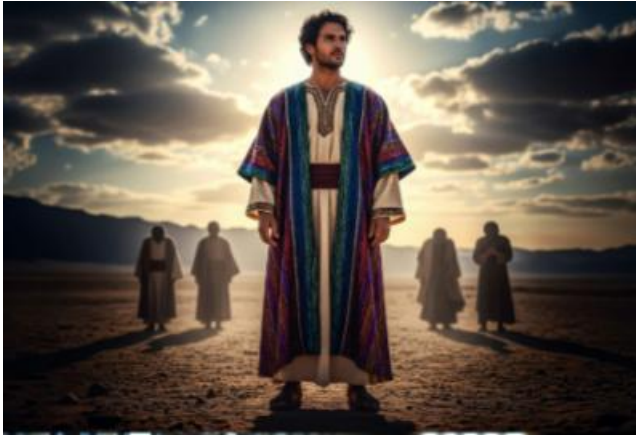
- What is one to do when God's answers Seems delayed?
 - We must allow our faith to be stretched through patience. Letting patience have its perfect course.
 - Rather than doubt and give up, continue to look up where our help comes from.**Psalm 40:1-4, 27:14, 37:7. Isaiah 40:28-31**
- Sometimes God's delay is because He is about to do something bigger and better. He delayed getting to Lazarus because he wanted to set the stage not for healing but for a resurrection. If He had left right away when He was first told, as Martha suggested, Lazarus wouldn't have died. That would have ruined His opportunity to demonstrate His power in resurrection. **John 11:1-46**

- **Example:** When God doesn't move when we think He should, or the way we refer. Satan's fiery arrow of doubt becomes more potent. We can counteract doubtfulness with prayer. The man with the son who was demon-possessed struggled in his faith. He asked Jesus, "If You can do anything." Once, Jesus questioned him about his little faith. He asked for help with his unbelief. Therefore, overcoming doubt through petitioning Christ. **Mark 9:20-29**

- **Divine timing doesn't always move on our time. Divine timing is perfect even when it is different from human expectations**



We don't always see the big picture



- Joseph's brothers, out of the rage of jealousy, sold him into slavery.
- Potiphar's wife lied about Joseph and had him imprisoned.
- Pharaoh calls Joseph out from prison to interpret a dream.
- Joseph went from rags to riches to the second in command in all of Egypt.

Genesis 41:40-43

“You shall be over my house, and according to your command all my people shall do homage; only in the throne I will be greater than you.” Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.” The Pharaoh took off his signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put the gold necklace around his neck. He had him ride in

his second chariot, and they proclaimed before him, “Bow the knee!” and he set him over all the land of Egypt.

- Joseph reunited with his brothers and explained their sin against him and how God worked it out for good.

Genesis 50:19-20

“But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? ‘As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.’”

- Even still, there was an even bigger picture. They went to Egypt, 70 people after 430 years, and they exited approximately around 2 million people. They became a nation as God promised Abraham and Jacob.

The lesson from Joseph's story that applies to all faith fighters

If you don't get anything else from this whole study, make sure you understand this one thing.

- This is a necessity for you to reach the mountain top of faith.
- It doesn't matter what you are experiencing or going through; It doesn't matter how good, bad, or ugly it may seem, God has a bigger purpose for



it. The big picture sometimes is ambiguous and not understood now. Keep moving forward with patience, trusting that God has you back and you will understand it better by and by.

Romans 8:28

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”



The next time you find yourself under attack by the enemy, you will be attacked if you are a true faith fighter. Rather than seeking to get from underneath it, seek God's purpose for it.

- Make no mistake, our opponent is always on the prowl, seeking to find someone napping or off guard.

1Peter 5:8

“Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

- I watched enough animal shows over the years, and they all agreed on one thing about lions' attack; they seek out the animal in the pack that is not paying attention or lame, and the one that wanders off from the pack.



THE LAST POINT I WANT TO DRIVE HOME.

In those moments when you are going through unpleasant trials, and you can't understand why, do these three things.

- **One:** Count it all joy / It's a mental fortitude Disposition

- Remember Paul said in Philippians 3:10, "I want to

know Him in the Power of His resurrection and the **fellowship of His suffering**. That verse and the one that fellow says, "Being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead."



