

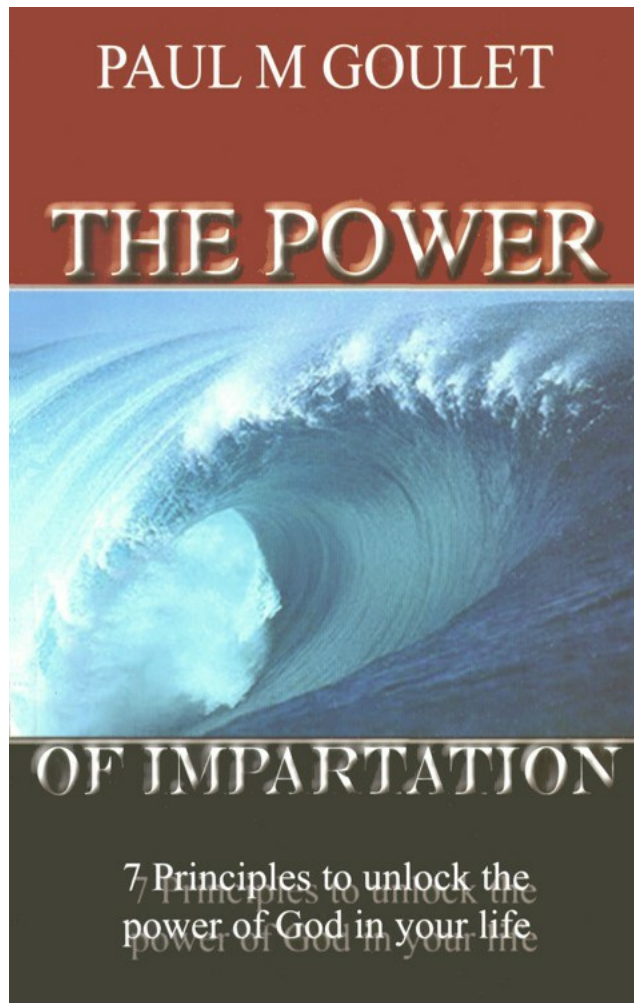
PAUL M GOULET

# THE POWER



# OF IMPARTATION

7 Principles to unlock the  
power of God in your life



**THE POWER OF**

**IMPARTATION**

**SEVEN KEYS TO UNLOCK THE POWER OF GOD**

**IN YOUR LIFE**

**PAUL M. GOULET**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this book to Jesus Christ, my Savior and Lord.

I also dedicate it to the scores of people who have poured into me.

I am eternally indebted to:

Mom: Your faith, resilience and beautiful disposition inspired me.

Dad: You were a hard worker, respectable, honest and tough as nails. I needed these qualities.

Denise: Over twenty years of marriage and it just keeps getting better. You are gifted, inspirational and passionate. I wouldn't be here without you.

Isabelle, Christine and Samuel: I didn't know I could love anyone this way. You are a gift from God. I am so proud of you.

Pastors, coaches and teachers from my past: What can I say? This book is a product of your commitment to impart.

Friends, staff and leaders of ICLV: The best is yet to come. Thank you for giving to the Lord. Truly, I am a life that has changed. I love you.

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## **FOREWORD**

This new book by my friend, Pastor Paul Goulet, is a gift of God to the church. It's a message full of good news to all those that cry out from their heart to God as Moses did, *"I beseech thee, shew me thy glory" (Exodus 33:18 KJV)*.

It is possible to live a Christian life without expectancy. It is possible to be satisfied with the experiences of the past and not expect anything new from God. It is possible to even ignore that a deep and personal fellowship with the Holy Spirit exists and live just paddling on the shore of a very deep river. But we know that this is not our Heavenly Father's will.

The Bible says, *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18 KJV)*. This Word of the Lord, in its original meaning, exhorts us to be "continually" filled with the Holy Spirit, revealing that this process needs to be renewed daily and in a constant manner. The intimate fellowship with the Spirit, the anointing for ministry and the fullness of holy living is not sustained with experiences from the past. It depends on our hunger and passion for the Holy Spirit each day.

I have a sincere love for Pastor Paul Goulet and his wife Denise. I know their wonderful International Church of Las Vegas, in Nevada, and the tremendous ministry that God enables them to carry forward in a city with such unique characteristics. I admire their pastors' hearts, their passion for souls and their surrender to the Holy Spirit.

There are many of us who, together with Paul Goulet, have rediscovered the person and the work of the Holy Spirit as the most prized thing in our lives. And through different impartations of the Holy Spirit to our hearts we have renewed our commitment and our

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thirst for God.

Pastor Paul Goulet shows us clearly, through the Scripture, his own testimony and deep ministerial experiences, the requirements to receive fresh and transforming impartations of the Holy Spirit. He speaks of the necessary humility, of the constant searching, of the worship that reaches God's throne, of the blessed influence of other servants of God, of the special care the person of the Holy Spirit deserves, and of the life of holiness and service that results from this full and victorious life.

We may experience a touch of the Holy Spirit in a service or in our room of prayer, but what is most important will follow later, when the internal changes and the external fruit of this encounter become evident. These glorious changes become fundamental in a new, personal and loving relationship with the Holy Spirit; become evident in our character, every day becoming more like Jesus; and by a new power to be His witnesses and to do His work in the world.

This impartation will affect your life, your ministry, your children, and your family. All that you are and all that you have will be moved by the glorious and blessed work of the Holy Spirit. When you receive this new impartation of the Spirit, take care of it as the most precious treasure and do not become satisfied, because you are just beginning to know him. Seek Him more! Fill yourself with more of Him!

I feel in my heart that by means of this book God has placed into your hands the keys to begin a new stage in your life and ministry. Get ready to receive it!

**Rev. Claudio J. Freidzon**

**INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this book is to help you unlock the power of God in your life, family, business, church and community. Once it is released, there is no force that can stop it.

I have been in pastoral ministry since 1983, but it is only since October 1994 that I can claim to know the Lord's power. Before this date, I had experienced only a mere trickle spilling over a seemingly indestructible dam, which held back the mighty river of God, preventing our church and our city from experiencing the full flow of His healing, saving, life-changing power. I hope and pray *The Power of Impartation* will burst the dams in your life and ministry.

This book was not written as an apologetic work for the ministry of impartation. The term *impartation* fell under suspicion during the latter-rain movement, when it came to be associated with the movement's oftentimes aberrant theology. However, it is time to free this important concept from its negative historical context and take a fresh, biblical look at it.

We live in a generation hungry for more of God. Impartation is the vehicle God is using to satisfy this hunger and to unleash a great end-times revival. I assume you are reading this book because you are one of those hungry people. These pages were written to help you experience His power like never before.

Impartation is all about the power of God flowing through people. It is not restricted to an elite few. God can use whatever vessel He chooses in order to impart (i.e., "to give over"<sup>1</sup>) to another. When Paul wrote to the Romans, he was confident of his ability and God's willingness to pour into their lives through him: "*I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong*" (Rom.

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*1:11*).

I am also confident that God will use this book as a tool to impart truth and power into your spirit.

In these last days there is no room for false humility. God is looking for men and women, teens and kids, who are full of faith and confidence. He wants to heal the sick, deliver the oppressed, save the lost, and touch a hurting world through people like you and me. As He pours His power into us and through us, we ordinary people will become the instruments God uses to spread a tremendous end-times revival to every corner of the earth.

Am I sure God is going to move when we preach or pray? You better believe I am! If I weren't, I would be a double-minded man, and the Bible says that such a man should not expect to receive anything from God.

*But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (James 1:6-8)*

Isn't that how many Christians live: expecting nothing from God? They live in fear—fear of failure, fear of financial ruin and fear of the future.

What do you expect from God? Power or pity? Love or condemnation? Miracles or near misses? It is your choice. Please realize that your choice will determine what and how you receive—you will find, for better or for worse, that you often get what you expect. Expectation is all about faith. And *"faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1 NKJV).*

I expect that God is going to use this book to unlock His power in your life. What about you? Will you join your faith with mine and dare to expect the same thing?

If so, let's get started!



## CHAPTER 1

### JESUS, THE MASTER IMPARTER

#### 1

I believe our theology needs to be firmly Christ-centered. He is *"the Alpha and the Omega" (Rev. 1:8)*. He is *"the author and perfecter of our faith" (Heb. 12:2)*. *"All things were created by him and for him" (Col. 1:16)*. He is the model that we must follow. His words and actions are life and truth.

He lived His life according to the Father's will. He did and said what the Father instructed Him to do and say. *"I do nothing on my own, but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him" (John 8:28-29)*.

Our beliefs, whether about impartation or any other subject, must be filtered through the life and teachings of Jesus. As we search the Scriptures, we can find many examples of the power of impartation at work through His life—in fact, He was the very master of impartation. Recently, during my early morning devotions, I fell upon one of these examples. I began by reading the story of Jairus:

*So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And he fell down at Jesus' feet and begged Him to come to his house, for he had an only daughter about twelve years of age, and she was dying.*  
*(Luke 8:40-42a NKJV)*

I wept as I read the verses about Jairus falling at the feet of Jesus, begging for help. I know what it's like to have a child who is very ill. Perhaps you do too, or have been through some other painful situation

that helps you relate in a very personal way to this story. I recalled many occasions when I had fallen at the feet of my Savior, as Jairus did, crying out for my own daughter, my Isabelle. I hated the cancer that had crept into her body. I hated everything about this horrid disease. Jairus' cry for help rocked me that morning.

As I continued to read, this moving scene was interrupted by a desperate woman, the woman with the issue of blood. She was weak from her condition. She had spent all her money on doctors who had not been able to help her. Somehow she made her way through the throng surrounding Jesus. She made her way to her one last chance.

*But as He went, the multitudes thronged Him. Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years, who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any, came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped. (Luke 8: 42b-44 NKJV)*

The compassion of Jesus seeped through the pages that morning. Somehow, in the midst of a chaotic and noisy mass of people who threatened to crush Him, He was able to remain sensitive to the needs of the individuals, and alert to the flow of His own healing power. Somehow, He was able to lovingly listen and respond to the begging father, immediately notice a touch of faith that tapped His power, and affectionately speak to the trembling woman who had just been healed by that power.

*And Jesus said, 'Who touched Me?' When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, 'Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, "Who touched Me?"' But Jesus said, 'Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.' (Luke 8:45-46 NKJV)*

How could He feel power leave His body? This statement has puzzled me for twenty years: *"I perceived power going out from Me"*

(Luke 8:46 NKJV). Let it sink into your heart and mind. Do you feel the power go out from you when you pray for someone? Do you feel the power go out from you when a faith-filled person touches your garment? Jesus did.

Have you ever wondered about this passage? Jesus had power within Himself. Do we have the same power in us? If not, are we meant to have it? How do we get it? If this power is in us, then how do we share it? What can we do with it?

*Jesus, The Master Imparter 13*

This woman who had suffered so much finally tapped into the power that could heal her. How did she do it? By faith.

*Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately. And He said to her, 'Daughter, be of good cheer; your faith has made you well. Go in peace.' (Luke 8:47-48 NKJV)*

Her faith was the key to unlock the power of Jesus Christ. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Without faith it is also impossible to seize God's promises for us. Without faith the woman would have left helpless and hopeless.

Circumstances should not dictate our ability to have faith and exercise it. The woman in this story had every reason to be depressed, discouraged and hopeless. Not only had she suffered physically for twelve years; she must have suffered from loneliness, isolation and scorn as well, for within her culture she was considered ceremonially unclean. Other people, even her closest relatives, would have avoided touching her or even touching the places where she sat or lay, lest they also become unclean.

The Bible says she had spent all of her livelihood on physicians

but no one had been able to heal her. How crushing it must have been to submit to new medications, procedures and treatments, only to be let down time and again. Most likely, after each failure, she was forced to bear cutting remarks from insensitive friends and relatives who were all too ready to condemn her for her illness. "If you're still sick after all that, it must be because you have some sort of hidden sin in your life," they may have said, or, "No doubt God is punishing you for some terrible thing you have done." They may have looked down on her because it seemed God was not responding to her prayers. Some may have told her she just didn't have enough faith to be healed.

Nevertheless, she did not give up hope. No matter what others may have thought or said about her, she pressed on. What perseverance! What tenacity! *Her faith thrust her into action, and the actions she took revealed her level of faith.* That faith reached right out and touched the Master.

I was deeply moved by these verses. The Spirit of God was using them to teach me an incredible truth about my personal life. By faith,

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the same power spoken of in this portion of Scripture was supposed to live in me. In fact, for over seven years, it *has* lived in me. My daughter's healing, the growth of our church from 270 to over 3,000 in less than nine years, my family's spiritual growth, and the birth of Bible colleges around the world are only a small fraction of the fruit God has produced and the miracles He has wrought since His power was imparted into our lives.

#### **Impartation 101**

As I continued to read in the book of Luke, I also stumbled upon some nuggets of truth that revealed the heartbeat of Jesus. First of all, Luke 9:1 gives us a glimpse of Jesus' theology of impartation in action:

*"Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power*

*and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases" (NKJV).*

All twelve disciples received power and authority, even Judas—not because of anything they had done, but because Jesus chose to give it to them. He imparted to them, drawing from the very power and authority that He had within Himself. He could do so because He wasn't lacking in either. He had—and still has—plenty to give away to His followers. Are you a disciple of Jesus Christ? Are you His devoted follower? Do you believe He has filled you with power and authority over demons and sickness? If you haven't been filled yet, you can be. He is looking for disciples in the twenty-first century—men, women and young people who will follow Him with all their hearts. The destiny of a true disciple is to walk with the power and authority of Christ.

Luke 9:2 tells us His purpose in imparting power and authority to the disciples: *"He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick."* In this verse, the word *preach* is translated from the Greek *kerusso* meaning "to herald, to proclaim."<sup>1</sup> Just like the disciples, we present-day followers of Christ are all called to be heralds. We must proclaim the Kingdom of God to everyone we meet. We are to announce to others what the Lord is doing in our lives and in the world. Each of us is a mouthpiece for the things of God. We are part of His great marketing campaign. Not all of us will be pulpit preachers, but we are all commissioned and can be empowered to tell people about our Savior.

In Luke 9:10, the disciples tell Jesus how they invested the gifts of *Jesus, The Master Imparter 15* power and authority He had imparted to them. *"When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done."* This is the first time the term *apostles* (from the Greek word *apostolos*, meaning "one sent forth"<sup>2</sup>) is used in the Bible. The Twelve had something that Jesus

gave them. They needed to put it to use, so they became the "sent-out ones." They were set apart, empowered, and sent out to touch a broken world. They discovered that they were not only proclaimers, but they were doers also.

Can you picture the radiant faces of the twelve apostles as they returned from this assignment? Can you imagine their excited voices as they eagerly told the amazing stories of repentance, deliverance, and healing? Their testimonies meant that Jesus' power and authority had been transferred successfully to others. Mission accomplished!

But this was just the beginning. Now that "Phase One" had been completed, Jesus wanted to expand the impartation of power and authority to a larger group, a group of seventy-two, to be exact. Can you see the principle of multiplication here? Jesus is never satisfied with a stagnant or cliquish mentality ("Us four and no more!"). On the contrary, He uses impartation to expand the kingdom because impartation leads to multiplication. Here, in the form of an equation, is a theoretical account of how Jesus turned His first twelve disciples into seventy-two:

1 anointed Jesus X 12 empowered apostles X 6 people disciplined by each apostle = 72 disciples healing the sick, casting out demons, and winning the lost.

Scripture doesn't tell us whether the first twelve disciples had a hand in the discipling and empowering of the other sixty. Jesus could have and probably did personally impart into all of them, but it would seem logical that He would use His closest disciples as models of the success of impartation.

Jesus began the ongoing process of reaching the world when He multiplied Himself through impartation into His followers. The number of people whose lives were transformed by God grew exponentially as Jesus and His followers continued to multiply

themselves, but without impartation, that multiplication could not have been achieved.

What anticipation these early followers of Christ must have felt as they were prepared for this new venture! The Twelve had already

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begun to turn the world upside down. How much more impact seventy-two would make!

When the large group returned from their "missions trip," they were as triumphant as the first group had been. How did they feel about what they had just experienced? More importantly, how did Jesus feel about their success? The answers to these questions can be found in Luke 10:17-21:

*The seventy-two returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.' He replied, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.' At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, 'I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.'*

The seventy-two disciples had discovered that they had the power and authority to apply everything they had learned and received.

*"Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name,"* they said.

Whenever you see phrases like *"in Your name," "in His name,"* or *"in the name of Jesus"* in Scripture, you must understand that the disciples used His name as a point of authority. They walked in an authority that had been delegated to them, given to them, *imparted* to them by Christ Himself. Some immature Christians use the name of Christ as if it

were some type of magical incantation. The disciples were not merely saying His name, and they were not invoking His name in order to gain the power and authority they needed to heal and deliver. They were simply proclaiming, acting upon, and walking in that which was already theirs through impartation from the Lord.

The disciples experienced joy because great things happened while they walked in His authority. As for Jesus, He was full of joy because he saw Satan being defeated by empowered disciples—and we should note that He was not simply pleased or even filled with a calm, quiet type of joy. The Greek word *agalliao*, translated to English as *full of joy* or *rejoiced*, is used in Luke 10:21 to describe how Jesus felt, and it means "gushing, leaping, springing up or jumping for joy." It also means "to glory," "to exult," "to experience exceeding joy," "to be exceeding glad," or "to rejoice greatly."<sup>3</sup> This verse is a moving *Jesus, The Master Imparter 17*

glimpse of our Lord at a moment when He was absolutely overflowing with joy, thanks and praise.

### **Impartation: An Implement of Compassion**

Jesus loved people. He cared about their eternity and their welfare. Everywhere He traveled, He was moved to help, heal and deliver. Jesus was full of compassion for the hurting and the lost. Of course, His compassion was not limited to the time He spent on earth. He still cares for us; He is not insensitive to our struggles. The offer He made two thousand years ago is still in effect today:

*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. (Matt. 11:28-30 NKJV).*

This compassion moved Him to be an imparter. While Jesus was on the earth in the flesh, He was limited to one location at a time.



When He chose to come to earth as a man, He temporarily gave up the exclusive rights and powers He had as the Son of God. This is alluded to in Philippians 2:5-7:

*Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

He was no longer able to be everywhere at all times. However, He was still moved by compassion to reach out to the multitudes.

Impartation was His tool to multiply His impact around His world.

Impartation continues to be His vehicle to touch a lost world. Jesus is still moved by compassion. He continues to impart power and authority to His disciples. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. Are you? If you are, then get ready for Him to impart His power and authority into you. You can become part of a well-organized, equipped, and empowered army. This is His perfect will for your life.

### **Moved by Compassion**

Jesus is moved by compassion for the six billion souls in the world. That is why He wants to unleash His power and authority into

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you. Didn't He emphasize this truth shortly before he ascended to heaven? *"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit ... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you"* (Acts 1:4-5, 8). He repeats His purpose for the power: *"...and you will be my witnesses"* (Acts 1:8). Then, He gives them a plan that, among other things, reveals to them the tremendous scope of their mission: *"...in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

The old adage seems appropriate here: "Give a man a fish and you will feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime." If we apply this to the concept of impartation, we might say: "Heal a man with God's power and you will change the life of one man; fill Him with God's power, and multitudes can be healed."

### **Twenty-first Century Power, Purpose and Plan**

Men and women of the twenty-first century church, there is power and authority available to you—the same power that healed the woman with the issue of blood; the same power that raised Jairus' daughter from the dead; the same power that Jesus imparted into His followers.

Are you ready to take hold of it and be released into God's plan?

Let us imagine that someone handed you the keys to a brand-new, red-hot Mustang convertible. The title, registration and insurance are yours for free. Would you leave the car unused in your driveway?

Would you continue to drive your Ford Pinto every day or choose to walk to work? Of course you wouldn't. You would take the keys, jump in your new car and drive around town with the CD playing your favorite tunes. You would stop at your friends' homes to show it off. You would even let some of them drive it. I'm sure you would bring the top down and test out your new car's huge, powerful engine on the highway.

Unfortunately, many twenty-first century Christians have received power, authority, and purpose from the Master, but it is parked in the garage for safekeeping. Many never use it and others only use it on Sundays, in church.

Why does this happen? Why would anyone settle for less? I believe the answer is quite simple. Some don't know it is available to *Jesus, The Master Imparter 19*

them. They embrace New Testament theology as best they understand it, but they live with "no-testament" power. Others are crippled by

fear. They are afraid to drive that powerful new sports car. They're afraid they will crash and fail. Fear has crippled their faith and future. Ignorance mixed with fear is a deadly combination.

It hurts to admit it, but often, we pastors and theologians have been responsible for hindering the full release of God's anointing and power to the multitudes. Recently, in a denominational newsletter, I read an article claiming that impartation is not biblical. Another one asserted that God does not dispense the anointing or power through a person. I couldn't believe my eyes. It shocked me into prayer. Why would anyone take such a stand? As I prayed, God filled me with insight. Although most pastors are wonderful, dedicated servants of God, there seem to be three forces in us that cause us to be an unholy blockade to the anointing.

***Elitism:*** For centuries prior to the Protestant Reformation, the laity had been relegated to the role of mere listeners. They had become a vast mob of devoted—but utterly passive—followers. Taught that only priests had the ability to interpret the Word of God, they were not permitted to study the Bible independently. They were unaware that anyone but the clergy could have a calling from God or be anointed for ministry. They were made to believe that salvation could only be gained through the church and adherence to its teachings.

Such passivity on the part of the laity gave the clergy an inordinate amount of power and led to great abuse. One type of abuse—one that brought in much revenue to the church—was the sale of indulgences. For a price paid to and determined by the church, one supposedly could obtain remission of temporal punishment for sins committed and confessed to a priest.

On October 31, 1517, an indignant German theologian named Martin Luther posted on the door of the castle church at Wittenberg his now famous 95 theses objecting to the doctrine of indulgences.<sup>4</sup>

Thus began the Protestant Reformation, a holy movement that brought new fire and purity to a church that had become cold and corrupt.

From his own extensive studies of the Bible, Luther drew many revolutionary conclusions still embraced by Protestants today. Among these are that salvation cannot be earned by good works, but only by God's grace through His gift of faith; that the Bible, rather than the

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church, is the source and norm for all religious teachings and authority; and that Christ is the sole mediator between God and man.<sup>5</sup>

However, in spite of all the positive changes that Luther and other Reformation leaders made, some felt there were still many issues that needed to be addressed. For example, a gaping chasm between laity and clergy continued to exist. Church leaders were generally well-educated in the Word, but congregants were quite ignorant of God's truths. As a result of the perceived need to bridge this chasm and to resolve other issues, new and more radical groups of reformers were born.

One such group, led by pioneers such as Michael Sattler, Menno Simmons, Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz, advocated personal conversion, independent Bible study, and believer's baptism. Because of this latter point of doctrine, most members of the group—having already been baptized as infants—felt a need to be baptized again as believers. Detractors disdainfully referred to them as Anabaptists, (i.e., baptized twice), but the group eventually embraced the nickname as its official designation. Because of their Bible-inspired beliefs and practices, these saints experienced horrible persecution—including imprisonment, torture and execution—from both Catholics and other Protestants. We modern-day evangelicals and Pentecostals have our roots in this movement.<sup>6</sup>

The revolution initiated by our Reformation brothers and sisters

must continue. The Word, Spirit, anointing, power, and works are for each and every believer. As we can see in Ephesians 4:12, God *"gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers."* So, while it is true that He has established structure in the church, the days of hierarchy are over.

Under the new covenant, God's holy flow chart is based on servanthood and is designed *"to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph. 4:12).*

Jesus set the tone for all true ministers in John 13:12-17:

*When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you*  
*Jesus, The Master Imparter 21*

*the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."*

The biblical role of all ministers, theologians, and denominational leaders is to be holy dispensers of God's truth, power, anointing, healing, and gifts.

The following is a simple analogy of the role of every minister and leader in the church: In our school hallway, there is a row of machines that dispense water, juice, sodas, candy and other snacks. These dispensers are not self-sustaining. Their role is very limited. They dispense their contents to willing recipients. Our staff orders the contents, a representative of the vending machine company fills the dispensers, and the company sends us the bill.

We Christians are called to be holy dispensers. God provides gifts,

healings, blessings, insight and knowledge through us. He has supplied us with every good gift that is in us. Our role is very limited. *"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights" (James 1:17)*. He also built into us the mechanisms that enable Him to dispense to others through us: preaching, teaching, praying, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, prophesying, and walking in the Spirit. When we walk in the Spirit and are led by the Spirit, we serve as smoothly-functioning dispensers that God can use to impart into people's lives.

Praise God that the role of dispenser is not limited to pastors! God can and wants to use every believer in this role. Elitism would require you to be a graduate of a seminary with ministerial credentials and a title in order to be used of God.

Thank God the Apostle Paul was not a professional snob. He longed to see the body of Christ mobilized and empowered to do the work of the ministry. In Romans 1:11, he makes this quite clear. He wanted God to take everything that he had received, and dispense it into the lives of all the Roman believers. *"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong."*

***Fear of Fallout:*** Some leaders are afraid if all believers could receive power and anointing, the fallout would be hard to control. What if they misuse the power? What if they make mistakes? What if they make theological errors? What if things are done out of order?

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These are appropriate questions; however, they must be answered by God. It is His plan. Therefore, He has anticipated the fallout and has already made arrangements to handle it. Our role as leaders is not to avoid problems by failing to release the multitudes into the anointing. It is to pastor the people as they function in the power; to guide them through a little fallout; to use the Word to direct the flow

of power in their lives. " *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*" (2 Tim. 3:16).

**Empty Dispensers:** The third reason the flow of God's power and anointing is limited in many churches and denominations is that the dispensers are almost empty. Don't you hate it when you place the correct amount of money in a vending machine, select a beverage and push the appropriate button, only to see it flash the words, "SOLD OUT"? Could those same words be a prophetic warning sign flashing over North American Christianity? How many pastors and leaders have sold out their birthright of power and authority for a bowl of "safe" but lukewarm and powerless practices?

Elisha cried out, "*Where now is the LORD, the God of Elijah?*" (2 Kings 2:14). Good question. Where is He? Is He in your church, pastors and leaders? Is He in you?

Jesus clearly said in Mark 16:17-18,

*And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.*

When was the last time the sick were healed, the lost saved, the possessed delivered, and the power unleashed at the tips of your fingers or the sound of your voice?

The Apostle Paul was so filled with the power of God that "*even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them*" (Acts 19:12). Wow! This dispenser wasn't sold out. Paul was so full of God's power, it was seeping out of his pores and saturating his garments! Isn't it interesting that the sold-out items—the items that so many

dispensers are lacking—are the very ones that would give us strength

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and power and nourishment and good health? Have we compromised the Gospel by being stocked instead with only the popular items, the ones that are pleasant to the taste but void of nutrition?

In our desire to appeal to the masses, have we chosen to avoid stocking items that might be offensive, confrontational, confusing or controversial—dispensing instead a few predictable minutes of polite, unemotional worship; a bit of socially relevant, politically correct teaching; and a couple of cold but poetic prayers, uttered in perfect King James English? Have we banished those images and practices that might cause distress or discomfort, such as altar calls and repentance; admonition and exhortation; the cross and the blood of Christ; the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit? Have we decided that it is too inconvenient, messy, and embarrassing to welcome into our midst a God who convicts of sin, draws the lost to salvation, ignites burning passion in the lukewarm, miraculously heals the sick, dramatically delivers the demonized, dares to interrupt our well-planned services with an agenda of His own, and refuses to be put in a box?

If we have done these things or held these attitudes, it is time to repent (i.e., to change our mind, our way of thinking<sup>7</sup>). We need to ask God to fill our churches and us with every item in His inventory. We must allow Him to stock us as He wishes so that we can participate in this dispensing process. We must surrender to Him the processes of filling and dispensing. He will give people what they need, not necessarily what they want or what they think they need.

This concept liberates us from the domination of public opinion. It frees us to be what we were designed to be. It also frees us from the burden to produce or perform. God is the supplier. We are only vessels



designed to be used by Him to dispense blessings, power, anointing and gifts.

Unfortunately, many Christians have chosen to be ineffective dispensers of pious platitudes and socially relevant principles.

Returning to our other analogy, this is "Ford Pinto faith." What kind of faith and life do you want? Ford Pinto or mighty Mustang? An empty dispenser or a dispenser full of the Holy Spirit?

Isn't it interesting that Stephen, the first martyr of the New Testament church, was a deacon (from the Greek *diakonos*, denoting a "servant"<sup>8</sup>)? He did not hold a high position in the early church. He

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was given the role of table waiter and benevolence steward. Yet, he was such a full dispenser, he became known for the "*great wonders and miraculous signs*" (Acts 6:8) he did among the people.

Scripture tells us the story of Stephen in just two chapters, Acts 6 and 7. But within those two chapters are many references to Stephen being *full*. He and the other deacons were "*full of the Spirit and wisdom*" (Acts 6:3); Stephen was "*full of faith and of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 6:5); and he was "*full of God's grace and power*" (Acts 6:8).

Minutes before he became the first person to give up his life for the cause of Christ, Scripture tells us again that Stephen was "*full of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 7:55), and this time, he was permitted a glimpse into heaven where he saw "*the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:55), ready to welcome His good and faithful servant home.

Stephen's life on earth may not have been long, but it was full, and, more importantly, he was full. He had allowed God to fill him according to His will, so he became a dispenser full of top-notch items. No Ford Pinto faith for Stephen!

Of course, Ford discontinued the Pinto model a long time ago.

Jesus, on the other hand, never had to discontinue anything. He never designed or produced anything less than pure perfection. He never imparts beat- up-old-Pinto faith. He fills us with brand-new-red-hot-Mustang-convertible faith. If you're tired of settling for less than His best, read this book with a desire to receive a powerful impartation.

This analogy could be used to describe my own life. It will be a joy and a privilege for me to share my testimony with you in this book.

The seven principles that will unleash the power of God in your life were derived from my own successes and failures; they also emanated from the relationships with which God has blessed me.

If you're tired of your beaten-up old faith, I hope and pray that *The Power of Impartation* will help you trade it in for a powerful twenty-first century model; or if the car you're driving is great, but it's beginning to cough and sputter, I ask God to use this book to give you a tune-up, change your oil, and fill your tank. Get ready to grab the keys, put on the seatbelt, and ask the Holy Spirit to ignite that powerful Mustang engine of yours!

*Jesus, The Master Imparter 25*

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### **Selah**

The word *selah* was often inserted in the Psalms as an admonishment by the author to emphasize his point. He was encouraging his readers to fully grasp the depth of the truth. At the end of every chapter and after each one of the seven key principles in Chapter Five, I have inserted a "Selah" page to help you digest and assimilate the subject matter of the previous pages. Start by reviewing the scriptures quoted in this chapter and meditating upon them. Try to apply them to your own context. Are you ready to begin? Great, let's get started!

**\*\*** Do you believe that Christ's present-day followers are meant to have

the same power and authority over sickness and demons that He had? Why or why not?

**\*\*** If you agree that impartation is still an important vehicle God uses to touch a lost world, name some reasons why such a vehicle would be effective.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE POWER OF IMPARTATION

#### 2

##### **A Personal Perspective**

The principle of impartation has been neglected by educators and ministers. I had never heard the term used in church and, although I attended a university and Bible college, earning a master's degree in psychology and pastoral counseling, I never heard the term used in any of my classes. However, even though the term was not used, and the concept was not taught, the truth was being exercised in part. The fact that I can now put a label to something that has been happening throughout my life is both enlightening and empowering.

The term translated as *impart* in the New Testament comes from the Greek word *metadidomi*, which means "to give over, to share."<sup>1</sup> Have you ever stopped to think about all those who have imparted into your life? A list of those who have poured into me would include:

##### **➤ Parents**

They imparted through touch, discipline, teaching, verbal reinforcement, affection, rewards and modeling.

##### **➤ Grandparents**

Even though their contact may have been sporadic, they handed down the family history. They provided a sense of continuity; a generational perspective.

##### **➤ Siblings**

According to family dynamics, a field of study that examines the

relationship connections within a family, sibling relationships are

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crucial in the development of a person's self esteem, body image, confidence and position in the world. Kevin Leman's popular work, *The Birth Order Book*, presents interesting theories and research about this subject.

Others who come to mind are other members of my family, friends, teachers, coaches, youth workers, pastors, authors, peers, employers, evangelists, and missionaries. God used all of these people to impart into my life. They were all role models through whom the Holy Spirit flowed.

In the past decade we have seen a heightened awareness of the need for coaches, mentors, and disciplers. Thousands flock to leadership seminars to receive the secrets of success in business, life and family. As I thought back over my own development, I identified key people and events that left a lasting deposit in my mind and emotions.

➤ My oldest brother Mickey was a remarkable influence in more ways than one. Ten years my senior, he was an amateur and, later, semiprofessional hockey player who had used his skills to get a great education. I admired him tremendously. He was tough on me, but fair, and though he lived far away, he imparted a great deal into my life. He played a key role in developing my mental toughness as well as my hockey and time-management skills.

He was the one who placed Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* into my hands and encouraged me to read other books by the same author. As a Catholic teenager growing up in Canada, these books proved revolutionary to me. They taught me many dynamic principles and helped me begin to memorize

Scripture, and to use it to change my way of thinking. Doesn't God promise that His Word will not return void? *"So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isa. 55:11)*. The Word must bear fruit, and it did for me. I don't know if my brother realized that giving me Peale's book would be my introduction to hiding the Word in my heart, but I am eternally indebted to him.

➤ There are many other key people and events that planted seeds in my heart and mind. I'll never forget when my peewee hockey coach told me I had leadership ability. He liked me and told me so. He gave me *The Power of Impartation 29* hope and confidence with his words of encouragement. Have you ever considered the impact of your words on the lives of children or young adults?

➤ A recent brush with death was also a valuable tool in the Potter's hand. Although God did not send that pain into my life, he did use it to transform my character and ministry. Dying to self might sound like a high ideal as a Christian, but the reality of it is overwhelming and traumatic. One of my hockey coaches used to say, "No pain, no gain." Pain is a very important factor in the process of change, whether physical or spiritual.

When God begins to impart something into our deeply encrusted souls and spirits, pain will often be the precursor. Perhaps that is what Jesus was referring to when He said, *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23)*. The cross experience means torture and death to self, selfishness, the flesh, pride and ego.

Jesus spoke of old wineskins being unable to contain new wine. If we desire the new wine from God, we will experience some

cracking, breaking and death. God wants to impart so many wonderful *charis* (i.e., "gifts" or "graces"<sup>2</sup>) into our souls, bodies and spirits, but first, He has to make us ready to contain them. The following paragraphs tell the story of how God prepared my wineskin to receive more of Him than I ever could have dreamed.

### **Old Wineskins Must Crack**

I was saved through the ministry of Athletes in Action and disciplined by Campus Crusade for Christ. From the earliest days of my conversion to Christ, I was trained to place little or no stock in experience and emotions. My faith would be built on the Word; faithfulness and service to God; witnessing to the lost; and making a difference in the world. What a tremendous foundation of stability and substance! I'm sure they sometimes felt like giving up on me, but the staff of this great ministry imparted their lives and character into me, and I am so grateful to them. Because of their influence, I chose to finish my bachelor's degree in psychology. Changing lives and helping people would be my life's calling. I turned my back on my goal to play professional hockey. Instead, I chose to serve God with the same zeal as those who disciplined me.

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My journey took an interesting twist when I read a pamphlet written by Bill Bright on the Holy Spirit. Having been brought up in the Catholic Church, I had a healthy respect for the supernatural. I remember going to St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal and seeing the evidence of miracles and healings. God performed them through a humble priest named Brother Andre. Wheelchairs and crutches adorned the walls of this great edifice built on the foundation of his ministry. After being born again, I had a vital relationship with God that fortified my natural belief in the supernatural. The pamphlet stimulated a renewed hunger in me to seek the God who could do the

miraculous. As I studied the Word, I discovered the concepts of "signs and wonders" and "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Wow, it was a whole new world of possibilities!

I searched for the God of the supernatural for years. I saw glimpses of Him in a Spirit-filled Anglican church, in charismatic Catholic services and, eventually, in the Pentecostal Churches of Canada. I'll never forget the first series of sermons on the Holy Spirit that I heard at a Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada church in Ottawa, Ontario. I was home! The Lord led me to a great church with a faithful man of God, Pastor Bert Liira. This church seemed to espouse a theology I could embrace, but I still felt there had to be more.

By this time, I had received a call to ministry and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and I had experienced growth in my walk with Christ—but where was the God of Elijah, the God of Peter, the God of Paul? Isn't this how Elisha felt? After Elijah was taken up to heaven by the chariots of fire, and Elisha was left to carry on his mentor's incredible ministry, he cried, *"Where now is the LORD, the God of Elijah?"* (2 Kings 2:14). I believe that most of us have this same hunger. We want to see God move in power, the way He did in the days of Elijah. And as we try to touch the lost and hurting world in which we live, we sense that the church today needs the Holy Spirit to flow through us as powerfully as He did through our predecessors in the book of Acts.

### **Where is the God of Elijah?**

After graduating from the University of Ottawa with a bachelor's degree in psychology, I married Denise Taillefer, a beautiful French Canadian physical education major. We were both young Christians but we had a burning desire to serve God. We went to Bible college to *The Power of Impartation* 31 fulfill our call to ministry. It was at Western Pentecostal Bible College that I received my first word from God. I heard quite clearly that I was

supposed to start counseling centers in churches, but this directive seemed so foreign to my original intentions. I had thought that I was going to be an evangelist or missionary who would win people to Christ. After all, Campus Crusade for Christ had taught me how to be a soul winner. It was the first priority of my Christian walk. No one, however, had taught me how to hear the voice of God.

I could identify with the young intern Samuel when he first heard the voice of God: "*Then the LORD called Samuel. Samuel answered, 'Here I am' (1 Sam. 3:4).*" The dean of the Bible college, Dr. David Lim, was a great comfort to me. He helped me understand the voice of God. He became an Eli to a young Samuel.

For the next twelve years, God put Denise and me through "boot camp," using various elements to break, shape, train and transform us. He was, in fact, preparing us for a fabulous, exciting, and challenging future, far beyond anything we could have imagined. God is very patient with our training, much more so than we are. He uses the circumstances of our lives and our responses to them to weave the fabric of our future. Doesn't the Bible say that we are "*God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10)?*" I am thankful that God was more than able to use the threads of our lives to create something beautiful.

As I recall those early years of marriage and ministry, the elements—or "threads"—that stand out are:

➤ **Hardship**

Denise and I were very poor. Our marriage was strained. We were both quite unhappy. We had very few tools to build a healthy marriage. Bible college, graduate school, and the first years of ministry put us under tremendous stress. During that time Denise and I sought healing for our marriage and, thank God, He provided it. He



also helped us to learn that a healthy marriage takes work—lots of it.

I believe that God used this time to refine our character and faith.

*"Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope" (Rom. 5:3-4).* God can redeem even the worst hardships.

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#### **➤ Education**

We were blessed with tremendous professors who loved God, His Word, and people. It was only years later that I grasped the full extent of their impartation into our lives. I would encourage every one of you to pursue a good education. Of course, whether we are currently attending a school or not, we should never stop studying and learning.

#### **➤ Ministry Experience**

Denise and I were privileged to work for true men and women of God. The Lord was very gracious, allowing us to learn ministry with successful, sincere pastors and counselors. We dedicated those years to helping hurting people through seminars, counseling, support groups, and writing. In retrospect, it is clear that God was using us during this season to mend the brokenhearted and reconcile relationships.

Of course, our ministry was not perfect. Early on, I found myself in the first stages of burnout because of poor boundaries. God was so faithful, though, guiding and teaching us through each new challenge. He imparted important principles during those years that have become the foundation of a life based upon New Testament beliefs and practices.

In spite of all that we were doing and learning, deep in our hearts, we knew—even back then—that there was more. There had to be

more. "Where is the God of the New Testament?" we often wondered. Why were there so many broken people? Where was God's healing and delivering power? Where were the miraculous signs that Jesus promised? He said, *"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well"* (Mark 16:17-18).

In 1994, God was to answer the cry of our desperate hearts and meet us in a dramatic way. Our old wineskins that relied heavily on proof and rational evaluation would give way to a surrendered faith journey. We would begin to walk in the supernatural, seeing God's promises fulfilled in our lives each day. We would start to minister with a new confidence, like Paul's when he said, *"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong"* (Rom. *The Power of Impartation* 33

1:11). God would begin to work through us as He did through Peter when he said to the crippled beggar, *"Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk"* (Acts 3:6).

I have known Christ for over twenty years, but only during the past six have I begun to experience what Paul referred to when he said, *"I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death"* (Phil. 3:10).

Do you want to know Him that intimately? Will you dare shed your old wineskins? Are you ready to give up the preconceived notions you may harbor about God? Are you willing to prepare your heart and mind for divine impartation? Are you longing for a supernatural visitation? If the answer to these questions is yes, you are about to

embark on the most thrilling, challenging, and meaningful journey of your life.



### **Selah**

**\*\*** Who has imparted into your life? What are the key relationships so far in your faith journey?

**\*\*** Are you experiencing God's presence, power and love more now than you did at the beginning of your Christian walk? Do you ever find yourself thinking that there must be more?

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **1994—THE YEAR GOD SURPRISED US**

#### **3**

There comes a time in everyone's life when they realize they don't have what it takes to get to the next level. The Peter Principle states that everyone rises to the level of his or her own incompetence. I believe this is true in every aspect of our lives: from careers and relationships to emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual development. But, as children of God, we are not bound to natural limits; after all, the infinite resources of our Father are at our disposal. As long as the thing we are attempting to do is within God's will for our lives, our own competence (or the lack of it!) is irrelevant. When we hit that invisible ceiling, God can help us crash through it and soar far above anything we ever could have imagined. Will you choose to let Him push you past your level of incompetence? I have. The choice to break free from this principle will propel us to our destiny, our inheritance in Christ.

One of the steps toward breaking free is simply recognizing our unhealthy or unproductive patterns of thought and behavior. It is insane to keep doing the same things in the same way, over and over again, each time hoping for different results. Have you ever been stuck

in this type of rut? As a pastoral counselor, I discovered how common this is; however, *common* is not the same as *inevitable*. As followers of Christ, we must expect our lives to be full of the extraordinary, the remarkable, the *uncommon*. We must shed our old wineskins and learn to live in the supernatural rather than the natural.

In my case, God had to take rather drastic measures in order to pull me out of the comfortable, cozy little rut I had made for myself. The first of these measures would involve moving me to a city I never

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dreamed I would call home and steering my career in a direction I never would have imagined.

### **Change of Plans**

The move came as a complete surprise. Our ministry had been going well. The counseling center that I had started was helping hundreds every week. Denise and I led a Sunday school class with three to four hundred people in attendance. I was writing, teaching at a Bible college, traveling to conduct seminars, and speaking on a weekly radio program. Life was good, and I was enjoying success on many fronts. We were content and comfortable, with a beautiful home, three great kids, and a lifestyle to be envied. If left to ourselves, we probably would be in the same city still, involved in the same ministry and living the same lifestyle. But God had other plans.

It all started as an invitation to the Philippines to take part in the development of curriculum for a Bible college. I was chosen to serve on a sub-committee to implement counseling training for the future minister. All was going as expected until the day I found myself alone, with a little spare time on my hands, and decided to take a walk. As I wandered through the streets of Manila, I was confronted with scene after scene of poverty and human suffering.

Each encounter was like a slap on the face, awakening all my senses. Tears sprang to my eyes when I saw a family living inside a small wooden box. My heart ached for the undernourished, half-naked children playing in the streets. God used these and other grim realities to shake me all the way down to the very core of my being. Suddenly, my definition of success didn't seem important anymore. I found myself telling God that I would do anything for Him. I did not feel a call to the Philippines that day, but I did feel an urgent desire to serve wherever and however He might lead; to surrender all for His perfect will.

On the return flight, I continued to pray, yielding myself to God and asking for His direction. To my surprise, somewhere between Japan and Los Angeles, God spoke to me so clearly: "You will be the pastor of West Valley Assembly in Las Vegas." (West Valley Assembly is the former name of the International Church of Las Vegas.) Even though I was seeking His will for my life, I couldn't imagine why God would want me to do such a thing. Why would He

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have me leave a successful pastoral counseling ministry in Sacramento, California, to pastor a home missions church in Las Vegas, Nevada?

I was familiar with West Valley Assembly. Robert Douglas, the founding pastor of this new church, had attended a seminar I had conducted in Las Vegas. After one of the sessions, he asked me to stay over and preach on Sunday, and I accepted. We developed a good friendship as a result, and our relationship seemed to make it even more improbable that I would ever become pastor of the church. The thought of giving up financial, emotional and relational stability in order to subject my family and myself to the unknown challenges that would await us in Las Vegas unnerved me. It was

overwhelming to even consider such a thing. Besides, it seemed ridiculous. Surely, a thought like that could not be from God...could it?

I decided to dismiss it, blaming it on jet lag, fatigue or indigestion.

The very next day, my comfortable little world received another frightening jolt. Robert Douglas called to inform me that he was leaving his church. He said God had shown him that I was the one who was supposed to take his place as senior pastor. So it was God's voice I had heard on the plane! As the shock of this realization hit me, I went numb. My heart began to pound and my knees turned into rubber.

Before I knew it, I found myself sitting on the floor. Then, the soon-to-be-former pastor of West Valley Assembly went on to say that he had actually seen my face in a vision. As far as I was concerned, it sounded more like a nightmare, because it scared the wits out of me!

From an earthly, natural perspective, a move like this made no sense at all. It would mean giving up everything we had worked and studied for, leaving our comfort zone, and entering a new ministry entirely by faith. It would mean dropping the work for which I had been trained in order to do something with which I had no experience and for which I had no predisposition.

Denise and I had often joked about the things we didn't want to do with our lives. Being a senior pastor of a small church was at the top of the list (right next to jumping off a bridge and wearing leisure suits!). But there was no doubt that we had heard from God. How could we reject His plan for our lives? As we talked and prayed about it, we decided we had to obey the Lord, regardless of the price.

At the time, there was no way to foresee how long we would be

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called to do this difficult and seemingly ridiculous thing. Little did we know that God was going to use this giant step into the unknown as a means to get us past the walls that hindered us. He was going to help

us enter a new realm of faith and experience.

Could it be that your next breakthrough is right around the corner of obedience? Obedience will spark growth. It will open your mind and spirit to new perspectives and insights. It will propel you out of your comfort zone, forcing you to let go of your security blanket and depend solely on God. He wants you to stretch more than you ever thought you could stretch. He wants to lift you so high that only He can catch you.

How do you begin to climb out of that comfortable rut you may find yourself in? Commit to know Jesus Christ more intimately than ever before. Invite the Holy Spirit to fill every fiber of your being so that you will truly become one with Christ. The Apostle Paul kept his hunger for God because he prioritized this intimate relationship.

### **I Want to Know Him**

In Philippians 3:10, Paul expressed his deepest desire: *"I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like him in his death."*

Before becoming senior pastor of West Valley Assembly, I undoubtedly knew Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. I loved Him and was serving Him as far as I knew how. But our move to Las Vegas quickly opened my eyes to a tremendous need for His power. Only a few months after we arrived, it seemed that our family was being attacked from every direction. Our second child, Christine, started to have seizures. The doctors diagnosed a form of epilepsy. Our eldest daughter, Isabelle, fell in with the wrong crowd and rebelled. Denise and I came under the consistently suspicious eyes of a congregation that didn't trust us.

Surprisingly, in spite of everything, the church grew quickly and so did my dependence on God. I needed Him desperately. I really didn't know how to be a senior pastor. I cried out to God for more of

Him. I asked Him for help, wisdom, and direction. I even asked Him for revival without really knowing what it was. I struggled with feelings of inadequacy. Others could pastor better, I thought. I was only a pinch hitter. I had never done anything to prepare specifically

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for being a senior pastor because I had never planned to be one. If God really wanted me to pastor this church, He was going to have to give me the ability.

I decided to dedicate one entire day each week to fasting and praying. Every Friday, I would hide out in the desert area surrounding Las Vegas. Alone with my Bible, my God, and the cacti, I would walk, climb and pray.

Now that I look back on those days, I realize I was chasing after God. What a shock when I finally caught Him! (Or should I say, "when He let me catch Him"?) Tommy Tenney's book, *The God Chasers*, seems to have captured the hunger for God that is growing in so many people today. I believe people are tired of the predictable generic church services. They want to know the God of Elijah.

Young people, in particular, seem to have embraced this quest in a dramatic way. Perhaps the next generation will be more effective than ours. There is a great need for passionate men and women of God who live in anticipation of His next great move. I pray that God will give all of us a holy dissatisfaction with the status quo, the safe and sanitized, and the lukewarm, money-back-guarantee church. We need a radical change, a spiritual revolution, and new wineskins to contain the new wine that God is pouring out on His children.