REJOICING FELLOWSHIP SUFFERING

Paul wanted to experiences of all

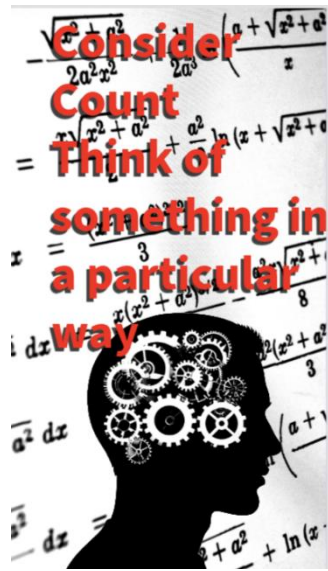
(suffering) that comes with associating with, the SON of the God of the universe. For Paul, it's an honor and a privilege to believe and suffer in Christ.



IN THE OF HIS

know the the smoke identifying with, and

Philippians 1:29-30 “For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but to suffer for His Sake. Experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear to be in me.



REJOICING IN SUFFERING IS A MENTALITY THAT EXTENDS FROM A HEART BURNING DESIRE TO WANT TO PLEASE AND KNOW GOD!!!!

Sufferings and trials are things we should view as blessings. Something that should be viewed as a good thing.

- **James 1:2** “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”
- **James 1:12**, “Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

- **James 5:10-11**, “As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.
- Matthew 5:10-12, **“Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”**



Two: You shouldn’t be surprised, as if persecution and trial are not the norm. Persecution and trials should be expected, especially when on the front line in service for the Lord.

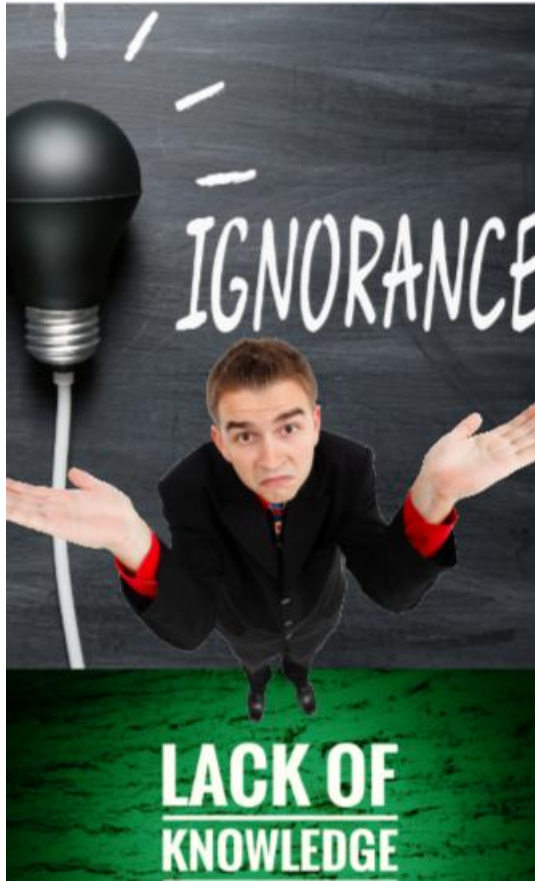
1. Peter 4:12-16

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. **If** you are **reviled** for the

name of Christ, you are **blessed**, because the Spirit of Glory and of God rests on You.

The word **“If”** is the if of a fulfilled condition. That condition, which is what you are being persecuted for, was the cause of Christ. Then you are **blessed**. Christians who are being reproached for the cause of Christ, he says, are blessed, which some translations have it, happy. It’s the same word used in **Matthew 5:3-11**. In both texts, it refers to a spiritually prosperous state or condition of the believer. If the world persecutes a Christian, that is an indication of the spiritual prosperity of his life. The world doesn’t get upset with worldly Christian it’s the ones that remind them of Christ that rub them the wrong way. **John 15:19**





Lack wisdom

Understanding/direction

#Three: Ask God

We can't always see the big picture immediately. There are days when it is not sunny and clear, but just the opposite, cloudy and foggy. Although we can't see the sun, we know it's there.



Likewise, when the big picture is not visible, and we can't see the Son of God. We can't make out what He is doing at the present moment.

- **However, we know He is still with us.**

Hebrew 13:5

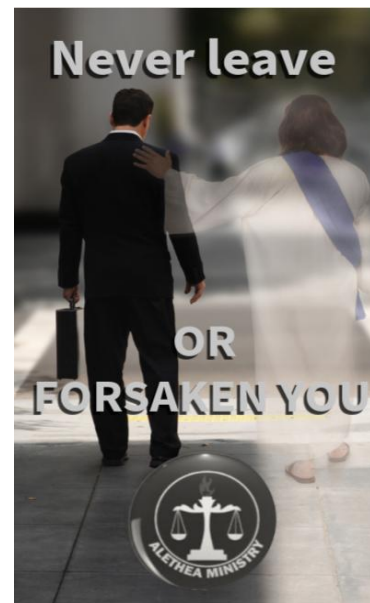
“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, ‘I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKEN YOU,’”

Deuteronomy 31:8

“The LORD is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

Psalms 23:4

“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me.”





"Ask God" was James' advice to believers living abroad who were facing adversity.

James 1:1, "James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad, Greetings.

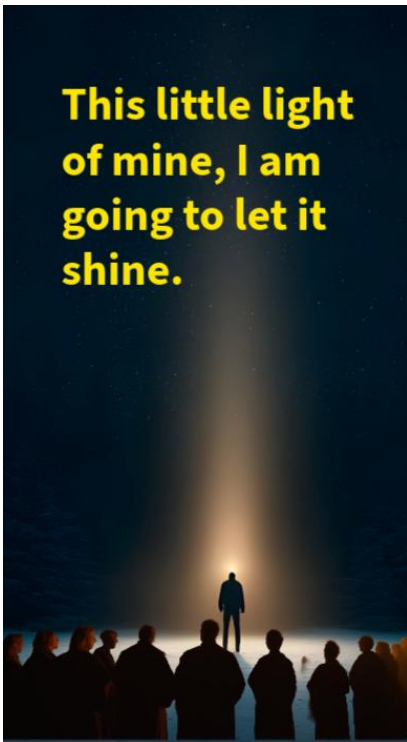
James 1:5-7, "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubt,

for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord."

- It's easy to praise the Lord amid other believers or in a church setting. How is your praise outside of those settings? Among folks that don't like God or You!
- **We can't shy away from our responsibility.**



This little light of mine, I am going to let it shine.



Matthew 5:14-16

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

*We must ask God for His wisdom and direction for guidance in a crooked, dark society. That our light may shine even brighter before those who sit in darkness.

CLOSING WITH A TESTIMONY



I want to share a monumental moment of faith.

What do I mean by a monumental moment of faith?

*A moment in your Christian journey, you were between a rock and a hard place, and you trusted God for deliverance, and He showed up and showed out.

*These monuments are reminders and encouragements for present and future challenges.



- **Example:** David, when questioned by the king concerning Goliath, shared how God gave him victory over lions and bears.



1Samuel 17:31-37.

1. God answered my specific prayer



It was in the spring of 1991. I petition God for a better-paying job so I could afford to go to Bible college. I was married with 2 children and one on the way.

- The old cliché is true. God doesn't always come when you want Him to, but He is always on time. Secondly, He sometimes moves in mysterious ways. This was one of those times.

2. Avoid putting God in a box.

- What do I mean by putting God in a box, placing little to no expectation of God's various ways of capabilities?
- The way God answered my prayer, I likened it to the movie Karate Kid. **Very unorthodox.**