Are you pursuing God? Jesus said, "*If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him*" (John 7:37-38). He promised that He would let you catch Him if you seek Him.



*"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened"* (Matt. 7:7-8).

### **The Day the Lord Surprised Me**

So, obedience to God's call had led to a strange new situation, full of insecurities and struggles, that forced us to seek His face like never before. And that period of intense seeking eventually led to the moment when God took pity on me and let me catch Him.

When my children were little, I used to play chasing games with them. Those of you who are parents know that if you don't let your

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children catch you at regular intervals they will either give up or become angry. Because we love our children and want our time together to be warm and pleasant, not frustrating or discouraging, we slow down and let ourselves be caught. As human beings, our love cannot even begin to compare with our heavenly Father's, so how much more will He allow us to catch Him, when we seek Him with all of our heart?

At first, the Father let me catch Him just long enough to get a taste of His intimate presence. It happened on an unforgettable Sunday in our small church when, at the beginning of the service, God suddenly filled me with an unexplainable joy. Did I laugh? Yes, of course I did.

I still cannot understand why some people have a hard time accepting laughter as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Many of those people are mature Pentecostal or charismatic Christians who have no trouble believing in other supernatural gifts or manifestations of the Spirit. As for me, I think laughter is a beautiful and biblical response to the presence of God. It is good medicine for a weary soul. I can testify that I have had more joy—and, therefore, more laughter in my

life—since the Holy Spirit filled me with new fire from heaven. After all, David declared to God, *"In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore"* (Ps. 16:11 NKJV). If we believers keep ourselves open to it, God's joy can be in each and every one of us. I pray that the time will soon come when all Christians are overflowing with the joy of the Lord.

When the Apostle Paul speaks of the fruit of the Holy Spirit, doesn't he mention joy? *"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"* (Gal. 5:22-23).

There has been a false assumption that spiritual matters are a somber and solemn affair; however, Scripture tells us that the joy of the Lord is our strength. *"Nehemiah said, 'Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength'"* (Neh. 8:10). And we just read Paul's assurance that there is no law against joy. Laughter is simply an outward expression of that joy, and personally, I believe we need a lot more laughter and joy in church. A joy-filled church will become a people-filled church. Joy will attract both the lost and the saved.

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Now, until that day when God let me catch Him, I had never started laughing during a worship service before. (Well, maybe I had laughed once or twice when someone messed up really badly.) Even though I was making great efforts to control myself, I couldn't stop giggling. Denise asked me, "What's so funny?" but I couldn't come up with a good answer. When she encouraged me to stop laughing, I tried even harder, but to no avail. I'm not sure what I preached, but I do remember having a good time.

After the service, a member of our congregation mentioned that I

was not alone in what I had just experienced; it was happening to other people in other places, as well. That was news to me! He invited Denise and me to attend a pastors' and leaders' conference in Toronto, Canada. Now, at the time, I had not heard any negative comments about the phenomenon known as "The Toronto Blessing," nor had I read any articles condemning or analyzing what was happening. So, Denise and I attended the conference with an open mind. We simply went to check it out.

Upon arriving at the conference, however, we quickly became quite skeptical. After a few minutes of observation, Denise remarked that it looked like a hospital for the mentally ill. Through our counseling work, we had actually visited such places, and trust me, her comment was not an exaggeration.

Although I thoroughly agreed with my wife's first impression, I soon became curious about the power the altar workers seemed to have. People were falling under the power of God. There was no pushing. I looked for it. My skepticism began to dissipate when I saw two respected ministers who were completely overcome with God's power and presence. They were rolling, crying and laughing on the ground. I had known them for over twelve years. They were not the types to fake something like that, and they were definitely not mentally ill. I tried going forward for prayer several times and was shocked when I actually felt the power of God touch me. I was deeply moved and thankful, and I wept for a long time in His presence. He touched me gently those first few times. A little touch was fine with me. As long as I didn't lose control or look foolish, I would be all right. Can you relate? Is it more important for you to maintain control than to be touched by God?

My wife had a different experience. When she went up for prayer,

she didn't experience the touch of God. Instead, God used a prayer team member to discern hurt and pain in her heart. Denise returned to her chair angry and disappointed. During the next service, she gathered the courage to go up again, but another woman shared a word of knowledge about Denise's hurt and pain. (A *word or message of knowledge* is one of the gifts of the Spirit listed in 1 Corinthians 12:7-11. It is the supernatural revelation of facts given by God, usually for the purpose of protecting the Christian, showing him or her how to pray more effectively, or showing him or her how to help others.) She returned to her seat feeling miserable. At the next session, she tried once more to get a touch from God. As you probably guessed, another prayer team member discerned the same condition. This time, Denise was finally willing to allow the Lord to deal with her pain. Seated on the carpet at the front of the church, my wife wept in the arms of the compassionate altar worker as the Holy Spirit healed all her hidden hurts.

During the past seven years of altar work, we have discovered that the Lord will often heal a vessel before sending His power. Many have come to our altars looking for God's power or a certain spiritual gift, but ended up finding something completely different. Altars should not be like a drive-in burger stand. We cannot simply select something from a varied menu and place our order. Instead, we must surrender ourselves to God, and He will choose to give us what He knows we need most. If we fail to approach the altar in this way, He will frustrate us. He wants us to come to Him with no strings attached. He calls the shots; we don't.

### **Caught by the Power**

Due to a previous commitment to do a marriage seminar, I had to leave the conference before it was finished. At about midnight, I decided to ask for prayer one more time, not for me, but for a revival

in Las Vegas. I was surprised by the response of the altar worker. He didn't want to agree with me in prayer. He wanted to pray for me. I told him I didn't want to be prayed for. I was feeling blessed and still in control. But he insisted, so I let him pray for me. What happened next is difficult to describe. I remember falling backwards and lying on the ground in perfect peace. I was thinking, "This is kind of nice. I think I will lie here and let God do whatever He wants." Wow, was I in 1994—*The Year God Surprised Us* 43

for a ride!

I saw a vision for the first time in my life. I had often heard other people describe beautiful images they would see during worship or prayer, but I never saw anything. When I closed my eyes at those moments, I would just see black. But not this time. I saw an oil tanker being filled with a substance from heaven. My heart started to race; I felt like I was having a heart attack. I lay on the ground for about two hours. I laughed and I cried. My body started shaking and it seemed like my stomach was in contractions. I remember Denise leaning over me in disbelief and asking, "Are you okay?" My sense of humor still intact, I responded to her with, "Honey, I've fallen and I can't get up." Then, I asked her to help me.

All my studies in psychology and theology had not prepared me for this experience with the power of God. I felt out of control. On the one hand, I knew it was God. Why would anyone make this stuff up? Who likes to roll on the ground, laughing and crying and flopping around like a fish out of water? It felt as if someone had connected my fingers and toes to an electric current, a strong one! As this was happening, a rush of emotions overwhelmed me—embarrassment, confusion, elation and joy.

Now, please understand that my story doesn't validate everything that has gone on in Toronto. I was touched by the power of God at this

conference, but that does not mean that I am in a position to judge the Toronto Blessing. I don't believe any of us are in that position. The only scriptural way to evaluate how much of it was an authentic move of God would be to observe the long-term results—the fruit—that follows this phenomenon.

Historically, revivals and revivalists have been criticized until the fruit is undeniable. Evan Roberts, the 26-year-old coal miner whom God used to usher in the 1904 Welsh Revival, was criticized for his lack of education, for his unorthodox preaching methods, and for being overly emotional. He had such passion for the Lord, he would spend hours in his room, praying aloud, praising God and preaching. His landlady, overhearing him, became convinced that he was mad or demon-possessed and, in fear, she asked him to leave.<sup>1</sup> Of course, the revival he helped start is one of the best-documented and best-known of all time. Over a period of two years, the fire of the Holy Spirit swept over the country, and was carried by visiting pastors to Norway,

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Japan, the United States, India, South Africa, and Korea, where further revival broke out. Many thousands of souls were saved and many miracles were recorded. Could it be that the revival that rocked Korea back then has never ceased? Is the great church of Pastor David Yonggi Cho the result of this revival?

John Wesley was a preacher of great power who founded Methodism during the eighteenth century. The Holiness Movement, an immediate precursor to Pentecostalism, issued from the heart of Methodism. At that time in England's history, evangelicals had to face bitter opposition and persecution. In many cities, Wesley's preaching was initially met by shouting, angry mobs who pelted him with various objects, some even attempting to stone him. In every case, he met the attacks with great courage and calm.<sup>2</sup> His beliefs were also sharply

criticized and ridiculed by many writers; however, those critical writings have passed into obscurity, while the fruits of Wesley's ministry continue to flourish.

William Seymour, the pastor from the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, who was instrumental in spreading the Pentecostal movement throughout the world, also faced ridicule and tremendous hostility.

When he first moved to Los Angeles, for example, he was invited to speak at a church, but was promptly kicked out when he began to preach on the gift of speaking in tongues.<sup>3</sup> The entire Pentecostal movement was treated with similar disdain and disapproval by many Christians and non-Christians throughout most of the twentieth century, and only in recent years has begun to gain a certain level of acceptance.

From my personal experience, I believe that the power of the Holy Spirit was manifested in Toronto. The fruit of these revival services will one day be recognized. I have been to the revival hot spots of the twenty-first century: Toronto, Pensacola, China and Argentina. There are common threads connecting these places together. In each, there is a renewed passion for worship; there are radical demonstrations of God's power; there are great numbers of souls saved; and there are impartations.

The critics tend to concentrate on the flesh that always follows the Spirit, or they question manifestations they don't understand. When the breath of God touches the body of a man or woman, there will be interesting reactions. Some will be like an oak tree: very little

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movement, but they are receiving it in faith. Others are like willow trees, flapping every which way in the wind of God. I love to walk through the forest. Every tree seems to respond a little differently to the wind. God's children will also respond in unique ways.

When the Holy Spirit (i.e., *pneuma*, meaning "breath" or "wind"<sup>4</sup>) of God fills a child of God, something spiritual, emotional, and physical will occur. The impact of Spirit on flesh will always create an interesting set of reactions. Please don't try to put God in a box. The box never has been built that could contain our omnipotent, omniscient, infinitely creative God. In Isaiah 55:9 the Lord declares, *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (NKJV).*

We must not resist God when He begins to shake up our neat little preconceived notions about what He can or can't do and what He will or won't do. I hope you won't allow your opinions—or anyone else's—to stop you from receiving from God. He would love to surprise you. He longs to do a new thing in your life. Be open, be hungry, be desperate, and be ready for revival. I can guarantee that you won't be able to predict it, limit it or keep it neat. True revival is known for being gloriously messy.

### **Surprised by God's Ways**

Do you remember Naaman's expectations? Naaman, the commander of the army of the king of Syria, had a desperate need. He was so desperate that he sought help outside his comfort zone, his country and his gods. Could it be that you will discover something new about God outside your denomination or frame of reference?

When Naaman sought Elisha for healing from his leprosy, do you think he expected to see a simple messenger instead of the prophet? No way! He didn't like what he heard either: *"Go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan" (2 Kings 5:10).* After such a risky trip, and being such an important man, he was expecting to get some personal attention from Elisha, himself!

*But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the*



*LORD his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy. Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than any of the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be*

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*cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage. (2 Kings 5:11-12)*

Not only was he expecting to see the prophet, he was expecting a big show. Many come to our altars with the same attitude: I will be healed if, and only if, Pastor lays hands on me and anoints my head with oil. And we do the same thing with God. "Oh God, I want You to heal me and this is how You are going to do it." We can be so proud and controlling, can't we? *Oh God, please forgive us!*

Because of his position, Naaman was used to preferential treatment, even though he had leprosy. His leprosy was bad, but his pride was worse. It almost kept him from getting a miracle. Could it be that pride has kept many believers from humbling themselves before their God? Has it kept you from humbling yourself before your God? Has it stopped you from going to the altar or getting help for a personal problem? Has it kept you from being a constant learner at work and in life? Has your pride stopped you from moving forward with technology or from learning new skills? Has it crippled your marriage and ruined your family because you wouldn't listen to anybody? Naaman's pride was his worst sickness and it may be ours.

I don't believe that God is really impressed with our opinions and discussion about when and how He moves. I appreciate the way Billy Graham and Jack Hayford have handled controversial phenomena throughout the years. These two respected and influential men have reserved judgment. They have followed the wisdom of James 1:19: *"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak."*

We cannot be surprised by people's reaction to God's presence, nor by how He chooses to move in their lives. Take the blind man, for

example, in John 9:6-7: *"When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, 'Go wash in the pool of Siloam' (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing"* (NKJV). Do you think he enjoyed mud pie in his eyes? I doubt it. Did he expect it? No. Did he need to be healed? Yes. He had a great need and God met it in a humbling, unique, and unexpected way. How would you respond if Jesus wanted to touch you in a humbling way?

I have read much about the ministry of Smith Wigglesworth. It seems that God tested his faith and obedience by telling him to do things in an unconventional way. When people with tumors would come to him for healing, he would minister to them by punching them—sometimes rather forcefully—in the part of the body where the tumor was located. It may have been a far cry from the usual laying on of hands or anointing with oil, but when it came to healing, this man of faith got results. And he didn't have any trouble believing that the same God who miraculously dissolved tumors and healed the sick could also restore life to a dead body. Indeed, God raised numerous people from the dead through Wigglesworth, but again, his technique was rather unorthodox. He was known to stretch himself out over the body of a dead child, Elijah-style; to throw dead bodies up against walls and command them to walk; and, at least on one occasion, to fetch a cadaver from a morgue, and bring it to the place where he was speaking, so that he could demonstrate to his listeners that God is still in the business of raising the dead.

Wigglesworth was a man utterly abandoned to the will of God.

What about you—are you fully surrendered? Do you trust God enough to yield to Him even when what He asks or does doesn't make sense to

you? If we are too easily offended by the unconventional, too rigid, too sophisticated, too attached to our own opinions and expectations, we are in danger of missing our miracle—worse yet, we are in danger of missing God altogether.

Funny how when people are desperate, either because of a problem or because of spiritual hunger, they become more willing to lay aside pride and preconceived notions. How about the deaf and mute man in Mark 7:33-35?

*After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "Ephphatha!" (which means, "Be opened!"). At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.*

Did he ask for Jesus to put saliva on his tongue? Did he expect it? No, but his physical need was great—he was in no position to object to Jesus' unconventional methods.

Then there was the time that Jesus blew on the disciples to impart the Holy Spirit to them: "*Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.'* And with that he breathed on them and said, '*Receive the Holy Spirit*'" (John 20:21-23). Were the

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disciples offended when the Lord "blew" or "breathed" on them? Did they object to His technique? I doubt it. After everything they had been through with Jesus by this time, they were probably only too aware of their great spiritual need and willing to submit to anything the Lord wanted to do in them, regardless of how He chose to do it.

If the apostles were open to that which they had never experienced and did not understand, who are we to be offended by certain manifestations of the Holy Spirit or by the behavior of those He is

touching or using as His vessels? We must get our eyes off the manifestations, and just commit ourselves to seeking God with all our body, soul and spirit. Then we will find Him, but because His ways and His thoughts are so much higher than ours, He will most assuredly surprise us. He is God and we are not. He is in control and we must surrender.

### **Wesley's Test for Truth**

I love John Wesley's theory on discernment. It is called quadrilateral theology, and proposes that truth can be discerned by using four elements:

#### **1. Scripture**

#### **2. Reason**

#### **3. Experience**

#### **4. Tradition**

According to Wesley, any event, movement, or teaching must be subjected to all four tests before we decide whether to accept it as truth.

In order to judge whether something is from God, we also need divine wisdom. We would be well advised to humble ourselves and ask for His wisdom regarding these matters, for "*God resists the proud*" (1 Peter 5:5). Let's not be guilty of crediting something that is of the Holy Spirit to the flesh or the devil.

Can I be perfectly honest with you? There was a day when I was critical of a well-known evangelist because of his technique of blowing on people when they came to him for prayer. I'm not sure why this one behavior irked me, but it did. God must have wanted to teach me something about my attitude because, since that time, I have effectively received impartation through that same technique and, as I 1994—*The Year God Surprised Us* 49

prayed for people, I have also been clearly guided by the Holy Spirit to

blow on some of them, myself. I have even been criticized for it.

*Ouch! God, I am sorry for being so opinionated. Please forgive me for my pride and my big mouth.*

Perhaps any of us who have been critical of such things should take a moment right now and ask God for forgiveness. He will have mercy on us if we humble ourselves and repent of our misguided opinions. *"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up"* (James 4:10).

I don't want to cause God to resist me because of my pride. I want Him to take me to places I have never been. I want Him to use me in ways He has never used me before. I want to see Him more clearly than ever before.

### **No More Business-as-Usual**

After the trip Denise and I made to Canada, and the amazing but unsettling phenomena we experienced there, I was looking forward to the first Sunday back in our safe, seeker-friendly church in Las Vegas. I have to admit that I thought everything would be business-as-usual once we got back. We had developed tremendous reputations and our church was growing so quickly. Pastors of other churches used to call us, wanting to know what our secret was. The church attracted a wide variety of people—professionals and blue-collar workers, married couples and singles, people from many different races and cultures. Many came seeking solutions for lives gone awry. Our church was a healing place. Because I was a pastoral counselor, I preached primarily on hope and healing.

That first Sunday back, however, was to change us forever. The music started on cue, and, at first, I thought I was back to "normal"—however, I quickly realized that God's power was not limited to Canada. I started to shake almost uncontrollably. It was so embarrassing. I tried to hide it. I sat, then I knelt, but I could not

disguise it. I finally walked up to the front and declared the one sentence that I could get out of my mouth: "If you want the power of God, come forward." I knew the power of God was all over me. I could barely stand up.

To my surprise, almost everyone came forward. I thought to myself, "What do I do next?" I concluded that maybe I should walk

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toward each one of them and pray. As I walked toward a very tall man I had never met, the power of God knocked him down. I looked at his wife and she fell down. No one touched them. No one even caught them! One by one, people would fall as I walked toward them or prayed. God moved on them in an incredible way. These good people, for the most part, were not really Pentecostal. Most of us had never seen this kind of manifestation. It was actually quite funny to see people who didn't know how to fall out in the Pentecostal fashion (i.e., backwards, gracefully). They fell everywhere. They fell forward, backward, sideways, on the cement, on the chairs, and on other people. It was a holy mess. (Many of them remained "out" under the power of God for quite some time. Some were later carried to another room and some had to be driven home.)

Those who began to arrive for the second morning service walked into a sanctuary full of people stretched out on the floor! You can imagine their surprise at this sight.

After worship during that second service, I walked up and said the same thing I had said at the first service: "If you want the power of God, come forward." The result was the same—a full altar and full power.

Not everyone welcomed the unfamiliar manifestations of God's power. Even though people were being healed, saved and filled with the Holy Spirit as a result of this new move of God, many doubted that

it was actually His doing. Within a week, we lost over one hundred people. However, while some of our people left, others stayed, faithfully trying to understand what God was doing.

We came under tremendous criticism from within and without. We were stung by gossip from people we loved and respected. A verbal minority even questioned my sanity. I don't care what the experts say about getting used to criticism. It still hurts.

The next few months were among the worst of our lives. In addition to the criticism and the loss of people from our congregation, the Holy Spirit started to expose hidden sins in the church body. It was so difficult to handle all that He was revealing.

As we were struggling to deal with these problems, our eldest daughter's rebellion escalated. There were days when I feared that we might lose her completely. The combination of overwhelming conflict both at home and at church brought on a storm of painful

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emotions in Denise and me, including a tremendous sense of insecurity. We were under attack by the enemy, who had his own reasons for wanting to stop the new move of God in our church. It often seemed that we had nowhere to turn, but, in retrospect, I regret allowing these trials to devastate Denise and me.

I realize now that I had received a very powerful *impartation*. I didn't understand the gift that I had received when the stranger in Canada prayed for me. That stranger turned out to be Randy Clark, a man whom God has used mightily as a catalyst for revival in Canada, the United States and many other parts of the world. God had imparted through him into me. I had been praying for revival, but I was not ready for the price tag.

After a few months of trying to lead our church through this new move of God, I gave in. My pride had been crushed and my good

reputation was destroyed. I saw myself as a shaking fool who had trouble standing in God's presence. I will never forget the words I said that grieved the Holy Spirit. I said, *"Holy Spirit, don't touch me in that way anymore. You can touch others in any way that You want, but not me."* We should never tell the Holy Spirit what He can or cannot do because that causes Him grief. Scripture warns us, *"Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).*

Have you ever told God what you would let Him do? "OK, God, I'll go to the altar, but I don't want to cry or do anything else that's weird or embarrassing," or "I'll make my decision my own way, in my own time. Going to altars isn't for me, God, and I don't like getting emotional, either. That's just the way I am." Some of us even try to bargain with God: "Help me get that raise, God, and I promise that I'll start tithing," or "I'll gladly serve You forever, Lord, if You just make Bill fall in love with me." If you try to relate to God this way, you may find out the hard way—as I did—that He does not take instructions from us and He refuses to play "Let's Make a Deal" with us.

I tried to tell God how to reach this city and He didn't like my limits. As you can probably imagine, the great move of God soon stopped. We regressed: Our church was comfortable, conventional, and successful once again.

### **The God of Second Chances**

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God is so gracious to us. Thankfully, He does not give us what we deserve. During the next year and a half, the power of God stopped flowing in such an intense and explosive way, but He continued to bless our services. People still got saved. They still joined the church. We also miraculously obtained fifteen acres of land situated on a highway running through the largest master-planned community in Las



Vegas. Soon afterward, our first building went up. So, our church continued to grow, but, meanwhile, I was painfully and constantly aware of having let God down. I came to the conclusion that I had cared more about the approval of others than about His. I had folded under the pressure.

For about a year, I would pray alone at the church on Saturday nights, asking God for a second chance. This was hidden guilt; no one else knew how I felt. In most people's eyes, my success had returned and I was respectable again—but I was miserable. I'm not sure how many times I asked God to forgive me. I can assure you that it was many. I know God granted me forgiveness the first time I requested it, but He did not send the Holy Spirit in power again until I was ready. Have you ever bailed out on God because of adversity? Have you settled for comfortable conformity to the expectations of people instead of total commitment to the will and power of God? The apostle James had strong words for those who were living like this: *"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4-5).*

The good news is that our God is truly the God of second chances. Do you need a second chance? Have you grieved the Holy Spirit? Would you like to know how to regain lost territory, and take back what the devil has stolen from you?

Try doing what King Jehoshaphat did when he needed another chance. Humble yourself and repent; seek the Lord through prayer and fasting; cry out to Him, confessing your helplessness; put your trust in Him; submit yourself to Him completely and resolve to do whatever He tells you; give Him thanks and praise. Then position yourself for victory, wait on the Lord expectantly, and get ready for another glorious visitation. He did it for Jehoshaphat and He did it for me. He

can do it for you.

*"You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves,*

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*stand still and see the salvation of the LORD, who is with you, O*

*Judah and Jerusalem!" Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go*

*out against them, for the LORD is with you. (2 Chron. 20:17 NKJV)*

Are you in position for a mighty move of God? Are you ready for a second chance?

### **Take It!**

My second chance came just when I needed it most. Denise and I had been asked to go to Rwanda to conduct training in post-genocide crisis counseling for the surviving pastors and leaders. Rwanda is a nation that suffered a racial massacre comparable to the Holocaust, at least in terms of sheer horror, cruelty, and suffering. In one hundred days the ruling political government and its supporters killed 800,000 Tutsis. The racial tension had been going on for years, and, for that, there was room for blame on both sides; but the ruthlessness and ferocity of this campaign was appalling. Men, women and children of every age were murdered, tortured, raped and dispossessed.

The tragedy was still very fresh when we were asked to train some of the pastors in *Reconcilers* 5 counseling techniques. They needed tools to help the victims who survived and the families that were left behind.

I was feeling inadequate for the task. What could I say to these people who had seen and suffered more than I ever could have imagined? In my desperation, I cried out to God, never dreaming what that cry would unleash. God would answer my prayers in a remarkable way that not only would enable me to help the Rwandans, but would have a far-reaching effect on my relationship with Him, and, ultimately, on our ministry, our church, our city, and many other parts

of the world.

He would use this opportunity to place me on the potter's wheel.

He would force me to face my inadequacies. I would have to admit that I had grieved the very One I needed so badly. As He helped me evaluate my spiritual condition and the difficult task that awaited Denise and me in Rwanda, I knew that mere words would not help these broken people. I would need much more. I would need nothing less than the raw, unhindered power of the Holy Spirit flowing through me. And for God to restore that, He would have to be willing to give me a second chance.

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The Lord used a conference set up by the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary as the means by which to grant me that second chance. One hundred pastors of the largest Assemblies of God churches in America were invited. I was honored to be invited and to meet the other pastors. I was also excited about the opportunity to see and hear Steve Hill, one of the speakers featured at the conference. I went alone because Denise was caring for our children. I went to the conference with a deep longing for God to touch me again; hoping that, somehow, He would meet me there. I was becoming more and more desperate because, by this time, I was absolutely convinced that I couldn't go to Rwanda without His power. As I responded to Steve Hill's altar call, I wondered if this was going to be my second chance. I felt the Holy Spirit put a crack in my shell when Steve laid his hands on me, but I wasn't satisfied. I still felt guilty.

Claudio Freidzon, an Argentine pastor, was the next speaker.

Instead of preaching at his scheduled time, Claudio started worshipping God again. Then he shared a word of knowledge through his interpreter: "Someone here needs a *second* chance." Overwhelmed with emotion, I ran to the *altar* weeping from the depths of my heart.

God had heard my prayer.

How many nights had I asked God to give me a second chance? I didn't care what people said anymore! I had experienced God's power; I had lost it; and now I wanted it—and Him—back on His terms, regardless of what those might be.

I had never heard of Claudio or the great Argentine revival with which he is associated. Once again, God was about to surprise me with whom He was going to use and how He was going to touch me. As I stood there at the altar, I observed that Claudio ministered to people in an unusual way. He would simply wave his hand at each person and say, "Take it!" As he approached me, I closed my eyes, anticipating the power of God. Whack! His waving hand slapped me in the nose. In a millisecond, my emotions went from shock to anger to disappointment; and then, I had a sudden urge to burst out laughing. This had to be the most ironic moment of my life! Was God trying to humble me again? Did He want me to admit once again how foolish I had been? It is amazing how many thoughts shoot through your mind at a moment like this.

Then, before I could think of a clever response to the situation, the  
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Master rescued me by taking the matter entirely out of my control. The Holy Spirit surprised me with a rush of power that sent me falling on my bottom. I'm sure it didn't look very graceful. Claudio waved his hand again and I fell on my back. During the next hour, God had a confrontational visit with me. He caused me to see certain areas of my life through His eyes and forced me to make a series of decisions about what or whom I would choose to serve—my flesh or Him. These bitter revelations and piercing questions provoked an intense but holy pain in my soul. I lay on the ground—a humiliated, blubbing mess. So much for making good impressions on the famous pastors. Intermittently,

Claudio would come back, slap me on the head or feet, and shout, "Take it!" or "More!"

God certainly did do more. This was God on His terms and not mine. This was my introduction to the cross experience. Would I pay the price for revival? Would I die to self? On the ground that night, I agreed to pay, whatever the price. I never wanted to grieve the Holy Spirit again.

God gave me two visions that night. First, I saw the cross with me being nailed to it. I was like one of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus. The list of my sins was nailed with me on a cross. It was a declaration of my guilt. It hung like a scroll from my left hand that had been pierced. God spoke so clearly to me: "Paul, will you crucify your flesh today?" "Yes, Lord," was my response. Every area of my life that displeased Him was brought to my attention, one by one. After each, He would ask me if I was willing to crucify that area. "Will you crucify your pride?" "Will you crucify your anger?" "Will you crucify your ambitions?" "Will you crucify your tendency to be a people-pleaser?" "Will you crucify your fear of man?" Each time I agreed, the scroll grew longer. Isn't this what the Apostle Paul referred to in Galatians 2:20? *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."* And Colossians 3:5? *"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature."*

Dying to self is not a popular theme in the twenty-first century, a time when convenience is glorified, wealth is idolized, and personal privileges are exalted as if they were sacred rights. The Gospel stands in bold opposition to the standards of this world. Two thousand years ago, Jesus confronted the values of our society—values that may seem modern but are really not so new. He said,

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*"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take*

*up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?"*  
(Matt. 16:24-26).

In Jesus' estimation, we find our true lives only by losing them.

We find ourselves by losing ourselves in Him. We become wealthy by giving ourselves away. We climb to the top by humbling ourselves.

In order for God to use me, I had to die. Dying to self is a lot harder than it sounds. It isn't a one-time decision. It starts with a decision like the one I made on the night God gave me my second chance. Then, it is repeated over and over, at thousands of different forks in the road we travel as we go through life. Each time we choose God's will instead of our own, we die a little more to ourselves.

### **The Second Vision: My New Role**

After the crucifixion of my flesh that night, God gave me the second vision. It demonstrated how He was planning to use me. In 1994, as you may remember, He had shown me a vision of an oil tanker to illustrate how He was filling me with His glory. This time, however, he demoted me.

Instead of an oil tanker, I was to be a \$1.99 oil funnel! The oil would be His, the glory would be His, and I would have the privilege of being a simple conduit. He was making it fully clear that this was all about Him. Was I willing to be a funnel for His glory—too much glory for even an oil tanker to hold? A funnel can't keep that which is poured into it. It is designed solely for conveying or passing a substance along to a vessel as that substance flows from the source. It reminds me of the widow with the flask of oil. All she had to do was keep pouring and God did the rest.

*Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door*

*behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."*

*She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one."*

*But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped*

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*flowing. (2 Kings 4:3-6)*

It has been only about four years since that incredible night. In some ways it was painful, even excruciating, but I wouldn't trade it for all the gold in Fort Knox. So much has happened since Claudio imparted to me that which God had imparted to him. This impartation helped me through seasons of great and exhilarating firsts in ministry as well as times of deep sorrow and personal affliction.

In the years to follow, we would experience, among other things, more gossip, more slander, and even death threats. During the construction of our new church building, a demon-possessed person—claiming Satan had sent her!—tried to kill our general contractor and an associate pastor by hitting them with her pickup truck. She then drove through the glass front doors of the church and came to a stop only when, after ramming the exterior wall, her truck stalled. The impact pushed the wall about three feet into the lobby. It took four police officers to restrain her and take her into custody.

Between the two of us, my wife and I would be involved in three car accidents and one snowmobile accident, the latter of which almost killed me. Following the snowmobile accident, there was the pain of three years of physical therapy. I still am not entirely back to normal, but Christ is healing me daily. Having always been athletic and active, I was used to my body doing anything I wanted it to, and doing it without pain. This accident gave me a taste of what it is like to feel

helpless, to be severely limited in one's activities, and to struggle with constant pain. Now I can understand and empathize more with people who have lived in daily agony for years.

Finally, our daughter Isabelle was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease (cancer of the lymph nodes). Of all the trials we experienced, this one was by far the most painful. We were informed of this diagnosis the day after we opened our new sanctuary that could seat three thousand people. Somehow, because it came immediately after a day of joy and celebration, the shock of hearing such heartbreaking news was intensified. It was like climbing up to a glorious mountaintop and then, right after reaching the summit, being hurled into a dark abyss.

That is just a small sample of what we have been through recently.

The only reason I mention these things is to illustrate why I can unequivocally say that I am embracing the fellowship of His

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sufferings. My recent choice introduced me to a new level of commitment and sacrifice. Revivals do not come cheap. If we want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection, we will have to enter new levels of suffering. Why? Because we are in close fellowship with Jesus Christ, and He came to destroy the works of the enemy. All those who long for a close union with Jesus and want to serve as conduit for His glory and power will find themselves fighting the forces of evil. In 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, the Apostle Paul summarizes his experience with suffering: *"We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."*

No one is exempt from these trials. Denise and I were honored recently with the opportunity to have dinner with Oral and Evelyn Roberts. We were overwhelmed as we learned of the incredible



amount of suffering they have gone through over the years. These dear saints have seen God move in great ways, but they have the scars to prove that they have been in a fight. If you are going to hang around with Jesus, you had better get ready to walk through some tough neighborhoods.

### **Our Response to Suffering**

The price of knowing Him in the fellowship of His sufferings, however, is cheap compared to the payback. When adversity has threatened to crush me like grapes in a wine press, I have asked that the juice flowing out of my life would be an acceptable offering to the Lord. When I have felt that I was walking through the fire, I have prayed that the smoke would be like fragrant incense to His nostrils. When I have felt hindered by fear; I have reminded myself that no one can kill a dead man. *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20a).*

If you are going through the fire, please give your pain to Him as a sweet-smelling offering. You will be amazed how much emptying of yourself will be required along the road of impartation. Many of us have prayed, "Let there be less of me and more of You, Lord," never imagining what God will have to take us through in order to grant our request. Often, I had prayed that way, but had not counted the cost until recently.

I had preached sermons based on Philippians 3:10-11: *"I want to*

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*know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead."* For many years I had known Christ as my personal Savior. But it wasn't until 1994 that I was introduced to His resurrection power; and it wasn't until 1997 that the door of the fellowship of his sufferings was opened.

The phrase *fellowship of his sufferings* is often misinterpreted. The reality of these words has brought great comfort to me in these last few years. The term translated as *fellowship* comes from the Greek word *koinonia*, which means "partnership."<sup>6</sup> In any business partnership, the partners all share the risks of their venture. Together, they share in the benefits, burdens, successes and failures. The same is true of kingdom business. When we suffer in Christ, we pay the price of our partnership. As partners with the Lord, we share with Him the good, the bad, the highs, the lows, and the risks of ministry.

### **Paul Embraced Suffering**

The Apostle Paul seems to have had a tremendous grip on this principle. He knew that his suffering had a purpose. Every time he suffered, he saw it as an investment in the kingdom of God. Short-term pain would lead to long-term gain. Regarding what he was suffering at the time he wrote the letter to the Philippians, Paul said, "*Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel*" (Phil. 1:12).

In Paul's letter to the Colossians, he says something regarding suffering that, up until recently, puzzled me: "*Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church*" (Col. 1:24).

I never understood what he meant when he said, "*and I fill up in my flesh, what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions.*" I thought that nothing was lacking in Christ's afflictions. Didn't He die once and for all? First Peter 3:18-19 says, "*For Christ died for sins once and for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*" Here's the revelation that the Holy Spirit gave to me: Nothing is lacking in terms of the debt paid for our salvation. It was paid in full.

We don't need any further sacrifice to atone for sin or to receive

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eternal life in heaven.

The lost, on the other hand, still need the sufferings of the saints.

Reaching the lost almost always requires some degree of sacrifice and suffering. What sacrifices are you prepared to make? What suffering are you willing to experience in order to bring revival? Some will pay the price on their knees; others, with their resources; and others, with their strength, but everyone who truly wants to reach the lost must pay.

Our sufferings are never wasted: God uses them to purify, refine and mold us. But He goes beyond that. While Christ's sufferings paid the debt for everyone's sin, our sufferings will be used to lead others to Him so that they may be saved, healed, delivered, disciplined, and released into ministry. Our sacrifices are added to His spotless sacrifice with the end result being the advancement of the kingdom of God. We only add our sufferings to the sufferings of Christ because we are partners with Him.

My friends in India and China understand this truth more than us North Americans. Many of them have lost everything in order to serve Jesus. They have been rejected by loved ones; beaten by extremists; and severely persecuted by neighbors, employers, and others. Many of our brothers and sisters in certain parts of the Middle East have been martyred simply for converting to Christianity.

For now, much of what we go through is a mystery to us. We only know and understand in part; but, in the end, the purpose of our sufferings will be fully revealed to us. We will see the grand scheme and it will all make perfect sense.

Denise and I have known the fellowship of sharing in Christ's sufferings, but we have also experienced the power of His resurrection. God has poured His power into us through anointed

leaders. He loves to use people to demonstrate His power, and to distribute His gifts through different vehicles and methods.

Before we can discuss the seven keys to unlock the power of God in your life, family, church and city, we must lay a greater foundation to build upon. I want you to clearly understand the power of God, and be open to what He wants to do in and through your life. Do you believe that God wants to impart through you? Do you know what He wants to pour through you? When the power of God is unlocked in your life you will be able to make precious, life-transforming deposits in the lives of others. God will be able to use you in ways you have

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never even imagined. Let's get ready for God to pour through us.

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### **Selah**

**\*\*** Can you think of anything the Lord might ask you to do that you would not be willing to do? Can you remember a time when you tried to place limits on what God could do in your life?

**\*\*** Do you know Christ's resurrection power? Have you experienced the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings? If so, how has this changed your life and the lives of others?

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **GOD WANTS TO IMPART THROUGH YOU**

#### **4**

The question that needs to be answered before we can go any further is: What does God want to impart through us? There are eight answers to this question.

#### ***#1 God wants to pour his power through us.***

As Paul said, *"My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power"* (1 Cor. 2:4).

Paul was convinced that the power of God would flow through him. He proved the truth of his message with power. Have you reached the point where you are convinced God's power will flow through you?

**#2 God wants to perform signs, wonders, miracles and healings through us.**

*"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well" (Mark 16:17-18).*

God wants us to take the miraculous into the streets where it belongs. Jesus performed most of his miracles in public, not in a church service.

**#3 God wants to proclaim the gospel through us.**

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

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*"How then can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'" (Rom. 10:14-15).*

God wants to proclaim the mysteries of the good news through us. He desires that none should perish; therefore, he is looking for willing vessels to reach the lost.

**#4 God wants to distribute His gifts through us.**

*"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift*

*to make you strong" (Rom. 1:11).*

Paul was sure that the believers in Rome would receive gifts ( *charis*) through him. He wasn't claiming to be the author of the gifts, just the vessel that God would use. We also can become holy vessels or dispensers for the gifts of God.

***#5 God wants to impart wisdom and understanding through us.***

*"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding" (Col. 1:9).*

Paul was extremely well-educated but he recognized that worldly knowledge is not enough; we need to have the wisdom and understanding that only God can give.

In the book of Proverbs, we see that Solomon, whose wisdom was a gift from God, was convinced that he could impart that wisdom to his son and others. He knew that if his son followed his counsel, it would go well with him. God is looking for moms, dads, teachers and others to impart wisdom to the young.

***#6 God wants us to disciple other believers.***

*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19).*

This commandment of Jesus was for all of His followers. That means that the discipleship of new Christians is the responsibility of every believer. If we are not discipling at least one believer each, we

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are not obeying the Great Commission. We must not let insecurity or feelings of inadequacy hinder us. God will supply us with everything we need to help new converts develop Christian maturity and character.

**#7 God wants to impart comfort and understanding through us.**

*"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2).*

*"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27).*

If we all took our role as our brother's keeper seriously, would suicide, alcoholism and depression statistics be so high? Warm touches, kind words, giving or caring actions, are all tools of impartation that, as simple as they may seem, can change someone's life forever.

**#8 God wants to deliver people from bondage and possession through us.**

*"And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues" (Mark 16:17).*

I have encountered so many people who are bound by addictions, depression, lusts, bitterness, and anger. Some need healing; others need deliverance.

God has so much to impart to this broken world. He is looking for willing vessels: men, women and young people who want to become vessels of honor.

*In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. (2 Tim. 2:20-21).*

The power of impartation is all about being sure God wants to do these things through you. It is so easy to agree that God wants to do these things, but it is quite another to agree that He wants to do the

imparting through us. We've made ourselves comfortable with the fable that God works through a select few. The superstars of

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evangelism, healing, teaching and preaching are not the only ones who are candidates. They are simply the only ones who have said yes. God didn't limit his choice to the "biggies." We are the ones who limited His choice.

We said we weren't smart enough or spiritual enough. We've created a shopping list of excuses based on our insecurities and fear. We need to repent for this cataclysmic cop out. We need to ask God to help us to be open, willing and believing. It all boils down to His work anyway, doesn't it? *"For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purposes" (Phil. 2:13)*. Shouldn't we start crying out, *"Lord, I believe; help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24 NKJV)*. Use me, God, in spite of my weaknesses and frailties.

### **Graduate to the Marvelous**

Let's get ready for the amazing, the astonishing, and the wonderful. Although, generally, we must begin by making ourselves available for the menial, we can graduate to the marvelous. Denise and I started our ministry by cleaning toilets, washing dishes and mowing lawns. Not very glamorous, but effective nonetheless. It takes time, but God uses those seasons of life to teach us and mold us. It is a process of successes and failures, but our Lord, full of grace and truth, leads us through it all. *"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14)*.

The apostles believed that God wanted to unleash his power, distribute his gifts and change the world through them. We serve the same God they did. Why wouldn't He want to do those things through us as well? The Bible assures me that God is the same *"yesterday,*



today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

He is still searching; still crying out in a sacred celestial quest,

"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" (Isa. 6:8a). Our answer must be like the prophet Isaiah's: "Here am I. Send me!" (Isa. 6:8b). If it isn't, we will have doomed ourselves, at best, to the mundane and irrelevant; at worst, to the demonic and destructive.

Dr. Richard Dobbins, a pioneer Christian psychologist, author, and my mentor, once said that every day the devil speaks to our minds, "stimulating us to think thoughts and make decisions that are destructive for our lives and others." Praise the Lord that God also *God Wants to Impart Through You* 67

speaks to us, stimulating us "to think thoughts that are creative and divine; thoughts that will bring more joy and peace and purpose."

To whom will you choose to listen?

As for me and my house, we have decided to be powerful agents of impartation. We want God to touch a broken world through us. We will make choices that will facilitate this goal. In my book *Jesus, I Want to Know Him*, I spent a considerable amount of time explaining the process of preparation for impartation. Preparation to be used by God is crucial. However, it is important to understand that it all starts with the conviction that God wants to use you and that He will use you.

Do you believe? If you do, the next step is to study the seven keys to unlock the power of God in your life.

Are you ready to learn how to become an imparter? Then, let's get started.

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**Selah**

\*\* Do you have a hard time believing that God can use you to do great things for Him? If so, can you think of some practical ways to

overcome this problem?

**\*\*** Name several examples in the Bible of very ordinary people through whom God accomplished very extraordinary things. If you find one with whom you feel you have much in common, you might want to make a careful, prayerful study of his or her life.

## CHAPTER 5

### SEVEN KEYS TO UNLOCK THE POWER OF

#### 5

#### GOD IN YOUR LIFE

##### **Key #1: You can't give what you don't have**

Have you ever been asked for something you could not give? It kind of makes you feel uncomfortable, doesn't it? It's hard to know what to say at times like that. You want to help, but can't guarantee results. In the past few years, this scenario has occurred many times at altars around the world.

Scores of broken people come to our church seeking deliverance, healing, reconciliation, and salvation. Some have even asked me to heal them, fix their marriage, help them get their kids back, or solve seemingly impossible financial problems. As a pastor, I often feel pretty helpless. Silver and gold (or magical powers!) have I none, but what I have, I give. And the first thing I have to give is the truth that I am not the one who delivers, heals, reconciles, saves, and provides—Jesus is. In ministry, it is crucial that we always point people to Christ, the author and finisher of their faith.

Long ago, the prophet Elijah was confronted with a request that was beyond his ability and experience—perhaps even beyond his faith. Elijah's intern, Elisha, made this request on what was to be the older prophet's last day on earth. The story of that eventful day is found in 2

Kings:

*The company of the prophets at Jericho went up to Elisha and asked him, "Do you know that the LORD is going to take your master from you today?"*

*"Yes, I know," he replied, "but do not speak of it."*

*Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; the LORD has sent me to the Jordan."*

*And he replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So the two of them walked on. (2 Kings 2: 5-6)*

Everyone was told to stay away. As Elijah walked toward his final meeting with God on this earth, Elisha was the only one of his disciples who persisted in following him. He would not take no for an answer. He had faithfully served Elijah for years and would not be denied his last opportunity to be close to the great prophet.

The fact that Elijah consented to Elisha's wish, allowing only him to share this most private of moments, tells us something about the special relationship between the two. From the instant Elijah, in obedience to God's directive, anointed Elisha to succeed him as prophet, the younger man served the older with total surrender and deep humility:

*So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him....*

*So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant. (1 Kings 19:19,21)*

*What a radical response to the call!* Elisha gave up everything. He even destroyed the source of his income. Without a moment's hesitation, he became a faithful armor bearer, serving the needs of his

leader for over ten years.

(Have you heard God's call? If so, did you answer with immediate obedience and total surrender?)

Elisha's humble attitude was evident to others. When King Jehoshaphat needed a man of God to continue Elijah's ministry, his advisor pointed him to someone with the heart of a servant:

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*But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there no prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of the LORD through him?"*

*An officer of the king of Israel answered, "Elisha, son of Shaphat is here. He used to pour water on the hands of Elijah." (2 Kings 3:11)*

Hand-washer. Not a position most of us would want to include in our resumes. Yet, it was precisely this part of Elisha's job history that impressed the king's advisor. In addition to demonstrating Elisha's humility and willingness to serve, it attested to the close, confidential nature of his relationship with Elijah.

It is my firm belief that deep impartations come from deep relationships. Long-lasting ministry also comes from long-lasting relationships. Elisha reaped a life-changing intimate moment with his mentor because of the time he had invested in Elijah's ministry. I have had the privilege of serving several wonderful men of God: Bill Bowers, a Presbyterian pastor who demonstrated great discipline and a true love for people; Wayne Clark, an Assemblies of God pastor with an outstanding ability to motivate people and a tremendous heart for missions; and Glen Cole, a statesman pastor who had a great impact on the Assemblies of God and the state of California. Each of these men imparted into me as I carried out my commitment to serve their vision and their call during my early years in ministry. Whenever I reflect on my experience as an associate pastor, I'm thankful that God placed me

under the leadership of these three gifted and gracious men.

Some associate pastors have not been as fortunate. I have seen several young associates grow frustrated after years of unrecognized service. If only we could all develop the faith and perseverance of Elisha. God's promises are true and He is faithful; in His time, He will see to it that our service is rewarded. *"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Gal. 6:7).* The Word also promises, *"a man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men" (Prov. 18:16 NKJV).*

### **A Bold Request**

As the end of Elijah's life on earth grew near, he must have felt a need to demonstrate his appreciation to his faithful apprentice. Perhaps he also wanted to make sure that he had passed along to Elisha everything the young prophet would need in order to carry on the

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ministry. So he asked Elisha a question one would only ask of loyal, intimate friends or family: *"Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?"* (2 Kings 2:9a). Elisha's response must have surprised him. *"Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit"* (2 Kings 2:9b).

These verses warrant a closer look. Elisha wanted a double portion of Elijah's spirit; in other words, he wanted twice as much of Elijah's spirit as the prophet himself had. What a bold request! In fact, it is the only time in Scripture where we see someone make such a request.

There is an element of Hebrew tradition that can help us understand more about what Elisha was asking of his mentor. In a Hebrew family, the eldest son was given a double portion of his father's inheritance. This meant he would receive twice as much as the other sons, however, *not* twice as much as his father possessed.

Obviously, the father could not give more than he had.

But Elisha was not asking for the rights of a firstborn son. He was asking for even more: spiritually speaking, he wanted everything Elijah had—multiplied by two! A study of his words in the original Hebrew<sup>1</sup> allows for only one interpretation: Elisha wanted twice as much of the Holy Spirit as Elijah had. The concept of some having more of the Holy Spirit than others is supported throughout both the Old and New Testaments. People were recognized by the Spirit they had. (See, for example, Deuteronomy 34:9, which says that *"Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him"*; Acts 6:3 where, for the task of distributing food to widows, the Twelve tell the disciples to select men from among them *"who are known to be full of the Spirit"*; and Acts 6:5 and 7:55 that describe Stephen as being *"full of the Holy Spirit."*)

Elisha's request took the Hebraic inheritance tradition into the supernatural realm. He was asking to multiply his inheritance to an impossible level. Only God could grant a request like that, and God loves it when, in faith, we ask Him for the impossible. For example, He says, *"Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession"* (Ps. 2:8).

Elijah was a powerful prophet. His exploits stand as some of the most daring and amazing in the Bible. Who else could have confronted the prophets of Baal in such an astonishing show of supernatural power? Who else would have mocked their god as he did? *"Shout Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life 73 louder!" he said, 'Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened'* (1 Kings 18:27-28).

Was Elisha being unrealistic when he asked for a double portion of that kind of spirit? Was he being pretentious or did he know there had to be more, even more than Elijah had experienced? Elisha had set his

sights beyond the high-water mark left by his mentor, so he asked for more. God's Word never discourages us from asking Him for great things; on the contrary, He repeatedly demonstrates His pleasure with those who do so. Years later, Jesus Himself would teach on the subject: *"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened"* (Matt. 7:7-8).

There was only one thing keeping Elijah from granting Elisha's request. We have just seen that there was nothing wrong in Elisha setting his sights so high. There was nothing wrong with the concept of impartation either. Both Elijah and Elisha would have known that receiving impartation from a leader was both biblical and practical because, among other things, they would have been familiar with Deuteronomy 34:9 (which, as we have seen, says that Moses imparted a spirit of wisdom to Joshua through the laying on of hands).