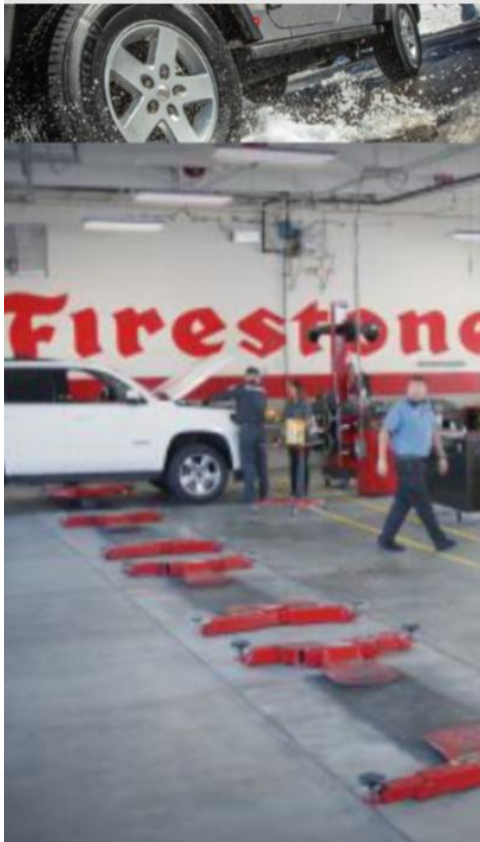


-Mr. Keesuke Miyagi teaches Daniel LaRusso karate in a very unorthodox manner. His early training consists of Daniel painting Mr. Miyagi's fence around his property. Next, washing and waxing about 7 of his cars.

-Young Daniel began to become frustrated because he didn't sign up for all of that. He didn't see the big picture. He even quit at one point. He was learning muscle movements related to karate, but in an unorthodox manner.

- After fasting and praying to God about a better job, the very next day, I got a phone call from a friend telling me about MTA hiring. I filled out an application, and this is where God's behind-the-scenes took a twist and lost me. Forget about the big picture, I saw no picture.

- We arrived home from the evening service. We stopped and picked up a video from the Blockbuster Store. My wife and the girls were already in the house. I was getting the sweets and goodies out of the car. Our apartment sits on a slight hill. As I was proceeding towards the bottom of the hill, I attempted to jump on the car park stopper. Back in those days, they were made from



wood. Unknowingly to me, the log was turned upside down. Because it was dark, I didn't

notice. So, when I landed on the log, I landed on the spike that holds the log in place. Either I didn't feel the pain, or I was too busy assessing the situation. I immediately knew this wasn't good. I prayed for a better job, but now I'm about to be out of work. The only picture I saw was that we were in trouble. I went to lift my foot off the log, and the whole log came up with my foot. I had to use my

other foot to hold down the log while freeing the other.

- I must place this story in its proper time frame to show God's sovereignty in His moving in my Life. When you can look back on your journey and see God navigating your path, it's encouraging and comforting to know God is with you.

I must point out the time of this monumental event. I graduated from NBS Auto School and had been working at Firestone Auto Shop for approximately two years on the nose. Why is that important? Because if my injury had occurred two or three months earlier, it would have disrupted the sequence of events leading up to my getting hired at MTA. One of the things MTA required, and it was stipulated on the application and in the interview, was that you must have two years of experience in the automotive industry. So,



my desire to go to a Bible college, the injury to my foot, and my getting hired at MTA seem to be orchestrated by someone upstairs

- Hold on to your seats. The next two things that happen in this sequence I can only describe as divine intervention.



- Following my injury, I was out of work for three months. I decided to use this time to equip myself for the Automotive certification test for the power train and air

conditioning system. Remember, I've only been in this field for two years, and I knew nothing about buses and diesel engines. After three months of being out of work and preparation for my certification test, MTA called me

asking if I was still interested in employment.

When I arrived on the scheduled day of testing for the job, there was a line turning the corner with

candidates. Experiencing looking at candidates with diesel certification patches on the sleeves. The woman that ministered the test explain you have only a certain amount of time, and if you pass the test, you will be given a date for an interview. There were about 40 multiple-choice questions.

- It was one of those tests where you have to pick between A through D for the answer, and color in the circle with a number two pencil. Every single question in that text I prayed over for the answer. I was in a zone that felt like I was having an out-of-body experience. I was cognizant of everything but felt like something or someone was guiding me. I took the paper up front, and they placed another paper on top of it, and all these black dots appeared. She said congratulations you pass.



- What happened next, I will describe as an emotional roller coaster. I went from a mountain top high excitement to a valley low disappointment within seconds. That mountain-high feeling must have been what Peter felt on the day of the mountain of transfiguration. Peter said, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, I will make three tabernacles here, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” (Matthew 17:1-13) It’s one of those things you don’t want to see come to an end. It’s like going on a cruise, being away all week, then Sunday arrives. Back to reality, back to getting ready for work Monday morning. This roller coaster happens all within two sentences.