The obstacle to granting Elisha's request had nothing to do with Elijah's lack of desire to do so. The old prophet gladly would have given a double portion of his spirit to his faithful protege. After all, this was the man who would soon face the challenge of carrying on Elijah's ministry.

The only problem, then, was that the prophet couldn't impart that which he didn't have. Elijah didn't have a double portion of his own spirit to give away; all he had was a single portion. Elijah admitted his dilemma when he said, *"You have asked a difficult thing...yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise not"* (2 Kings 2:10). (The good news is that God's resources, unlike man's, are unlimited!)

### **What Gift Are You Looking For?**

If I wanted a gift for multiplication, I would go see Tommy

Barnett. If I wanted a gift of leadership, I would attend a John Maxwell

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conference. If I were looking for an apostolic gift, I would visit Dr. Jim Marocco of Maui, Hawaii. If I wanted a gift for pastoral counseling, I would see Dr. Richard Dobbins of Emerge Ministries. These men would be capable of imparting certain gifts to me, because they have those gifts themselves. Of course, the converse would also be true: They couldn't impart a gift to me that they didn't have.

Do you need more gifts to achieve your God-given goals? Then, find someone who has the type of gift you are seeking. Visit them, attend their seminars, read their books, listen to their tapes. Then, ask them to lay hands on you. When they pray for you, receive by faith whatever God wants to pour into you. *"Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy" (1 Cor. 14:1).*

*Ultimately, God is the one who imparts;* however, He allows us to be part of the process (praise His holy name!). He imparts to us through mentors, coaches, teachers, pastors, and other significant people. Choose these people carefully because they will be pouring into you not only their gifts, but their philosophy, beliefs, values, teachings and, ultimately, their spirit.

When you seek a gift, seek also the anointing of the Holy Spirit that activates that gift. The anointing can be poured into you as well; indeed, a gift without the anointing is out of balance and out of place. However, do not forget that God—not man—is the source of the gift, as well as the anointing that should accompany it.

#### **Bringing It Home**

After God used Steve Hill and Claudio Freidzon to give me my second chance, I was bursting with excitement. I couldn't wait to find a phone and share it with Denise, but it wasn't just the news I wanted to



share. I wanted to impart into her that which had just been imparted to me.

You see, when God first touched me with His power in 1994, Denise had been very skeptical. She had not experienced for herself the resurrection power that ended up turning both our lives upside down. But, by the time I received my second chance, she was tired of neat, respectable, predictable church services. Furthermore, she felt that the Lord was prompting her to pray for the ladies in the Bible study group she was leading, which by now had about three hundred in *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 75 attendance. However, she sensed that in order to pray for and minister to them effectively, she would have to tap into the power of God. As she continued trying to serve Him in her own power, she was increasingly aware of her desperate need. She began to long for a deeper experience with God. She was becoming hungry for more of Him, and there's nothing that moves God like our hunger.

By the time I got a chance to call Denise, I couldn't dial fast enough. As soon as Denise answered, I said, "Honey, I got it again!" Then, I proceeded to tell her about the incredible events of that evening that had led up to my being filled with Him once more. After we talked for a while, I felt moved to pray for her. As I prayed, she began to experience a life-changing infusion of God's Spirit. It didn't matter that I was not there in person. It didn't matter that I could not lay hands on her. God is not limited by time or distance. He touched my wife powerfully. In just one incomparable evening, He turned the two of us into a mighty force for His purpose and His glory.

When I first returned to Las Vegas from that amazing trip, I invited our congregation to come on a Sunday night so that we could impart into them. The response was enthusiastic and the church was packed, but we were prepared to minister to a large number of people.

We had marked the carpet with electrician's tape—three 60-foot lines, 5 feet apart—so that those seeking impartation would know where to line up. All of our catchers and bathers were well-trained. (A *catcher* is someone who stands behind the person being prayed for, in case the power of the Holy Spirit causes a physical reaction like falling, and the person needs to be caught or helped in any way. A *bather* is someone who helps the pastoral staff by supporting them and praying—i.e., "bathing" them in prayer.)

The only problem was that our pastoral staff, although quite willing to pray in faith, was not ready. How could they give what they didn't have? Their prayers would have been sincere but powerless. They would have felt terrible and the people would have been disappointed. Unfortunately, many Christian leaders live this way for years on end. They have developed a religious form that is appropriate, but their prayers lack the power of the resurrection. They pray for people, but nothing happens. Meanwhile, God's heart is broken because His people are not being healed, filled, and equipped.

For five weeks, Denise and I laid hands on everyone who came,

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including members of our staff, in order to impart to them what had been imparted to us. Our altars would stay open until 10:30 or later every Sunday night. Our staff just observed and received for weeks. As we prayed, God poured into thousands. It was glorious!

I felt like a father, the first night our pastoral staff was released to minister. It was so exciting to see the Spirit of God flow through them as He did through us. This was a wonderful example of the power of multiplication in action. Now, instead of just two anointed people ready to impart to others, there were ten.

The number of imparters has continued to grow with the addition of powerful lay leaders. I strongly believed our church could not be

built on a few super-anointed pastors; we needed an entire impartation team overflowing with the Spirit. Over the past few years, we have continually asked God to cause the gifts to flow through not only the pastoral staff but also an ever-increasing number of lay leaders.

(Incidentally, the ministry of impartation is not restricted to adults.

Our youths and children also have been used mightily by God at our altars.)

Another strategy has been to invite speakers who could impart certain gifts and types of anointing that were lacking in our body. For example, prophecy was a gift I very much wanted to see released in our church. Why? Because the Bible says, *"he who prophesies edifies the church" (1 Cor. 14:4)*. I especially wanted every one of our pastors to function in this gift. Can you imagine the benefit to hundreds of people who need a word from God? So, we held a prophetic seminar, and I asked our invited speakers, two servants of God who have the gift of prophecy, to pray for our staff. Of course, I realized that not every staff member would hold the office of a prophet. There is a difference between those who function in the gift and those who are actually recognized as prophets. This gift must be tried and tested over a long period of time before a body of believers can confirm that a person holds the office of a prophet. But Scripture encourages all Christians to seek the gift of prophecy. *"Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39)*.

God has already strategically poured His Spirit and gifts into men and women who can become "Elijahs" to you and your church. It is His desire to give the gift of prophecy and other gifts to all of His people. I sincerely hope you will dare to pray for and seek them.

**No Guarantees**

The Elijahs in your life cannot guarantee what you will receive when they pray. All they can do is to pray in faith. They are mere vessels it pleases God to use in order to accomplish His purposes. People cannot impart into you what they do not have. Nor can you impart what you have not received. Jesus admonished his disciples, *"Freely you have received, freely give"* (Matt. 8:10), but He never asked them to give anything they had not already received.

God didn't give a clear picture to Elijah regarding how He would answer Elisha's request, but He did give him a glimmer of hope he could pass along to the younger prophet: *"You have asked for a difficult thing," Elijah said, 'Yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise not'"* (2 Kings 2:10).

Sometimes God doesn't give us the whole picture either, but he does give us a hint or a sign. We are forced to continue walking by faith. The release of giftedness in our lives does not come with a money-back guarantee. When you ask someone to pray for you, he or she cannot promise specific results. God is sovereign—He will do as He pleases. The person ministering to you will pray in faith, and you will receive in faith, but only time will tell what you received. Gifts do not fall into your lap. They are poured into you by God through His servants; then, you must work hard, pray harder, and fight for their fulfillment. You must protect the gifts with personal holiness. You must exercise them by faith.

Ask God to pour into you. Seek mentors and pastors who can pour into your life that which God has poured into them, things like wisdom, anointing, joy, peace, and power. God wants to give you *something* so that He can use you to give it to others.

What gifts will you seek God for? What gifts have you received since you accepted Christ into your life? What gifts has the Holy Spirit imparted into you? Who has God used to impart into your life? These

are questions that need to be answered. Do not take for granted the many sermons and Bible studies that God has used to pour into you. You probably have more gifts than you know. Most likely, you have some that have never been identified, cultivated, or poured out. I challenge you to find very specific answers to the questions at the

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beginning of this paragraph, so that you can be very specific and very purposeful about what you pour out to others.

◆◆◆

#### **Selah**

\*\* Name a few occasions in your life when you dared to ask God for something so big, it would have been impossible for anyone but Him. (If you can't remember ever having done that, you might want to ask Him to plant some big dreams in your heart.)

\*\* What are some gifts you feel you need in order to achieve your God-given goals?

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#### **Key #2: You must decide what you want**

Tommy Tenney, probably best known as the author of *The God Chasers*, was recently a guest speaker at our church. He brought his wife, Jeannie, and several of their friends. As we worshipped at the beginning of the service, the power and presence of God fell in the sanctuary. Then, after one family stood to share a moving testimony about their 12-year-old daughter's miraculous healing of cancer, the church erupted with faith and anointing. While the power of God was flowing through me, one of Pastor Tenney's friends grabbed my hand and said, "Pray for me. I want what you have. Impart into me." He then bowed, placed my hand on his head and said something that thrilled me: "I am taking it." He knew exactly what he wanted, so he reached out and grabbed it in faith.

That man dramatically demonstrated the second principle of impartation. In order to highlight this Biblical truth, we will do a case study of three heroes from the Bible. They will demonstrate the need to be specific, bold, desperate, determined and persevering. These people didn't wait for their ship to come in. They saw it, wanted it, and swam out to meet it.

### **Hannah**

*In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the LORD. And she made a vow, saying, "O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head." (1 Sam. 1:10-11)*

Hannah had a tremendous need. She was desperate for a child, and not only for the reasons that might seem obvious to us. In her culture, a woman unable to bear children was considered a failure. To make matters worse, her rival Pininah was harassing her. Day after day, year after year, she would face the same ridicule. She was the classic victim. She seemed hopeless and helpless, until she took a bold step of faith. She went to the house of God alone, to pray.

We are not told if she ever did this before. Could it be that her husband's support (see 1 Sam. 1:5, 8) gave her the motivation she needed? For whatever reason, she decided to take action. This sparks a question in my mind: Why do people remain in their misery year after year? Why don't they try something different? Hannah did!

A contemporary Hannah might have prayed something like this:

"OK God, I'm willing to do whatever it takes to change things. I'm sick and tired of living like this. I mean business. Please, Lord, give me a son and I will give him back to You for Your service." She was bold,

specific and desperate. Hannah was a candidate for a powerful impartation because she had the type of attitude that gets results. What was Eli the priest's response? *"Eli answered, 'Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him'" (1 Sam. 1:17).*

Although Eli was not a model dad or priest, and his prayer may have lacked a certain zeal, Hannah immediately responded in faith. Doesn't her faith bear a striking resemblance to that of the woman who, after touching the hem of Jesus' garment, was healed of a twelve-year issue of blood? Hannah's faith reached right up to heaven and grabbed her miracle!

*"She said, 'May your servant find favor in your eyes.' Then she*

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*went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast" (1 Sam. 1:18).* What changed Hannah? It was her faith-filled attitude that changed her emotions. No more depression or victim mentality. The circumstances had not changed but Hannah had changed. She was still childless; still facing the harassment from Pininah and the critical comments from the neighbors. But her attitude was different. Her faith helped her experience hope again. She could dream about having a son, not with desperate longing but with happy anticipation. She could even knit little blue baby booties in faith. We need to face our challenges in the same way. Be specific with God. Try something different. Get someone to agree with you in prayer. Then let your attitude help you reach new altitudes.

## **Elisha**

*When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?" "Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit," Elisha replied. (2 Kings 2:9)*

Elisha is another hero who was bold, specific, and determined. He

had a goal, and he wasn't afraid to go after it. So he, like Hannah, was an excellent candidate for a miracle. Out of the entire company of the prophets, he was the only one who pressed in to the man of God:

*Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here, Elisha; the LORD has sent me to Jericho." And he replied, "As surely as the LORD lives and as you live, I will not leave you." So they went to Jericho. (2 Kings 2:4).*

Elisha received a double portion of Elijah's spirit because he refused to accept less. The fifty prophets who ministered with Elijah chose to stay on the wrong side of the Jordan. They settled for the cheap seats of life. Isn't it a shame that experienced prophets of God watched and passively waited from a great distance, while a simple servant—a hand-washer—pressed in for more? Elisha knew exactly what he wanted and what he didn't want. He wasn't satisfied to watch from the stands or to sit on the bench. He wanted to get in the game. He wanted to move up to the big leagues. He asked, he pressed in, and he received. Those three steps changed his destiny and they can change yours.

He could have allowed the fear of rejection to stop him, but he didn't. He was willing to risk rejection and disappointment in order to seize his blessing. Are you hiding in the crowd because you are afraid

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of sticking out? Are you afraid of going to the altar because you might be disappointed? Come on, saint. Be the first at the altar and be the last to leave. Don't be satisfied with a trickle from the river, dive in and swim around. Get hold of God and don't let go until you receive your gift. Don't leave that altar without a touch from God. Keep seeking His face until you meet with Him.

For over a year, I fasted and prayed one day a week, crying out to the Lord for revival in Las Vegas. Every Friday I would find a lonely spot in the desert where I would spend hours seeking my God. Like



Elisha, I would not take no for an answer. I really didn't know what revival would look like, but I knew that we desperately needed it.

### **Jacob**

*So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man. Then the man said, "Let me go, for it is daybreak." But Jacob replied, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." (Gen. 32:24-26)*

Jacob was so desperate for God, he once wrestled all night with the Lord, seeking His blessing. We need to pray for this type of desperation.

Too many Christians live in the land of disappointment and regrets. It is time to aggressively seek the promises of God. Jacob was specific and tenacious. He fought for a blessing. When was the last time you fought until your blessing came? Have you prayed with such fervency and abandon that an observer might mistakenly believe you were intoxicated, as happened in Hannah's case? Have you, like Elisha, burned your bridges behind you, risked rejection and disappointment, and persevered in the pursuit of your dream even when everyone else

chose to stay safely behind? Have you dared to chase after God, wrestling with Him for a blessing as Jacob did, continuing to press in, in spite of weariness, doubt, fear and pain?

One of the most intense, life-transforming impartations I have ever received happened only after many hours of pursuing God with everything I had in me. I was at a convention, and had already gone to the altar four or five times for prayer. I was so hungry for more of God. It was the last night of the event, about 12:30 a.m., and everyone

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had left except a few of us Jacobs, still wrestling with the Lord for a blessing. I walked up to a worker and asked him to pray for revival in Las Vegas. He insisted on praying for me instead. I was a great candidate for impartation—specific, tenacious, and desperate—and God touched me that night in ways I will never be able to explain. That was the beginning of my impartation journey. What would have happened if I had left at 11 p.m., or even at midnight? I would have missed my hour of visitation.

What about you? Do you leave church during the altar call or do you tarry in God's presence until you have a breakthrough? How desperate are you for revival in your life? Are you willing to fight for it?

### **Suffering: A Door to Impartation**

Great suffering is one thing many recipients of great impartations have had in common. Perhaps this is because their pain developed in them the other factors we have already discussed: desperation, determination, perseverance, focus on a specific need, and even boldness. Those in deep pain often decide they can't afford the luxury of false pride or self-consciousness. The man at the pool of Bethesda is a classic example of a dramatic impartation of healing that took place after years of suffering.

*One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years.*

*When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"*

*"Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."*

*Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked. (John 5:5-9)*

*"I have no one to help me...."* What a riveting statement. When you are in the middle of great suffering, it feels as if there were no one who could help you. Sometimes, it's even difficult to find people who care. We live in such a busy society. Hurting people often fall through the cracks. They want help but they can't find it. I can truly understand why some sufferers decide to give up. The Bible says, *"Hope deferred makes the heart sick"* (Prov. 13:12). This reality motivates me to make *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 83

a difference in my little world. Our entire church family is encouraged to pour out wherever they find a need. Tommy Barnett lives by a slogan that he repeats at his pastors' and leaders' school in Phoenix, Arizona: "Find a need and fill it." If you follow this example, your life, family and community will change.

Jesus lived His life by this motto. Everywhere He went, He healed the sick, forgave sinners, delivered the possessed, and taught those seeking truth. In this scene, by asking a strange question, Jesus reveals Himself as the one who can help: *"Do you want to get well?"* Isn't that why everybody was at the pool? An angel would stir the waters. The first one in would get healed; the others would only get wet. Thank God the sick man did not respond in a sarcastic tone. Instead he simply spoke the truth. He told Jesus about his troubles.

Isn't this the humble attitude God loves to see in us? He wants us to come to Him; He wants to hear where it hurts. "'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest'" (Matt. 11:28).

Jesus still has His arms wide open today, inviting each one of us to come to Him. In the middle of our suffering, He is asking us, "How can I help you? Do you want to get well?"

How many years had that man lain near those healing waters, clinging to the hope that someday, somehow he would get in first? It must have been a tragic sight. Day after day, year after year, there he was, waiting near the pool, just one of many on a shore awash with human suffering.

Then, one day the Master of Impartation stepped into the scene: the one who later would breathe on His disciples and say, "*Receive the Holy Spirit*" (John 20:22b). The Lord Jesus looked with compassion upon this man who wasn't fast enough or good enough to win his own healing; this man who had suffered for so long. And Jesus decided to level the playing field. He can do the same for you and I. He can come in when we are at our most desperate point. Please allow the Imparter to hear the cry of your heart. Be bold and tell Him exactly what you need. Then, let Him touch you. He is able to touch you, He is willing to touch you—all you have to do is ask.

I can speak from experience. As I mentioned earlier, after the Lord called us to Las Vegas, my family and I became more familiar with suffering than we would have liked. I'm sure that our suffering was part of the devil's strategy to discourage us, weary us, and frighten us;

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he was hoping to drive us away or force us to throw in the towel.

However, the Lord faithfully provided us with everything we needed to get through each trial; He brought much good out of them; and He even responded to our prayers with miraculous answers.

For instance, when Christine began experiencing seizures, doctors said there was a fifty-percent chance she would outgrow them after a few years. Denise and I asked our Savior to improve those odds, and He did. After only a year and a half, God totally healed our daughter. Praise Him! He is Jehovah Rapha, the Supreme Imparter of Healing, the Great Physician.

(After the snowmobile accident, I also experienced a miracle from God's healing hand, but I'll say more about that later on in this book.)

When the doctors told us that Isabelle had Hodgkin's lymphoma, they gave her up to a ninety-percent chance of survival. Praise God that He can even take good odds and make them better. He began by pouring faith, courage and strength into her spirit, soul and body. Eventually, she was completely healed by His power.

She was transformed through this trial, as were we all. Isabelle now has a call to full-time ministry and has returned to college to study the Bible and counseling. But during her illness and treatment, the anguish—both physical and emotional—was overwhelming. I will never forget how I would rub my daughter's feet, in an attempt to find something to soothe her pain. As I held her feet in my hands, I would sing to the Lord and pray, claiming His promise in Romans 8:28: *"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."* I would tell my heavenly Father about our troubles and ask Him to bring good out of this horrible situation. God can and will take the worst the devil can send our way and transform it for good as we surrender it to Him.

Just as the goal of chemotherapy is to destroy cancerous cells in our bodies without destroying healthy cells, suffering has the ability to destroy the spiritual cancers in our lives without destroying us. When our daughter was diagnosed with cancer, our priorities crystallized. Our vision became focused. The successes our ministry had enjoyed,

the new buildings that had been constructed, and the accolades we had received didn't mean much anymore. We just wanted our daughter to be made well.

Isabelle's battle with cancer was one of those periods of adversity I

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wrote of earlier, when the best thing we can do is to humbly offer ourselves up on the altar of the Lord. During this trial, the biblical phrases about being "*hard pressed on every side*" (2 Cor. 4:8) and purified like gold and silver in the "*refiner's fire*" (Mal. 3:2) became very real to our family. As we underwent the pressure and pain of being squeezed like grapes in a press, we prayed that the wine we yielded would be sweet to His taste. As we walked through the fire, sending fragrant smoke toward heaven like incense, we longed for it to be pleasing to Him. These words were not empty, pious platitudes. They helped us get through a very painful experience and allowed us to touch God in unspeakable, indescribable ways.

At times, of course, we felt a little like the man at the pool. We struggled to hold onto faith and hope in spite of cruel disappointments and setbacks. Our nerves and emotions were severely tested. In the darkest moments, we couldn't do much but hold up a little candle of faith, but God sees and responds to even the faintest glimmer.

This difficult period of our lives gave us an opportunity to experience firsthand the truth of God's promises and His character as revealed in His Word:

***He is compassionate and He is merciful.***

*A bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. (Isa. 42:3).*

***He knows how much you can take,***  
*and God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way*

out so that you can stand up under it. (1 Cor. 10:13).

**God cares deeply for you.**

He loves you with a pure and unselfish love, and is especially near to His children when they suffer:

*The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. (Ps. 34:18).*

**He will never leave you to suffer alone;**

He will give you what you need to make it through each situation:

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*The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. (Deut 31:8).*

*So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. (Isa. 41:10).*

**No matter how fierce the fiery trial you may be going through,**

**He will be the fourth man in the fire:**

*Then King Nebuchadnezzar leaped to his feet in amazement and asked his advisers, "Weren't there three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied, "Certainly, O king." He said, "Look! I see four men walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed, and the fourth looks like a son of the gods." (Dan 3:24-25).*

So, I encourage you to be bold, to be specific, and to persevere.

And remember that suffering is a secret door to great and intimate impartations. As Paul said, *"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).*

Now that we have discussed some of the guidelines for seeking and receiving impartation, we will look at Key #3, which reveals to us

the *purpose* of impartation.



### **Selah**

**\*\*** Why do you think people sometimes tend to lack boldness, specificity, and determination when seeking God for something they need or desire?

**\*\*** Name some of the ways God uses our suffering for our own good.

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### **Key #3: God imparts to us so that we may**

#### **impart to others**

*“As you go, preach this message: ‘the kingdom of heaven is near.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.” (Matt. 10:7-8).*

Jesus Christ poured into his disciples so they could pour into others. They had not paid for what they had received from Him. It was a gift. Of course, the decision to follow the master cost them everything—careers, homes, plans for the future—but that which He had poured into them was free. The impartations they had received, however, like all impartations, had a purpose. We are not poured into so that we might become selfish consumers of the presence of God.

We are expected to give it away, to pass the blessing on to others.

The greatest illustration of this principle is found in 2 Kings 4:1-7:

*The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, "Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD. But now his creditor is coming to take my two boys as his slaves."*

*Elisha replied to her, "How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?"*



*"Your servant has nothing there at all," she said, "except a little oil."*

*Elisha said, "Go around and ask all your neighbors for empty jars. Don't ask for just a few. Then go inside and shut the door behind you and your sons. Pour oil into all the jars, and as each is filled, put it to one side."*

*She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring. When all the jars were full, she said to her son, "Bring me another one."*

*But he replied, "There is not a jar left." Then the oil stopped*

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*flowing.*

*She went and told the man of God, and he said, "Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left."*

The woman was in a terrible emotional and financial condition.

Her husband was Obadiah, a priest who had spent his entire life serving in the care of the prophets. *"Ahab had summoned Obadiah, who was in charge of his palace. (Obadiah was a devout believer in the LORD.)" (1 Kings 18:3-4).*

Even though he served Ahab the wicked king, Obadiah risked his life and the welfare of his family to protect the men of God. Elijah also enlisted him as a liaison to the king:

*As Obadiah was walking along, Elijah met him. Obadiah recognized him, bowed down to the ground, and said, "Is it really you, my lord Elijah?" "Yes," he replied. "Go tell your master, 'Elijah is here.'"* (1 Kings 18:7-8).

By the time Elijah was taken up to heaven, Obadiah must have risked his life many times. In 2 Kings 4:1 we discover that his servant attitude continued under Elisha's ministry: *"The wife of a man from the company of the prophets cried out to Elisha, 'Your servant my*

*husband is dead, and you know that he revered the LORD."*

This transition speaks highly of Obadiah's character. Although he was a high-ranking official, he served the men of God. Even when there was a change in leadership, he remained faithful. This is as it should be, for we are not to serve personalities, but God. The cult of the personality has always been a problem. Even Paul the Apostle faced it in Corinth:

*You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. (1 Cor. 3:3-7)*

Mature Christians will serve God faithfully regardless of who the pastor is. We don't serve the pastor and leaders of a church because we

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are in love with them. We serve the leaders because we are called to serve God. Immature Christians will run after the most popular speakers instead of the man of God called to lead the flock. Obadiah apparently did not suffer from this kind of immaturity.

We aren't told how Obadiah passed away, but we do know that his wife was left without finances, and in more debt than she could ever hope to pay. One commentary proposes that Obadiah had gone into debt to protect and provide food for the prophets.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps he used up his own money to assist the prophets and then felt that he had to borrow in order to continue his mission. After his death, the creditor demanded Obadiah's sons as payment for the debt, a practice common

to many cultures in those days.

After years of counseling, I have seen time and again that pain and misery are no respecter of persons. From my perspective, life is often unfair. Doesn't it seem odd that after her husband served God so faithfully, his widow would be forced to undergo such hardship?

Perhaps she was thinking the same thing. Perhaps she was beginning to wonder if God had forgotten her. In her desperation, she went to the best source of help she could think of: a man of God.

Living in Las Vegas, I have seen several people lose everything because of alcohol, drugs, gambling or sex. Pawnshops are a big business here because some people are willing to do anything to get money. Some have even sold their children into prostitution. Others have sold their own bodies. In desperation, many have done desperate things.

However, the woman who went to Elisha for help was not a user or an abuser. She was an innocent victim of hard times, struggling to survive in spite of overwhelming circumstances. Apparently, by the time she found Elisha, he was already somewhat aware of what had happened. The widow spoke only two brief sentences—sentences filled more with unspoken questions than with information—but the prophet didn't need to know anything else about her predicament, and he didn't seem surprised. His response to her was immediate: "*How can I help you? Tell me, what do you have in your house?*" (2 Kings 4:2).

Elisha answered the woman by asking her two things. (Don't you just hate it when someone answers your question with a question? My seminary professors used this as a teaching technique. Exasperating  
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though it was, it forced me to think through the tough issues and find some of the answers on my own.)

The first part of her answer reflected her seemingly hopeless condition. *"Your servant has nothing there at all,"* she said. But then she added the words *"except a little oil."* I'm glad she tacked on the *"except,"* but I wonder if it sprang from a little surge of faith, or if it was simply an afterthought.

Have you ever gotten to the point where you felt as if you had nothing left? That may not have been the truth, but you felt that way. It often takes a friend or the Holy Spirit to reveal your miracle. Tommy Barnett's book, *There's a Miracle in Your House*, has been a great inspiration to me, especially through several of our church's building programs. It seems that God often waits until I am at the end of my resources before He steps in. Even though my flesh is crying out, *"God, there's nothing left,"* my spirit turns on the flashlight of hope. I've told Him many times, *"I can't see where the miracle is going to come from, but I know it is somewhere in this house."*

I will never forget when God told me to build a sanctuary that seated 3,000 people. I shared the vision with our leadership team and they caught it. After we had the plans drawn up, we faced a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. No one would lend us the money. They didn't think we were a good risk. We sought God desperately for an answer. In spite of the fact that we had an insignificant amount of money and no loan, we believed God was telling us to go ahead and get started. So we scraped up as much money as we could and began to build. Well, 1.8 million dollars later—that's how much we paid the contractor over a 16-month period—the lenders were falling all over themselves, almost begging to loan us money. We started pouring out the little that we had, and the money just kept flowing. Praise God!

### **Humble Yourself**

One of the first steps toward receiving a miracle is to humble yourself. To borrow every empty jar in town was a huge act of faith; it

also must have been very humbling for someone who had lost everything. Maybe that's why she sent her kids to get them. Have you ever asked your children to do something that you were too embarrassed to do? Remember that this was not a big city. Everybody knew her story. Maybe they had even purchased some of her *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 91 belongings at a yard sale.

I can just imagine what the neighbors were saying:

"Harriet, who was that?"

"Oh it was Ruth's kids."

"Were they begging for food or something?"

"No my little bagel, they were borrowing empty jars."

"What! Have they gone nuts?"

"Well dear, I didn't have the heart to ask them why. I'm sure we'll get them back soon."

"I hope so, jars don't grow on trees, you know."

Neighbors may not have reserved their comments for gossip sessions. Middle Eastern culture seems to facilitate frank communication. In other words, they probably told her to her face that she was nuts.

After her house was filled with jars, she had to pour the little she had left into the empty jars. When you are desperate, your faith needs to start leading the way. Now it was time for her to take another big step of faith. Do you think she closed her eyes when she started pouring? I know that I would have.

### **Shut the Door**

We do know that she closed the door. *"She left him and afterward shut the door behind her and her sons. They brought the jars to her and she kept pouring"* (2 Kings 4:5). Why did she close the door? I believe it was to keep out the doubters. She had to close the door to

protect her family, her faith and her miracle. The moment of truth had arrived. As she started pouring, one jar was filled, and then two, three, four, five—and the oil still kept flowing! *"When all the jars were full, she said to her son, 'Bring me another one.' But he replied, 'There is not a jar left.' Then the oil stopped flowing"* (2 Kings 4:6).

In one day, she had exchanged hopelessness for hope, poverty for abundance, and misery for joy. The miracle of the oil continued as long as there were empty jars.

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### **He Will Never Stop Pouring**

This powerful illustration teaches us that as long as we keep pouring into others, God will keep pouring into us. As long as there are empty vessels in the world, He will be looking for people to fill them.

When you are offered the opportunity to receive an impartation, you are not being invited to join a "bless me" club. Every gift is meant to be given away, every blessing is to be shared, and every filling is to be spilled out.

Do you see empty people in the world? If you do, are you willing to make a difference? Then shout out like Isaiah did, *"Here am I. Send me!"* (Isa. 6:8).

Be blessed to become a blessing. Prosper to share with others.

Receive the anointing to minister life to the hurting. If you will pass along to others that which God gives to you, He will give you more.

### **The Year of Lifting**

In January of 2001, a special guest speaker, Benny Perez, prophesied into my life: He said that this year would be a year of lifting for the church and for me. I received that word in faith. The year 2000 had been a year of sifting. I really needed a word of hope. In the weeks that followed, I announced to the church the theme for the

coming year. The season had changed, so we needed to prepare ourselves for lifting.

As I write these pages in May 2001, I can truly testify that God has lifted us in incredible ways. Our church hosted the Benny Hinn crusade in Las Vegas, where thousands were saved and healed. I led a team to Northern India to hold classes for pastors and a crusade, and God moved in unbelievable ways. We have had the privilege of sharing our church's miracles on Benny Hinn's television program and on the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN). *Charisma* magazine recently did a wonderful story on our church and the renewal in Las Vegas. The doors of ministry are opening so wide, it is overwhelming. God is so good.

Bruce Wilkinson's book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, has caught the attention of believers all over the country, and we are no exception. As soon as someone introduced this little book to Denise and me, it found *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 93 a center role in our church. We have prayed the prayer of Jabez with the congregation several times, and I have been stopped in the church hallways more than once by people exclaiming, "It works! The prayer of Jabez works!" Yes, prayer does work. The prayer of Jabez, recorded in 1 Chronicles 4:10, works for us *because* the God of Jabez is our God. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He granted the requests of Jabez and He will grant ours. But remember, you will be blessed in order to be a blessing to others. You will continue to be filled only as long as you pour. Let's pray the prayer of Jabez together and see what our God will do:

*Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory,  
that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from  
evil, that I may not cause pain! (1 Chron. 4:10 NKJV).*

Understanding this third principle is critical. If nothing is pouring

out of you, you will become a stagnant swamp. Eventually you will dry up altogether. If you want the river to keep flowing through you, you must give it away.

How much can God trust you with? The more you give away, the more He will give to you. There is a direct relationship between the level of your blessing and the level of your giving. Whether it is money or mercy, God is no man's debtor. He will press it down, shake it together and pour it back to you.

Our church's fourth annual Holy Spirit Conference this year was a prime example of this principle. Representatives of several different countries and denominations were in attendance. There were twenty-nine from India, seven from the Philippines, one from Mexico, and hundreds hailing from at least eight different U.S. states, including a group of almost fifty from Vermont. This diverse gathering of pastors and lay leaders filled our sanctuary for a week, seeking God day and night for revival and powerful impartation that they hoped to take back to their own cities and churches. In almost every case, their presence at the conference was a fruit produced by sharing God's blessings with others. In the past, we had poured into their lives by faith, and now they were coming for more.

You won't have anything to harvest unless you sow your seed. And God won't give you more oil until you are willing to pour, pour, pour.

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### **Selah**

**\*\*** Has God blessed you with talents, gifts or resources you have never shared with anyone?

**\*\*** With God's help, think of new ways you can pour yourself into others.

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#### **Key #4: Position yourself for impartation**

The fourth principle deals with the crucial aspect of being in the right spot at the right time with the right heart. I call it positioning.

When you are in need of a miracle, it is a perfect time to position yourself for impartation. We recently lived out this truth when, over a span of twelve months, my daughter was diagnosed with cancer; our lives were threatened; we finished a six-million dollar building; started another building program; one of our church counselors fell into immorality; and my father died of cancer. It seemed that a new crisis lurked around every corner.

In order to survive and to lead my family, staff, and congregation through these crises, I was forced to apply the principles discussed in this book to my own life and help them to do the same. As a result, instead of allowing our trials and challenges to plunge us into a pool of discouragement and defeat, our church exploded in numerical growth and spiritual depth. Many people told Denise and me that they were inspired as they watched us confront stress, heartache, and adversity with a spirit of perseverance.

When most of us hear the word *crisis*, we think of trouble or danger; however, according to the dictionary, a crisis can also be a "turning point...for better or worse, a decisive or crucial time."<sup>3</sup>

Inevitably, all of us will face many of these decisive or crucial times, *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 95

but when we trust in the Lord and obey Him, we can count on Him to turn each one into a turning point for the better. The dictionary also tells us that the word *crisis* comes from Greek, Latin, Indo-European and Germanic words meaning "to separate, discern, sift, cut, shear and purify."<sup>4</sup> As this word evolved into its current meaning, it sounds as though people down through the ages have concluded that the crises we go through can serve to sift us, purify us, and separate us (i.e.,

consecrate us, set us apart, sanctify us, make us holy). And, of course, that would be right, especially if we take our crises and lay them at the feet of Jesus.

Our constant prayer through our pain was, "God, we know You can take these trials and tribulations and bring good out of them. We don't know how, but in faith, we believe You will." Some days, we could only cry out for help and strength. Every day we asked God for wisdom, mercy and grace to walk through the land mines of this war. We needed miracles desperately. It felt like Satan was amusing himself by using us for target practice. I couldn't understand why all these battles were occurring at the same time. We were forced to reconsider our position, habits, prayer life, commitment and faith. The Word was a constant source of strength and direction. It was in 2 Chronicles 20:15-19 that I discovered the importance of position:

*He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.'" Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with very loud voice.*

Jehoshaphat and the Israelite army were overwhelmed by their enemies. The odds were against them. They needed a miracle. They

were commanded to position themselves for a miracle. Do you believe that blessings or gifts come more frequently to those who are in the right position? Of course they do.

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In football, the wide receiver who is in the right position will receive more passes. The baseball player who is in the right position will catch more balls. The Olympic diver who holds his position will receive more points. I could give a hundred more examples of this truth, but I think you get the point.

*Let's get into the right position to receive a divine gift.*

There are steps we can take as Christians, pastors, teachers and even churches to position ourselves for victory. We all have a choice: We can live in the land of self-pity, accepting oppression and defeat; or we can begin to position ourselves for a breakthrough.

Jehoshaphat and his army took four steps to get in position for victory. Let's take the same steps and see what God will do.

### **1. They humbled themselves before God**

Humility before our God is a big key. *"Jehoshaphat bowed with his face to the ground, and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem fell down in worship before the LORD. Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the LORD, the God of Israel, with very loud voice" (2 Chron. 20:18-19).*

God delights in our humility. *"For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation " (Ps. 149:4).*

Our pride sets God against us. On the other hand, when we humble ourselves, we position ourselves to receive God's unmerited favor.

*"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).*

Are you humble before God and man? Repent of any pride or self-sufficient attitude you may have.

### **2. They worshipped God**

When the people of Judah worshiped God, he set ambushes against their enemies. *"As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated"* (2 Chron. 20:22-23).

The principle behind Judah's victory is still valid for God's people today.

God is looking for worshippers: men, women, teens and children who will worship in spirit and truth. Are you a worshipper in spirit and in truth? Do you worship regardless of the circumstances? *"After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: 'Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever'"* (2 Chron. 20:21).

Worship is a key to the revival we are experiencing in Las Vegas.

Our congregation loves to worship God. The senior pastor sets the tone for a worshipping church. The church will never rise above his level of worship. And your own relationship with our Savior will never rise beyond your level of praise and adoration for Him.

### **3. They obeyed God's direction**

*"Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, 'Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful'"* (2 Chron. 20:20). In this entire account, we do not find one moment of hesitation. The people of Judah rendered immediate obedience to God, as should we all. When He says, "Jump!" we should say, "How high?" Wouldn't it be incredible if all of us yielded to God's promptings like this?

Many of us have become experts at making up excuses. We have

learned to rationalize away our disobedience. How many opportunities have we missed because we convinced ourselves that the nudge we felt might not have been God? It didn't make sense to us, we reasoned, therefore it couldn't have been God. Don't we realize that our wisdom is foolishness to God? Will we be guilty of disobeying God?

Jehoshaphat obeyed God's directions. They must have seemed so simple, so unsophisticated, but they obeyed nonetheless. *"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: 'He catches the wise in their craftiness'" (1 Cor. 3:19).*

#### **4. He consulted with the people**

*"After consulting the people..." (2 Chron. 20:21).* God has provided you with safeguards to help you in making decisions. Some of them come in the form of mature Christians whose opinions you can trust—they may be your pastor, your spouse, your parents, a counselor, an elder, a deacon, or other friends and family members.

Are you in the habit of running your ideas past trusted counselors?

I believe God wants you to prepare yourself for a holy visitation, and I don't believe you can do it alone. God wants to use godly men

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and women as safeguards, motivation and inspiration. Are you ready for what God wants to do in you and through you?

Have you surrounded yourself with on-fire Christians who love

God's presence, his Word and his people? If you want to run with the big dogs you have to get off the porch. Find a pack of huskies who are headed to a great destination and who are being driven by the Master.

If you want to soar like an eagle, you must leave the chicken yard and start hanging around other eagles. (Don't you love those analogies?)

The four steps we just discussed will position you for a great breakthrough. Here are a few other hints that will help you:

➤ Don't make excuses and don't wallow in self-pity.

- Spend time in prayer and fasting.
- Repent of stubborn attitudes, pride, resentment, and bitterness.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any wickedness in you. Then, get right with God and man.
- Commit yourself to learning how to worship. I have spent the past twenty-two years learning how to worship God in spirit and in truth. It will take time, but it must be a priority. Find a church that places the worship of God in a high place. Worship is not three fast songs and two slow songs. True worship is falling in love with Him. It is expressing passion and hunger for His presence.
- Position yourself by obeying God in service, giving and holy living. Faithfully attend a great church. Submit to a leadership team who loves God and wants to touch your city and the world.
- A simple step of obedience can unleash God's blessings on you. In my life, there have been many occasions when one decision to obey set off a chain reaction of opportunities. Oral Roberts recently preached at our church a powerful message on acquiring "The Blessing." He tied The Blessing to Abraham's obedience in giving a tithe to Melchizedek. One instance of giving unleashed God's favor on Him. The Blessing can be tracked even further back to Abraham's obedience in leaving Ur. *"He also said to him, 'I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it'" (Gen. 15:7).*

There is an old adage that asks: "How do you eat an elephant?"

"One bite at a time" is the answer. How do you position yourself for *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 99 impartations? One step at a time. Take your steps one at a time. God will give you strength along the way.

### **Character Really Does Count**

The prayer of Jabez also gives us clear direction about positioning

ourselves for a blessing. When we read 1 Chronicles 4, we will discover that in a very long genealogical list, only one name stands out, and that is, of course, Jabez. Why would the author interrupt this list of names with a short biography? Why did the author of Chronicles take a special interest in Jabez? More importantly, why did the God of the universe take a special interest in Jabez?

The answer can be found in 1 Chronicles 4:9: *"Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers."* That one sentence lights up the page so that all can see the secret of Jabez's life. He was more honorable than his brothers. When God surveyed the landscape of His creation, He saw one man who stood out. It was the character of Jabez that made him stand out. He was more honorable than his co-workers, his society, his leaders, and even his family. He was a man of integrity. He was worthy of honor because his life was clean.

As I have pondered this statement over the past few weeks, I have been convicted of certain attitudes and actions that were not very honorable. My golf game has even changed as the Holy Spirit reminded me of this phrase. Was it honorable to blame a bad shot on noise from another player? It might have been justifiable in my competitive mind, but it was not honorable. To position ourselves for a miracle, we need to evaluate our words, actions and motives to see if they are honorable. Certainly, God, from whom we can hide nothing, knows if we are in the right position. The big question is whether He can trust us with a blessing. Will we be more honorable than the rest of our society?

In Acts 17:11, we are reminded that God recognizes honorable character: *"Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."* They were more noble because they listened, learned, researched and

received the truth. What a great example for you and me.

Will you commit to being more honorable than others? Or will you use the sins of others as an excuse for yours? It is quite simple to

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rationalize away our dishonor. We easily fall into step with the pack, hoping to blend in and sneak by the watchful eye of God. Are you afraid to stand out in the crowd by being honorable?

I can guarantee you that, in our society, it is not popular to possess qualities like honor, holiness, forgiveness, integrity, humility, faith and obedience. However, if you do allow God to develop these qualities in your life, you will be able to pray the prayer of Jabez with great expectations.

God will bless you indeed, He will enlarge your territory, His hand will be with you, and He will keep you from evil so that you will not cause pain.

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#### **Selah**

**\*\*** \* It has been said that the qualities of honor and integrity are so rare in our current society, most people have a hard time even defining them. Think about the significance of honor and integrity in your own life; then, compare your thoughts to the dictionary definition of these two qualities. If you have children, discuss these qualities with them.

**\*\*** \* Reflect on any recent trial or challenge you have experienced. Did you handle it the way King Jehoshaphat and his subjects did? If not, what would you like to do differently the next time you are confronted with a crisis?

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#### **Key #5: Seek multiple impartations**

*"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be*



*filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18).* There is an erroneous belief that once you've been filled with the Holy Spirit, you have finished. You have achieved some kind of spiritual plateau. This could not be further

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from the truth. God does not want us to settle for stale bread. He has an infinite supply of fresh bread for all of His saints. It is important to thank God for what he has done in the past, but it is also very important to seek God for our daily bread. The words "*give us today our daily bread*" (Matt. 6:11) refer to more than just food for our bodies.

When you wake up in the morning, do you greet the Holy Spirit? Do you ask Him to fill you afresh and to guide you throughout the day? I hope so, because it is God's plan for you.

Jesus made the following promise to you, as a child of God: "*The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you*" (John 14:26-27). Remember that the Holy Spirit is a person. He has strong feelings for you. He wants to fill you. He wants to guide you. When He fills you, your life will change. You will walk with a new confidence and authority.

When you are full of the Holy Spirit, He leads you into His perfect will. Even our Lord was filled with the Holy Spirit. "*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert*" (Luke 4:1-2).

As was mentioned earlier, Stephen, who was one of the first seven deacons, is a notable example of one who was full of the Holy Spirit. On several different occasions, the author of the book of Acts highlights this truth:

*This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 6:5).*

*But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. (Acts 7:55).*

Are you full of the Holy Spirit—not only half-full, but full?

When the Holy Spirit fills you, He always deposits His gifts in you. He decides which ones you need in any given circumstance. In Luke 10:21, Jesus was filled with joy in the Holy Spirit: *"At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.'"* Jesus wasn't filled once; He was

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filled continually. Stephen wasn't satisfied with a one-time experience; being full of the Holy Spirit became part of his reputation, his very identity. He received what he needed. If we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will become internally—rather than externally—controlled. Circumstances won't be able to sway us. If we are filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit, His gifts will freely flow through us. When we are functioning in our own strength and determination, the Holy Spirit is limited and supernatural gifts don't flow. The only gifts that come out of us then are natural talents, knowledge and skills.

There is a tremendous opportunity for you and I to walk in the supernatural. Don't miss it. Be filled with the Holy Spirit every day and unleash the flow of His gifts. *"God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will" (Heb. 2:4).*

#### **Impartation: A Lifelong Process**

Jesus spent three years imparting into his disciples in many different ways. Then, He breathed the Spirit into them. *"And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (John 20:22).*

- 1. He taught them.**
- 2. He broke bread with them.**
- 3. He prayed for them.**
- 4. He preached to them.**
- 5. He corrected them.**
- 6. He demonstrated faith to them.**
- 7. He breathed into them.**

What an incredible pattern of discipleship!

Can you imagine what it must have been like to walk with the Master? When He breathed on those first disciples and told them to receive the Holy Spirit, what do you think happened? Don't you think they received the Holy Spirit? Of course they did. He was the resurrected Lord. He had conquered death and the grave. The natural question that arises here is, why then did He later tell them to stay in Jerusalem until they were baptized with the Holy Spirit?

The answer to this question is found in a study of the words Jesus *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* 103 used in each case. In John 20:22, he told them to *receive* (Greek: *lakete*: to get a hold of, to take<sup>5</sup>) the Holy Spirit. In contrast, Jesus tells them in Acts 1:5 that they will *be baptized* (Greek: baptizo: to immerse, submerge; to make overwhelmed<sup>6</sup>) in the Holy Spirit. *"For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5).*

When it tells us, in John 20:22, that Jesus breathed on the disciples, I am reminded of Genesis 2:7, when God breathed into Adam and gave him life: *"The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."*

The moment Jesus breathed on the disciples and told them to receive the Holy Spirit, I believe the Holy Spirit entered them. He did

not just rest upon them, but they received Him into themselves. This act gave new life to each one of them. Up until that moment, the disciples had only an intellectual belief in Christ. But after they received the Holy Spirit into themselves, they became new creations, born of the Spirit (or "born again," which is the same thing). This is what Jesus was referring to when he told Nicodemus that no one could see the kingdom of God and receive eternal life unless he or she were born again: *"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit"* (John 3:5).

Of course, Jesus' words are still true for us today. People can be in mental agreement that Jesus is the Christ; however, they must receive Him as Savior and Lord in order to be born again. John 1:12 indicates that in order to become a true child of God, one's belief in Christ must be more than intellectual; it must be the kind of belief that includes accepting Him, welcoming Him, and receiving Him into one's life: *"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."* When someone accepts Jesus Christ into his or her life, He immediately enters that person by the Holy Spirit. Jesus is seated at the right hand of our heavenly Father, but He lives in our hearts by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. Of course, this means that the Holy Spirit dwells within each and every true believer. This is good news, but there is much more.

After we have been born again (i.e., born of the Spirit), we are candidates for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is a separate

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experience from being born again and takes us to a whole new dimension of our Christian walk. When we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, we become *filled with the Holy Spirit*. Gifts, power and anointing can flow through and out of a Spirit-filled believer. Have

you been baptized in the Holy Spirit yet? If you haven't, you are missing one of the Lord's great promises.

While growing up in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, I attended the Catholic Church. Due to the influence of Campus Crusade for Christ, I accepted Christ into my heart at eighteen. As I started to read and study the Bible for myself, the book of Acts made me believe there was, after conversion, a second and distinct work of the Holy Spirit that I should seek. I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit alone, in my room, simply by asking for it. I told my Heavenly Father that I was asking for bread and I knew, according to His Word, that He would not give me a rock:

*"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?  
Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? 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 good gifts to those who ask him!" (Matt. 7:9-11).*

*"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).*

I wanted everything God had for me. People told me it was not going to happen. They claimed these things only happened in the first century. Thank God I didn't believe them; I held on to God's Word instead.

Since I received the baptism in 1979, I have received *multiple fillings*. Many Pentecostals have failed to recognize that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not the second and last experience but an open door to the steady flow of the power of God.

We are not to live on the fumes of past fillings. We are saved once

and for all, but we must be filled continually. There is new wine that God wants to pour into both the young and the old. Being a candidate for new wine has nothing to do with the age of the saint, but it has everything to do with the condition of the heart. Our hearts need to be

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flexible and clean like new wineskins. *"And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins" (Mark 2:22). God, we need new wine today.*

*"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10).* Take a moment and repeat this Psalm as a prayer. Our spirits and bodies will become worn out if our hearts are not regularly cleansed and made new by the Holy Spirit.

### **The Apostle Paul and the Principle of Multiple Impartations**

Paul believed in and lived a life of multiple impartations.

*"I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith" (Rom. 1:11-12).* Was Paul pretentious? Did he have something no one else had? I believe Paul simply recognized that God had given him many special gifts he could pass on to others through the power of the Holy Spirit.