Congratulations, you passed, you will have an oral test next week with some supervisors and superintendents. Needless to say that was a long week of cramming.

- There was a popular gospel song out years ago by Daryl Coley titled, **“He’s Preparing Me.”**

The first stanza goes something like this.

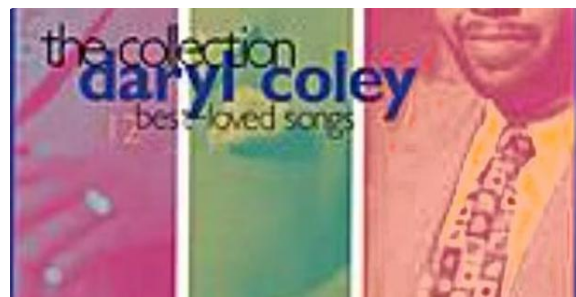
“He is preparing me for something I can’t

Does your life have a big picture?

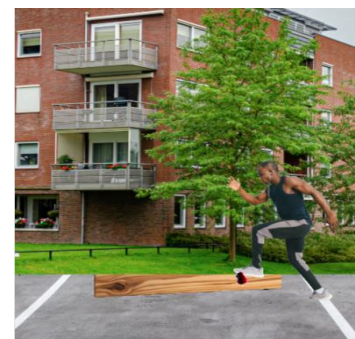


A trail that's showing you what God is doing and where God is taking you.

handle right now. He is making me ready, just because He cares. He is providing me with what I need.” I want you’ll to chew on that for a minute. Let that stew. I am convinced too many confessing Christians, all missing out on a faith walk that is showing them a big picture. Does your life have a big picture?



- My stepping on that spike in the log was a part of God’s purpose and plan. And He was preparing me for something that I would not have been able to handle. I was using the three months being out of work preparing to take the auto certification test, but unknown to me, God was equipping me for an oral test and interview with MTA. I had no idea what was coming down the road.
- Remember, I mentioned to you I had the second interview and test. Well, guess what, the following week I



Romans 8:28

we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

had the oral test, and you won't believe it, but it's true. For some reason unknown to me, out of the twenty-something questions they asked me about, half were on air conditioning that I wouldn't have been able to answer if it weren't for my being out of work and preparing for my certification. The other questions were about engine and smoke and power lost once again, things I was preparing for certification, but God was equipping me to fulfill my prayer for a better job so I can go to Bible College. Won't He do it?

Listen up the story doesn't stop here. It gets even sweeter.



- **The Icing on the cake**



Here is the kicker: God wasn't finished manifesting His power and presence. Leaving the interview, the woman from

the Human Resources Department sent me the next day to the Maryland Motor Vehicle Department. She said I needed to get one more thing done. I needed to get my permit for my CDL license.

My bank account was exhausted and depleted. I woke up the next day, put on my clothes, and headed out for MVA. To get my permit, I needed 15 dollars. I didn't have 15 cents. But when you know what you know. I just didn't believe God had brought me this far to leave me now. I could have borrowed 15 dollars, but after seeing all that God has done already, I went out of faith.

I had my own Moses burning bush experience



Exodus 3:2-3

“The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. So, Moses said, “I must turn aside now and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burned up.”

- As I headed out for the MVA., my wife asked me how you are going to take the test, and you don't have any money? It's been so long ago that I don't even remember my response to that question.
- I tell you what I remember and will never forget it either. It was a windy March. I stepped outside the wind was so strong that it blew me a few inches.
- Trash and debris were blowing in every direction, and then something caught my attention. There it was, lying on the porch, a five-dollar bill just sitting there, not even moving. I stared at it for a moment to be sure I was seeing what I was seeing. A five-dollar bill is not moving an inch. I picked it up and went back into the house to show my wife. She casually said, ‘You are still 10 dollars short. So I stared back out again. I got to my car and opened the door, and the wind blew it right out of my hands and slammed it really hard. I looked down at the ground, and there it was, a 10-dollar bill just sitting there. You know some praises were going on inside that car.