*For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power. (1 Cor. 2:2-5).*

Paul's preaching was not fancy or eloquent. Even if we had no other evidence, the following account could make us suspect that he might

not have been the world's most electrifying preacher:

*Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted. (Acts 20:9-12)*

Although we might be tempted to laugh at this anecdote, no one underestimated this apostle as a man of God. How many other

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preachers could put one of his listeners to sleep, have him fall out of a window and die, and then, raise him from the dead? Eloquent or not, we know his speaking was packed with the power of God—whenever he came to a city there was either a revival or a riot. Wow! Our churches need more of Paul's type of spirit.

*Dear God, please give us all a double portion of the Spirit that filled Paul.*

#### **Timothy: A Classic Example of Impartation**

In Paul's letters to Timothy, we find that Timothy had experienced at least three different impartations.

##### ***#1 Timothy received faith***

*I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. (2 Tim. 1:5).*

His grandmother and mother imparted a vibrant, mature faith. We are not told how that happened, but we can imagine that the teaching sessions, the prayer meetings, the life examples, and the commitment to the body of Christ all imparted faith into Timothy's life. Do you see

the generations of impartation that took place? First, his grandmother Lois poured into his mother Eunice, and then both the grandmother and the mother poured into Timothy. We've often heard of generational curses, but how about teaching and preaching the concept of generational blessings? Can a blessing be passed on for generations? Absolutely. Will you establish generational blessings or curses in your family?

## **#2 Timothy received a gift**

The second recorded impartation of Timothy's life came at the hands of the elders:

*Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. (1 Tim. 4:13-15).*

Can you imagine this memorable day in Timothy's life? The elders of the church laid their hands on him and one of them started to

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prophesy. Then, suddenly, Timothy received a gift. Isn't this exciting? Can you put yourself in his place and imagine the emotions? I believe God wants to impart into our lives in the same way.

Pastors, elders and deacons, when was the last time that you gathered around a young person in order to impart a gift? I can remember such a time in my life. I was at a pastor's conference in Maui. Baby boomer pastors with large churches were asked to share ideas, experiences and visions for the future. On the last day of the meetings, we gathered at a prayer center on a mountain. After a brief lunch, we started to pray. One by one, the pastors and their mates would sit on a chair surrounded by great leaders who prayed and prophesied over them. As I stood on the outside of the circle, I



wondered if these people were really hearing from God. The whole scene seemed very foreign to me.

Although I was Pentecostal, I had never been to a prayer meeting like this. I tended to be a bit skeptical of this kind of stuff. I told God I needed some kind of proof. I asked Him to reveal to them a very specific secret desire of my heart. Within minutes they called me over to sit in the hot seat. My questions disappeared in a moment when one of the leaders prophesied over me the very deepest desire of my heart. I remember weeping like a baby.

I believe that each of us longs for the supernatural in our lives. We need to seek God's face in order to tap into His revelations and gifts. The body of Christ needs to function in the gifts.

Unfortunately, due to poor teachings, abuses and fear, we tend to shy away from them. I admit that the glaring disappointments of the past have clouded our hearts. I believe the Lord is raising up a whole new category of men and women of God who will function in the supernatural. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers will equip the saints for the work of the ministry. God never did away with these offices. He is still waiting for men and women who are full of the Holy Spirit to assume these and other roles.

*And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. (1 Cor. 12:28).*

Paul encouraged Timothy not to neglect the gift that was in him. It

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was given to him by prophecy and by the laying on of hands. If it happened in Timothy's life, it can happen in yours. If it happened in his church, it should happen in yours.

I find it interesting to read 1 Timothy 4:14-15 in the New King James Version: *"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."* Paul encouraged Timothy to *"meditate on these things,"* to give himself *"entirely to them,"* so that his *"progress may be evident to all."*

Impartations will be unsuccessful unless prayer, study, devotion and obedience nurture them. Paul did not advise Timothy to ignore these experiences. He encouraged him to water and nourish them. God wants to deposit gifts in you that will impact your world.

### **Impartations Take Work**

Every impartation I have received has taken a lot of work on my part. I wasn't a passive recipient of them. I was an active participant. My will, mind, emotions and efforts all played a role in a successful use of impartation. I had to take six steps to see each gift grow:

**1. Receive it.** Gifts can be offered and prayers sent your way, but they are activated when you receive them. Whether by word or deed, your faith has to reach out and grab that which is being imparted to you. No one can force you to receive an imparted gift or blessing. I have often encouraged people to walk to an altar to receive something or to verbally acknowledge the reception by saying, "I receive it." On the other hand, when a person is being delivered from a negative spiritual influence, it is crucial that he or she verbally renounces the spirit(s) or stronghold(s). Our words can either open doors or close them. This truth works both ways.

**2. Believe it.** How many times has someone prayed for you, but deep in your heart, you didn't believe anything changed? Whether because of doubt, fear, insecurity, or a feeling of

unworthiness, many blessings and gifts have been lost due to unbelief. The old song "Only Believe" exhorts us to do just that—believe—and promises us that all things are possible if we will only believe.<sup>7</sup> This great chorus says it so well, and no wonder, because the lyrics are taken from Scripture.

On the same subject, the Bible also says:

*But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (James 1:6-8)*

and,

*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Tim 1:7 NKJV).*

Remember that faith pleases God,

*and without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. (Heb 11:6).*

Also remember that faith itself is a gift from God: *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast"* (Eph 2:8-9). So, we may ask Him to help us believe:

*"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:23-24).*

**3. Meditate and pray it into reality.** David, the king and psalmist, often used this tool to firmly plant his future in the hands of God, and God's plans in the depths of his heart. Nourishing an impartation with prayer and meditation will give you and it time to mature. Although we may experience intense emotions

when God deposits something in us, a true gift from God is not a mere emotional high that ends when we descend from the mountaintop. Some of the greatest gifts and prophecies I have received have taken weeks, months or even years to bear fruit. It is better to wait for God's timing and not rush into a call with lots of zeal but inadequate knowledge and wisdom.

**4. *Sacrifice until it bears fruit.*** Not only will it take time to see gifts and impartations bear fruit; it will take sacrifice. You must water seeds that have been planted with your own tears, sweat and blood. There are no shortcuts to an anointing that lasts or a ministry that will stand the test of time.

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**5. *Use the gift even if it's risky.*** The operational word here is *risk*. Flowing in the gifts of God or His anointing is scary. If God doesn't come through, the sick will leave the altars sick, the bound will leave bound, and the hurting will leave discouraged. We know, however, that there is at least one of God's faithful servants who never had to face that type of scenario. Regarding the life of the prophet Samuel, Scripture proclaims, "*The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground*" (1 Sam. 3:19). Oh, that this could be said of our prayers! But we will never know unless we are willing to take risks.

**6. *Work alongside others who have similar gifts.*** There is no greater learning device than modeling—not "do as I say," but "do as I do." Apprentices, internships, mentoring programs and buddy systems are all examples of this truth. Find someone who is successfully being used by God; then, serve the anointing. Watch and pray. Keep the good meat and spit out the bones. You won't agree with or like everything you see, but

that's fine. Give your best and go for God!

### **Guard Your Seed**

Many times, immature believers become impatient when they are not instantly changed by powerful altar experiences. They fail to understand the need to feed the seed. Every impartation is a seed. Unless it is cared for, protected and cherished it will not take root. Our enemy the devil loves to snatch these seeds before they take root. How many times have you allowed an impartation to be killed by fear, self-doubt, compromise, disobedience, apathy or lack of perseverance? The enemy also loves to intimidate us. *"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. **Resist him, standing firm in the faith**, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings"* (1 Peter 5:8-9, emphasis added).

Don't let Satan devour your seed. Once, I heard a motivational speaker say that if you held onto a dream for five years it would happen. This statement is only partially true. We need to *hold onto it* for five years, *hold onto Him daily*, and then, *work hard*. We must *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life 111*

water it with prayer, and nourish it with the Word, courage and faith. In order to see our gifts grow, we must see them in the context of the body of Christ. We are not islands unto ourselves. We are connected, even interconnected. We are not independent; we are interdependent. Our gifts are given to edify (i.e., build up) the body (i.e., the local church). In this environment, our gifts will grow.

### **#3 Timothy received a gift when Paul laid hands on him.**

The third incident of impartation to Timothy is recorded in 2 Timothy 1:6-7: *"For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God*

*did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline."*

Timothy was encouraged to stir up the gift of God that he received when Paul laid hands on him. Although no one can be sure what he received, I believe the gift may have been that very spirit of power, love and a sound mind. The other plausible interpretation is that the gift he received needed to be accompanied by a spirit of power, love and a sound mind. In my personal experience, I have found that this type of spirit is a requirement for the use of many of the gifts. In order to flow in the gifts, I need confidence, love and a sound mind.

I have often felt tremendously vulnerable when I stepped out in the gifts of the Spirit. As I mentioned earlier, whether it's preaching, praying, worship or prophecy, it is risky to flow in His gifts. Fear can stop you from praying for the sick, believing for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and asking for other miracles. The fear of public opinion, the fear of man, and the fear of failure are just a few of the most common faith crippers.

Paul didn't have a spirit of fear, praise God! I have observed, however, that too many believers (including pastors, deacons, and leaders), far from being filled with the same Spirit that filled Paul, are filled with and controlled by fear. They are afraid of finances, their mates, their kids, the devil and a host of other things. Many are more concerned with pleasing people than pleasing God.

The altars in our churches should be the most exciting, life-changing places on the planet. The spirit of fear should be broken and cast out of people. Unfortunately, since many pastors are full of fear, their flocks are full of fear. Our homes also should be among the most

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exciting and joyful of places. But many parents are full of fear; therefore, their children have a spirit of fear. Fear is not just an

emotion; it often has a strong tie to demonic activity. Even in cases where there is no demonic activity, we know that fear is the opposite of faith. And *"without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him"* (Heb. 11:6).

Pastors, deacons, elders, parents and leaders, stir up the gift of the Holy Spirit in you. Fan it into flame again.

Seek a new impartation of power, love and a sound mind. If a spirit of fear has crippled you, reject it. Don't receive it anymore. Shut the door on that thing and don't let it sneak back in. Renounce its hold over you and your family and repent for yielding to it. If fear of man has been a problem, exchange it for a healthy fear of God. Ask Him to fill you with a spirit of power, love and a sound mind.

I encourage you to apply the principle of multiple impartations to your own life. Seek them, nourish them, and pass them on to others. Open your heart, mind and spirit to new ideas, visions and the power of God. They will lead you to a life of victory and fulfillment as you are better able to serve God and other people. And please don't let fear stop you from receiving your next life-changing impartation.

### **Impartation Changes Lives**

*Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. (Acts 3:6-10)*

Peter and John recognized what they had and what they didn't

have. In this particular case they saw a man with a spoken need. The beggar wanted money to survive. Day after day, friends or family would place him at the gate, and he would spend long hours begging for money from those entering and leaving the temple. What irony: a poor, hopeless beggar at a gate called Beautiful.

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Peter and John had no silver or gold to help with the spoken need, but they had something for the unspoken need. When someone seeks prayer at the altar, I have found that they generally have a particular need in mind. They often will tell the person who is ministering to them what they think they need to receive from God. It is so comforting to know that the Holy Spirit also knows the unspoken need. In fact, His greatest concerns are the deep needs and issues of the heart.

When I was a young child I loved peanut butter and honey sandwiches. I also loved eating pure butter and spoonfuls of sugar. Thankfully, my mother insisted on feeding me a balanced diet instead of what I was asking for. It may be a simple metaphor for a complex subject, but I think it hits the point home.

When men and women go to the altar they often get something different than what they expected. Why? Because God is the imparter. He knows what we want, but He also knows what we need.

Do you remember the story of the zealous friends who lowered their crippled friend through a roof to reach Jesus? *"Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven'"* (Mark 2:2-5).

They took incredible steps to get their friend healed. Can you



imagine their frustration and surprise when He said, *"Your sins are forgiven!"*

No one in that building expected the healer to become the forgiver.

*"Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 'Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?'"* (Mark 2:6-7).

The lame man didn't ask for forgiveness. He didn't even know it was available! He didn't realize to whom his friends had brought him.

When you seek God with all your heart, get ready to be surprised by Him. Jesus doesn't want to give us just an attractive little snack.

Yes, those appetizers—health and prosperity, for example—may look appealing. But the Lord wants you to feast at His banqueting table.

Jesus Christ wants to meet your deepest needs. He wants to change

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you from the inside out, and He knows just how to do it. He wants to give us good gifts that will change us as well as others.

The beauty of this story is that Christ imparted both forgiveness of sin and healing to the man. He healed him for two reasons: first, because he loved him, and secondly, to prove he had the authority to forgive sins. *"Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'?" But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.... 'He said to the paralytic, 'I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home'"* (Mark 2:9-11).

In the past five years, we have spent hundreds of hours at altars praying for people to receive impartations. Many know what to expect. Others have a predetermined agenda. But, of course, no one can force or manipulate God to do anything. He imparts through willing servants into receptive people. The faith of the imparter and the faith of the seeker combine to tap into the promises of God.

Peter had great faith. *"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you,"* he said. What did he have? He may have had a gift of healing, a gift of faith, a gift of miracles, or all three. Whatever it was, he seemed to know exactly what Jesus had poured into his life. Did the lame person also have faith? Yes, he did. It takes faith to reach out your hand and be lifted up. If he hadn't been healed, he would have fallen flat on his face. *Miracles often require tremendous risks.*

When Peter said, *"In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk,"* he meant it. Where did he get that kind of confidence? Maybe he was drawing on the authority Christ had given to the disciples. *"I have given you authority ... to overcome all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19).*

Perhaps it was because he had been used in divine healing before. Peter had learned that when he was full of the Holy Spirit, great things happened. He had confidence that he had everything he needed to see a miracle. Do you have this same kind of confidence?

### **Tremendous Faith**

I recently had a wonderful illustration of this type of faith. I set up a luncheon with a pastor from Northern California. I had heard that he was a man of faith, flowing in the Holy Spirit.

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Weeks before this meeting, a doctor and physical therapist had given me some bad news. Due to the snowmobile accident I mentioned earlier, and the ensuing surgery, my left leg was 11 millimeters too long. There was no way they could correct the disparity, and it was already causing severe hip problems.

As we sat in a restaurant, I asked the pastor if he had ever prayed for the lengthening of a leg. He told me he had. After sharing my story, he immediately asked me to sit up straight and stretch my legs. The difference in length was clear to the naked eye. This pastor reminded

me of Peter; he was so full of the Holy Spirit and so confident. He started to pray that my left leg would shrink to its normal length, and, to my joy, it did! Right there in that pizza parlor, my left leg was returned to its original length! (I should have asked him to pray for my right leg to lengthen instead. Deep down, I always wanted to be six feet tall. Just kidding!)

My next appointment with the physical therapist became an occasion for celebration and confirmation of this incredible miracle. Upon measuring my legs, the therapist shouted, "They're the same length! What happened?"

This was just one of many opportunities I would have to testify for the Lord because of His amazing answer to prayer. My physical therapist's faith was strengthened, as was that of a young man who was in the physical therapy program. I also had the opportunity to demonstrate the healing to our entire church. Our church body has shared our trials and triumphs with us, and we have found that it is important to our growth and our faith to celebrate these victories together, giving God all the glory due Him.

In summary, seek God's face continually and be ready for His gifts to flow into and through you. In John 7:38-39, Jesus uses an illustration to explain this process: *"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."*

Rivers of living water can flow through you daily. You will not be like a stagnant swamp. You will be a continual recipient of grace, mercy, gifts and strength, and you will pour these out to others. When will your next impartation come? How about right now?

Ask Him to fill you once again.



### **Selah**

**\*\*** What are some specific ways that we, as parents and/or church leaders, can help our families and congregations become free from a spirit of fear?

**\*\*** What are some steps you will take in order to ensure that you are continually filled with the Holy Spirit?



### **Key #6: When you get it, guard it**

Eighteen years ago, my father gave me a gold watch he had received from his brother. It was a Swiss-made beauty. I will never forget the day our daughter Isabelle, just a toddler at the time, got her tiny hands on the watch and somehow managed to close the car door on it. In a split second, my little treasure had transformed a cherished gift into a shattered mess. I was heartsick. Apart from its monetary value, that watch had become a symbol of the reconciliation between my father and me. Like the watch, our relationship was valuable but fragile.

As a young couple, Denise and I did not have the money to get the watch repaired. Instead, I slipped it into my top drawer for safekeeping. There the watch silently awaited the day of its resurrection. Because it was a gift from my father, I continued to value, protect and cherish it, even though it didn't work. Fifteen years, three states and a few houses later—and just two years before my father died—I was finally able to have the beloved gift repaired. It was worth every nickel I paid, because it meant so much to me.

When something or someone is valuable to us, we naturally care for it. We protect it, improve it and invest in it. This same principle

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should be applied to the spiritual gifts and the anointing given to us by our heavenly Father.

### **They Didn't Do It Again**

In Numbers 11:24-25, we are introduced to 70 elders who received a life-changing impartation from God through Moses. *"So Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. He brought together seventy of their elders and had them stand around the Tent. Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again."*

The last six words of that portion of Scripture are among the saddest I have ever read. *"But they did not do so again."*

Why? What happened? The Bible clearly states that God took of the same Spirit that was on Moses and put that Spirit on the elders, enabling them to prophesy. But why did they prophesy only once? Why didn't they keep their new gift? They should have been able to continue walking in it, but they didn't.

Moses, on the other hand, never missed a beat. He kept right on leading. This brings up two other important points:

First of all, when God imparted through Moses, Moses didn't lose any of his gifts; he didn't have any less of the Spirit. When God imparts through you, you still have plenty of anointing left. In fact, the more you pour out, the more God will give you. (Have you noticed that God's ways are diametrically opposed to the ways of the world? God's wonderfully paradoxical system ordains that it is by giving that we receive; by risking that we find true security; by humbling ourselves that we are lifted up; and by dying that we have life.)

Secondly, for those of us who are learning to impart into others, it is a relief to realize that the failure of the elders to continue to walk in

their new anointing did not reflect poorly on Moses. It wasn't Moses' fault; nor, of course, was it God's. Nothing was wrong with the impartation.

There are many who seek anointing from great revivalists, pastors, prophets or apostles. In and of itself, it is not wrong to desire the anointing of a Claudio Freidzon, a Carlos Annacondia or a Billy

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Graham. But it is wrong—and dangerous—to seek the anointing without counting the cost. It is wrong to take the anointing lightly, to risk wasting a divine gift. We must ask ourselves, are we ready for that level of anointing? Have we prepared ourselves for the gifts we are seeking—through prayer, repentance, study, discipline, fasting and sacrifice? All the gifts of our heavenly Father are precious. Each one must be valued, protected and cherished.

During the renewal and revival that we have been experiencing at our church over the last few years, I have discovered four truths that will help you to keep moving forward with God's anointing:

#### ***#1 The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity.***

The Holy Spirit is not only a power or a force. He is God. He has character and feelings. Recognizing and believing this is one of the things that separate Christians from cults like the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons.

After we are born again, our lives begin to produce good fruit because the Holy Spirit is at work in us. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control"* (Gal. 5:22-23).

As Christians, we also begin to receive supernatural abilities or gifts because the Holy Spirit is manifesting Himself in us.

*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the*

*Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. (1 Cor. 12:7-10 NKJV).*

When we receive an impartation of gifts or anointing, we receive it from the Holy Spirit via an instrument. If we want to guard the impartation, we must recognize the imparter. We must not fixate on the man or woman through whom the Holy Spirit is imparting; he or she is only a conduit. Instead, we must invest in the Holy Spirit. Our eyes and our hearts must remain focused on Him, and our devotion must be directed toward Him. God will not share His glory with any other.

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***#2 The relationship we have with the Holy Spirit is crucial to walking in an impartation.***

We can have fellowship with the Holy Spirit. *"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all"* (2 Cor. 13:14). If we want to increase in our anointing, we must cherish our relationship with the Holy Spirit.

We must ask ourselves if, based on our behavior, thoughts and attitudes, He would want to have fellowship with us.

We must ask ourselves whether we truly desire to be close to Him.

Are we willing to do whatever it takes to cultivate a deeper level of fellowship with Him?

To fellowship with Him is to partner with Him. A partnership with the Holy Spirit has its privileges, but it also has its demands. For example, we must beware of things we can do which can damage or even destroy our relationship with Him:

***He can be grieved.*** *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,*

*with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).*

Have you ever grieved a dear friend with your words or actions? To grieve someone is to cause them to feel deep sorrow and distress. As incredible as it may seem, we can actually cause these emotions in the Holy Spirit, just as we can cause them in anyone else who loves us.

***We can rebel against Him.*** *"Yet they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit. So he turned and became their enemy and he himself fought against them" (Isa. 63:10).* We rebel against the Holy Spirit when we disobey His leading and direction.

***He can be resisted.*** *"You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51).* The Holy Spirit is our counselor and guide. He speaks to us in a still, small voice. He will not shout over our noise and busyness; He will not force His counsel upon us. He waits for us to listen, to follow, and to yield.

***He can be blasphemed.*** *"And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven" (Luke 12:10).* Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit occurs when—through continual and deliberate rejection of the voice and the witness of the Holy Spirit—one hardens one's heart to the extent that he or she will never repent. Only God is

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able to determine when this has happened.

***We can lie to Him.*** *"Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?'" (Acts 5:3).*

***We can test Him.*** *"Peter said to her, 'How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also'" (Acts 5:9).*



***#3 The depth of our intimacy with Him will be the greatest determining factor in flowing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.***

Throughout the Bible, the men and women greatly used of God were full of the Holy Spirit. One example is Barnabas, of whom it says in Acts 11:24, *"He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord."* After Saul's conversion, Barnabas was the first of the disciples to trust Saul and embrace him as a brother. Known for his generosity, faithfulness and positive attitude, Barnabas was used mightily by God.

The more we seek the Holy Spirit and are filled with Him, the more His gifts will manifest themselves through us. More importantly, there is a deep, intimate love we can only experience as we are filled with and led by the Holy Spirit. The *agape* love of God is poured into our hearts as we spend time in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

***#4 The quantity of His presence in our lives will determine the quantity of fruit and gifts.***

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 15:13).*

It sounds strange to talk about the quantity of His presence but it is such a reality to me. For many of us, a frequent and fervent prayer is, *"Lord, I want there to be less of me and more of You in my life."* I know I want more and more of the Holy Spirit. I want to be as filled as Stephen, Philip or Paul. If we, God's vessels, are overflowing with His presence, signs and wonders will spill out of us. *"God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His will" (Heb. 2:4).* He chooses how to distribute the gifts, but it is His will to fill all of us to overflowing. It is

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His will to touch a broken world through willing vessels.

It is important to learn from the seventy elders who prophesied only once. If we do not develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit, we will become like them. We are responsible for the development of our gifts and anointing. God will hold us responsible for the gifts we have received; however, He will not hold us responsible for the gifts He has given to others through us. As I noted earlier, Moses was not held responsible for the failures of the seventy elders.

The enemy of our souls would like to discourage us from pouring into others. He would like us to feel like failures. He is the accuser of the saints. He wants to weigh us down with condemnation and guilt. Don't allow him to deceive you. You are not responsible if others fail to cherish the love, care and gifts you pour into them. You are only responsible to pour freely, in faith, and leave the rest to God.

### **How Our Relationship With the Holy Spirit Can Be Hindered**

Ephesians 4:25-31 gives us a clear list:

*Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor for we are all members of one body. "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.*

Those are some of the behaviors, types of speech, thoughts,

feelings and attitudes of the heart that can grieve the Holy Spirit or hinder His work in our lives. If we are having difficulty receiving an impartation, sensing God's presence, or feeling His touch, the first step we should take is to repent. We need to ask the Lord to cleanse us; to remove anything that is getting in the way of what He wants to do in our lives. The clutter in our hearts must be cleared away to make room

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for Him.

Galatians 5:19-21 introduces us to another list of obstacles to the leading of the Holy Spirit:

*The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

The works of the sinful nature are contrary to life in the Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit fills a person, some things have to go. In the old Westerns, the classic line, "this town ain't big enough for the both of us," soon would be followed by a gunfight and one of the two cowboys would die. The Holy Spirit has the same attitude when He comes to fill us: "Sinful nature, this temple ain't big enough for the both of us." As Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, *"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price.*

*Therefore honor God with your body" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).*

Sin is exposed by the Holy Spirit; the old nature is unmasked. We have to decide who we are going to let control us: the old nature or the new Spirit. Who will rule our hearts and minds? No one can make this decision for us. God has left the choice entirely up to us.

#### **Show Me the Fruit**

A true outpouring of the Holy Spirit will produce visible changes.

Unfortunately, skeptics and immature believers have concentrated on the manifestations instead of the fruit. Didn't Jesus teach us that the only measuring stick of true revival is the fruit?

*"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:4-5)*

If you want to see examples of some true moves of God, consider those in Argentina, Canada, England, Korea, the United States and many other nations. They are producing tremendous changes. Many thousands of people are being saved, healed and delivered; and

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churches are being planted in record numbers.

Entire cities are being changed by prayer and unity. A recent viewing of the video "Transformation," which documents the mighty moves of God in several cities around the world, has inspired our church to believe for a similar move in Las Vegas. The quality and quantity of our prayer thrusts is increasing. In our Saturday night prayer meetings, our people are specific in their prayers. Together we target obstacles and tear down strongholds. We believe God for needs and He answers with miracles. The hurting are being helped. People are being healed, delivered and filled with the fire of God. Racial barriers are falling. Believers have become unwilling to settle for less than lives of obedience, holiness, and total surrender to God.

When John the Baptist sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He was the One they had been waiting for—the Messiah—Jesus responded, *"Go back and report to John what you hear and see: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear,*

*the dead are raised and the good news is preached to the poor'" (Matt. 11:4-5). So Jesus' way of answering a question about the validity of a particular move of God (in this case, the coming of the Messiah) was to list the fruits that it was producing. Godly results are always the best evidence for a true move of God.*

Personally, I can testify that since the power of God knocked me to the ground, my life has changed. Holiness is a priority in my home, marriage and heart. For instance, we have set higher standards for TV and movie viewing. Some consider us too strict, but we do not want to bring impurity into our family; we want to keep our hearts and minds clean. The Holy Spirit has also shown us emotions and attitudes of the heart—resentment, anger, pride, hurt feelings, and certain passions—that had to go if we were to continue to walk in the anointing.

The fruit of revival has become evident in the lives of our three children.

As I mentioned, our 20-year-old daughter, Isabelle, has a powerful call to full-time ministry. Even when she was diagnosed with cancer, her spirit was unbeatable. We are so grateful to God for healing her, for His faithfulness as He guided all of us through the storm, and for the good He has brought—and is continuing to bring—out of a particularly painful ordeal. We are also grateful for the love and support of the many people who prayed for her.

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Our 16-year-old daughter, Christine, who was also miraculously healed by the Great Physician, is active in various ministries of our church. She uses her lovely singing voice to glorify God, and feels particularly drawn to participate in our worship ministry and discipleship program.

Our 13-year-old son, Samuel, recently told me that instead of playing during our church's altar time—which, at some of the services,

goes on for quite a while—he wants to stay in the sanctuary and worship God or follow me as I minister to people in need of prayer. In fact, all three children have started praying for and laying hands on people who come to the altar for prayer. All three truly form part of our ministry team. And all three have been baptized in and filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe the fruit in my children's lives is largely due to impartation.

No one can tell me that impartation is not real. It is the spark that, if properly nurtured, not only keeps the fire burning, but also causes it to spread.

What effect has impartation had on our church?

First of all, there has been incredible growth in every area.

Salvations, healings, deliverances and other miracles are weekly events. In nine years, Sunday morning attendance has grown from 270 to over three thousand, and our church's income has multiplied over fifteen times. Our missions and benevolence giving has grown exponentially, and we have a vision to start two thousand churches by the year 2020. God has given us a 15-acre campus with 76,000 square feet of facilities, a Bible institute with over 150 students, a large school offering instruction for grades from kindergarten to eighth, a preschool/day care center, a weekly program for feeding the homeless, a number of support groups, a home for troubled women, and many other tools with which to touch a hurting world. New ministries and outreaches are being planted all the time. Almost on a weekly basis, we send out a minimum of three ministry teams who reach out to our own community as well as to towns and cities throughout the United States and abroad.

### **Guarding the Anointing**

The impartation we received from men and women of God has

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gloriously changed us. We've got it and we will guard it. Guarding our anointing is not passive; we have to fight for it. Daily we forgive, repent, worship, study and pray. The anointing is valuable. We cherish the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit. We don't take them or Him for granted. We are growing in our sensitivity to Him and we love it. We also have to do intense battle against the devourer. We must protect the seed so that it will not be snatched up. We fight discouragement and the lies of the enemy. We fight to win souls and keep them. We work hard and pray hard. Every inch of progress has to be won at a cost. A revival doesn't fall into your lap. It is built on the blood of Christ and of His saints.

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### **Selah**

**\*\*** Can you think of a few things you could do to improve your relationship with the Holy Spirit? (Hint: If you're having trouble coming up with ideas, try thinking of things you would do in order to become closer to your spouse, your children or your friends.)

**\*\*** Ask God to show you any changes you might have to make in your life in order to create a better atmosphere for intimate fellowship with the Holy Spirit. (Warning: Don't ask unless you're willing to do whatever He says.)

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### **Key #7: When you get it, feed it**

Jesus used this analogy to teach His disciples an important lesson about the vulnerability of the spiritual "seeds" God plants in us:

*"A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on rock, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. Other seed fell among*

thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than what was sown....This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. The seed that fell among the thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. **But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.** " (Luke 8:5-8, 11- 15. *Emphasis added.*)

This analogy clearly demonstrates how important it is for us to:

- **Prepare** our hearts for the seed;
- **Guard** it against the devil;
- **Shield** it against the environmental dangers of worries and passions;
- **Nourish** it with faith.

Although, here, Jesus was talking about God's word and the message of the Gospel, a gift of the Holy Spirit or an anointing given by God is also like a seed. The possibility of losing this kind of seed is always a dangerous reality. To grow, it too must be protected, fed and nurtured. The process of growth from seedling to fruit-producing tree is as important as the original deposit. The gift and the relationship with the giver must be carefully cultivated in order to produce fruit. The seed will grow only in an environment of intimate union with the Holy Spirit. We are called to live by the Spirit and be led by Him. Galatians 5:22-25 gives us a glimpse of what this relationship will look like:



*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

We live in the Spirit by learning to yield to Him moment-by-moment, day-by-day. We keep in step with the Spirit by learning to live a life of prayer. The Apostle Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life 127* admonishes us to "pray continually." Although this sounds incredible or even impossible, it is not.

Throughout the day, I often call my wife. Why would I do this? Just to connect with her, to tell her I love and appreciate her, or to go over our plans for the day. We have an intimate relationship that requires communication, tenderness, caring, concern, comfort, directions, and touch.

Isn't that a beautiful illustration of our relationship with the Holy Spirit? I have learned to talk to Him throughout the day, and to be sensitive to Him when He touches me or speaks to me. I often feel His presence and His approval or disapproval of my thoughts or actions. I know when I please Him and when I grieve Him. I know when my heart is hard or tender towards Him. I must admit, at times, I have neglected Him or even ignored Him. And I know others who have far surpassed my level of intimacy with Him. Every day I have to work on this relationship, but I keep at it because I am hungry for more.

Communion with the Holy Spirit is possible for anyone who is hungry for it. If we lack hunger for the Holy Spirit, we must ask God for it. We can't work to achieve it; it is a gift from God. Here are four ways to nurture our impartations and feed our hunger for God:

***1. Read books by and listen to tapes of men and women who***

***are running after God. Some examples:***

Tommy Tenney's book *The God Chasers* is a classic account of hunger for God. Tenney was guest pastor at a church in Houston when God's presence filled the sanctuary in such a powerful way people could barely breathe, and, at one point, the pulpit split in two almost as if lightening had hit. Since that dramatic encounter with the Spirit of God, Tenney has never been the same. He says, "Now I'm a God chaser. Nothing else matters anymore....When you pursue God with all your heart, soul, and body, He will turn to meet you and you will come out of it *ruined* for the world."<sup>8</sup>

*Rees Howells: Intercessor* by Norman Grubb is the biography of a man who was so desperate for close communion with the Holy Spirit that he was willing to do whatever it took to develop and nurture it. Eventually, his intimate relationship with God through prayer became a pattern for a radical generation of world-shakers. Everything Howell did was based on total dependence on the Holy Spirit. Following is *128 The Power of Impartation*

Howell's description of the initial act of unconditional surrender God required of him before the Holy Spirit could begin to work through him:

I saw Him as a Person apart from flesh and blood, and He said to me, "...I am come to ask you to give your body to Me that I may work through it. I need a body for My temple (1 Cor. 6:19), but it must belong to Me without reserve, for two persons with different wills can never live in the same body. Will you give me yours? (Rom. 12:1). But if I come in, I come as God, and you must go out (Col. 3:2,3). I shall not mix Myself with yourself."<sup>9</sup>

Through faith, Howell established the Bible College of Wales, an institution that has given birth to several famous leaders. One graduate of that college who is touching the world for Christ in our day is

Reinhard Bonnke. In his book *Evangelism by Fire*, he points out that the Spirit that empowered Elijah and Elisha has been passed down (i.e., imparted) through the ages:

The same endowment that Elisha received from Elijah was also given to John the Baptist many years later....The same Spirit that made Elijah—and Elisha—great prophets, was passed on...to John....The Spirit of Elijah, Elisha, John, the apostles, and the early church leaders has never left. That Spirit is our inheritance. We were born to belong to His company. We are on God's revival team, right alongside Whitfield, Wesley, Finney, Evans, Wigglesworth, Moody, Price, and Jeffreys....They brought the flame of Pentecost to us right from the upper room in Jerusalem. Now we carry it further....<sup>10</sup>

Reading this and other books by Bonnke is a good way to catch the fire of evangelism that burns in the heart of this great man.

## **2. *Find people who have what you want.***

Allow them to impart to you through prayer, teaching, preaching, and the written word. Go to their seminars; learn from their experiences; get a glimpse of their hearts and catch their spirits.

If you want your church to grow, you can visit Tommy Barnett's church. If you want to learn from someone to whom God has given tremendous authority over principalities and powers, you can follow the ministry of Carlos Annacondia. Do you want to develop your gifts for leadership? Try John Maxwell. Do you feel you are called to intercession? Let Peter Wagner impart into you. If you want to learn about the transforming power of citywide prayer, see what Ed Silvoso *Seven Keys to Unlock the Power of God in Your Life* <sup>129</sup> has to say about it. If you are interested in counseling, try Richard Dobbins or James Dobson. In other words, if we want meat, we go to a butcher; if we want bread, we go to a baker; fish, a fisherman; water, a well.

In Numbers 27:18-19, we are told that Joshua already had the Spirit of God. However, there was a high-water mark that God intended for him to reach. Therefore, He sent Moses to take him higher: *"So the LORD said to Moses, 'Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand on him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence.'"*

There are a few people who have helped feed and develop the gifts and anointing in my life. I have a relationship with them because God has placed them in my life, personally, and the life of our church, corporately. We need regular doses of their anointing, teachings, and impartations to continue to grow. Ask God to help you find people who will encourage and nourish your growth.

### **God Wants to Take You Higher**

Joshua had the Spirit already but he was serving a man who had more. It was God's will for him to get more wisdom. God could have just dropped it into him but, in most cases, God imparts through people. God is looking for springs who will water thirsty multitudes. Jesus said, *"Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him"* (John 7:38).

I love the old song "Spring Up O Well" that describes a river of life flowing out of us, a river that can heal the lame, restore sight to the blind and set the captives free. Oh, that these words would be true for every Christian! Unfortunately, too many Christians have failed to yield to the Holy Spirit. He is the river that springs up out of us. However, He can be stopped by disobedience and hard-heartedness. It is, after all, God's will that everyone become a fountain of His healing, anointing and power. There are many powerful fountains flourishing all over the world, some of whom have become dear friends and mentors. I am very thankful to them and pray that the

impartations I have received through them will continue to grow. But I am quite aware that they are not the source of the impartations—God is. They are simply obedient vessels used by God to pour into me.

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Those who pour into us could also be compared to the garden hoses in our backyards. The Holy Spirit is the water. He is the one we seek, the one on whom we depend for our very survival as Christians. We appreciate the hoses and are thankful that the water flows through them, but we don't glorify them.

It is my prayer that this book will serve as a hose bringing fresh water to you from the life-transforming river of God. Then, if you aren't one already, perhaps you too will become a hose for God, watering thirsty souls in order to help them survive, grow and bear much fruit.

### ***3. Feed your impartations by fasting, studying the Word, and submitting yourself to a local church body.***

Jesus said, *"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it"* (Matt. 16:18). We all need to be active parts of this divine organism that Jesus Himself is building.

In fact, in order for our gifts to flow and grow, we must find our place in the body and remain part of it. *"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others"* (Rom. 12:4-5).

Submission to the leadership of a church, and sacrificial giving of time, talents and resources are crucial elements in the process of nurturing the seeds God has planted in us. Under the proper conditions, those seeds can grow into fruit-producing trees. The local church is the ideal greenhouse for believers who want to bear much

fruit. *"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you" (Heb. 13:17).*

#### **4. Be sensitive and responsive to the preaching of the Word.**

Invest a lot of time at the altar. Become like a Jacob who would not let go of God until he received a blessing. You will never regret the time you spend waiting on God and humbling yourself at His altar. *"So, as the Holy Spirit says: 'Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert'" (Heb. 3:7-8).*

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I have noticed a frightening trend in church leadership. Many church leaders spend a great deal of time giving, but little time receiving. They spend a lot of time leading, but not much time being led. It is a dangerous phenomenon that successful leaders have fallen into.

Each one of us must be poured into on a continual basis. We must be fed spiritually. Do you have a plan to respond to this need?

Our church makes regular investments in the pastoral staff. Guest speakers come to our church to pour into our team. I encourage our leaders to be prayed for, and to attend seminars and conferences. We keep each other accountable through a buddy system. We all read books that bring us to new levels.

Personally, I am fed during my daily devotionals. Like the staff, I benefit from the guest speakers who come to pour into us; and I attend seminars and conferences to receive anointing and direction. I have a close circle of friends who go out to dinner with me once a month. I meet with a few other pastors of large churches so we can pray together and exchange ideas.

Putting this seventh key into practice is vital to your success. The anointing is not an excuse for lazy, undisciplined people. It is a gift that must be fed in order to be effective. It is, in fact, a permanent relationship that takes time, energy and sensitivity to develop. In many ways, it is a marriage—a marriage between the Holy Spirit, who is the Giver of Gifts, and us. The more you foster your relationship with the Holy Spirit, the more the gifts will flow.

There are some who criticize those of us who take this approach to impartation. They say, "Why do you have to go somewhere to receive a touch from God? I can be touched in my own city. I can even be touched in my own prayer closet!" Yes, we can be touched in our own prayer closet. I agree that it is important to develop our private communion with God. However, we are not independent of the rest of the body of Christ. We need each other. We need each other's gifts and anointings.

Sometimes, in our pursuit of God, we may find we need to take a physical step before we can make a spiritual leap. Elisha is a prime example of someone who had to literally cross the Jordan in order to receive his impartation. He persisted in his relationship with Elijah right up to the very end—walking with him, clinging to him, refusing

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to leave him—because he wanted more of that spirit that he saw in his mentor.

I can testify that traveling around the world for seminars, teachings and tools has paid off for our church, for my family, and for me. As a result of the relentless hunger for God that He has placed in me, and a willingness to go anywhere and do anything to get more of Him, I have been blessed with incredible impartations that are now bearing wonderful fruit.

A wholehearted pursuit of God requires true humility, great hunger

and a realization of our interdependence within the body of Christ.

Leaders and pastors, if you are not hungry enough and humble enough to say, "I need more and I am willing to do anything to get it," then you should either get down on your knees and pray for a change of heart or find a new occupation. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

None of us is getting any younger and the return of Christ is drawing nearer. It's time for all of us to get hungry and humble.

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### **Selah**

**\*\*** What kinds of spiritual nutrition are most lacking in your life? What are some ways you can start right now to achieve a more balanced "diet"?

**\*\*** Ask the Lord if He is satisfied with the level of intimacy between the two of you. What would He change about your relationship?

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## **CHAPTER 6**

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE MINISTRY OF**

#### **6**

### **IMPARTATION**

As far as I am concerned, receiving the power and the gifts of God is easy. He has taken care of everything. He has all the resources. The tricky part comes in the weeks, months and years that follow. I have heard of many churches divided by people who, sadly, could not properly handle the blessings of God. This chapter will present a model that comes from what may seem to some an unlikely source: Benny Hinn. This healing evangelist has been the object of a considerable amount of controversy and debate. Personally, for over twenty years, I did not care for him. However, the healing of my daughter's cancer at one of his crusades, and the relationship that



developed as a result, caused me to reevaluate my opinion. I hope that this model will help you avoid errors that many of us have made throughout the years.

I recently had the privilege of participating in a Benny Hinn crusade. During a teaching session, Benny said something that revealed one of the secrets of his success. The principles that direct and control his ministry, he explained, can be found in three chapters of Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14. As soon as he said that, I could see one of the reasons God uses him as He does.

During the weeks that followed, I studied these familiar chapters from a new perspective. As I studied, I started to apply them as guidelines for the revival our church is experiencing. I realized that even the power of impartation can be used most effectively if it is governed by these three chapters.

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1 Corinthians 12 begins with the words, "*Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant*" (1 Cor. 12:1 NKJV). The church at Corinth had its problems, but a lack of the power of the Holy Spirit was not one of them. They were abounding in the spiritual gifts.

The word *spiritual* in this verse is translated from the Greek *pneumatikos*, which can also mean "non-carnal, ethereal, heavenly, celestial, supernatural or regenerate." The word *gift* in the Greek is *charis*, and can also be translated as "grace, favor, endowment, free gift, divine gratuity, or miraculous faculty."<sup>1</sup> Now, based on that etymology, what would a church abounding in spiritual gifts look like? Well, can you picture a church where miracles, prophecy, tongues, the interpretation of tongues, healings, words of wisdom, and words of knowledge were common occurrences? I hope you can because that

was the first century church. *And it will be the end-times church.*

The church in Corinth had the power and it had the gifts, but it needed the boundaries and direction found in 1 Corinthians 12, 13 and 14. For us, I see these chapters as riverbanks for the mighty river of revival. If there are no banks to a river, it becomes a flood. A flood damages everything in its path. If a church is full of power but lacks guidelines, it will damage lives. Here are some key governing truths I discovered:

### **1. Same Spirit but different gifts.**

The Spirit of God works in and through people in different ways.

We do not all have the same gifts. The Holy Spirit deposits gifts into each believer as He chooses. " *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit*" (1 Cor. 12:4).

### **2. The manifestations of the Spirit in the church are designed to build up the body of Christ.**

"*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good*" (1 Cor. 12:7). The word *manifestation* comes from the Greek word *phanerosis*, meaning "something open to sight, visible, clear, shining, appearing openly and outwardly, uncovered, laid bare, revealed."<sup>2</sup> So, when Paul writes about the manifestation of the Spirit, he refers to the open and outward appearance of the Holy Spirit through His people.

Isn't it incredible that the Holy Spirit would clearly and visibly

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reveal Himself through us in such a manner, so that the whole body might be built up? The gifts and the power of the Holy Spirit are given to profit all. This is an important statement because it directs us to do away with public manifestations of the Spirit that are self-gratifying. There have been several occasions in our church when I had to correct people whose behavior was not edifying to the body. I did not question

whether the Spirit of God was moving on these people; however, I concluded that the way in which they were manifesting was not of benefit to others.

Pastors, do not be afraid to pastor your church through an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Teach and guide in the proper use of the gifts and the appropriate response to the Holy Spirit. It is possible to guide people without quenching the Holy Spirit.

### **3. Unity in the church.**

*The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ....so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. (1 Cor 12:12, 25).*

Unity must be taken into consideration in the ministration of the gifts. The enemy of our souls would love to bring division in Holy Spirit-filled churches. He knows that division will cripple a great move of God; he also knows there is power in unity.

The Apostle Paul said we must *wrestle* for the unity of the brethren. He said we should *"make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace"* (Eph. 4:3). Unity will not be easy. We will have to work at it. The power of God will flow through us in tremendous ways; however, we must use this same power and energy to build unity.

I am not advocating that we do away with the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit in order to placate the squeamish, the fearful, or the skeptical. We must be committed to fully Pentecostal services, but we need to be considerate of those who may be uncomfortable with and bewildered by what is for them a strange new phenomenon. I have discovered that a simple biblical explanation calms fears and clears up a lot of confusion. Do not assume that every member of the flock already knows the Word or understands it. Each

church needs a shepherd who is willing to take the time to patiently explain it. We cannot expect everyone to be at the same level of

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maturity or experience.

I will never forget the woman who came up to me after a service, and, immediately after introducing herself, declared, "I am a Baptist. I will not respond to your altar calls nor will I come forward for prayer. Nor will I lift my hands during worship. Is that OK?" I assured her she was welcome in our church just as she was. I told her I loved my Baptist brothers and sisters and confessed that I owed them a debt of gratitude, because it was members of that denomination who disciplined me.

That conversation took place in 1995. Since then, she has become a wonderful leader in our women's ministry. She even traveled with our team to India. I wish I could send you a video clip of her "before" and "after." She now feels free to be at the altar, and ministers to the needs of women and children with great sensitivity.

We must learn to build unity in the midst of diversity.

#### **4. The gift that keeps everything together: Love**

I don't think it is any accident that the "Love Chapter," 1 Corinthians 13, is sandwiched between a chapter on spiritual gifts and one on tongues and prophecy. How many times have arguments erupted between Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals; the "tongue-talkers" and those who believe this gift died in the first century. It's a shame that many Christians forget Paul's words:

*And now I will show you the most excellent way. If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. (1 Cor 13:1).*

In my personal experience, I have seen very little love enter into discussions on the gifts and their usage. The lines dividing the camps

have been clearly drawn: charismatics and non-charismatics; the river people and the non-river people; the Toronto river and the Pensacola river. It seems that people look for excuses to disagree; however, the problem does not lie in the fact that they disagree. It lies in the lack of love they demonstrate toward those with whom they disagree. It is possible, after all, to disagree agreeably. I have developed a respect for people like Jack Hayford, Billy Graham and Bill Bright who have managed to demonstrate a loving spirit in spite of being surrounded by critics and controversy. *God, please help us to respect the opinions and beliefs of others.*

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The second crucial thing we can learn from 1 Corinthians 13 is that we must administer the gifts in love. Some people seek the gifts because of the exciting or satisfying emotions associated with them. Some seek them for prestige or power; others, because of the potential for a large ministry. But our desire for and use of the gifts must not be based on pride, ambition, self-gratification, prejudice, or preference. The gifts of the Spirit function best when they are motivated and governed by love. Since, "*God is love*" (1 John 4:8), His gifts must flow from a heart of love and compassion; and the love (*agape*) that we are called to exhibit is unconditional. When we use the gifts of the Spirit with God's love, lives are changed forever.

Jesus was moved with compassion for the hurting multitudes. He truly loved the thousands who came to Him. " *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd*" (Matt. 9:39). Love and compassion should govern our desire for and use of the gifts. It is all about motives, isn't it? If we seek God with a pure heart, He will use us in world-changing ways.

Benny Hinn has had a dramatic impact on the world. I now have

grown to respect his anointing and ministry even though, for many years, I was skeptical not only of him, but of all television evangelists. It is easy to criticize those we do not know. For one thing, the view from a distance is often distorted.

The governing principles that Benny extracted from 1 Corinthians 12-14 have given me a new understanding of how we can better avail ourselves to God, becoming the type of vessels through whom He can pour. They are helping us continue to grow from glory to glory.

### **A Model for Love-based Gifts**

As I lay in bed one night in 1986, I started weeping for hurting people. Every day, they would call our church and fledgling counseling center. Their broken lives, bondage, pain, and fear moved me. I knew that somehow God would help me help these people. There had to be a way to touch more of them. I didn't have enough hours in my day nor could I find enough quality Christian counselors to meet the many needs.

As I earnestly prayed for direction, God spoke to my mind, giving me a passage of Scripture to read. I turned on the light next to the bed

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and reached for the Bible. My wife sleepily inquired what I was doing and I told her I thought God wanted me to read 2 Corinthians 5:14-21.

"What does that Scripture say?" she asked. I had to admit that I didn't know. Once I located the passage, I read:

*For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from*

*God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Cor. 5:14-21)*

I was confused by two terms used by the Apostle Paul: the *ministry of reconciliation* and the *message of reconciliation* (called the *word of reconciliation* in some translations).

During my year of Bible college, two years of seminary and eight years of personal study, I had never heard these terms. That night God gave me a vision of a biblical model to help hurting people. Through a little research, I discovered that one meaning of the word *reconciliation* means bringing peace to two parties that are at war with one another. Wow! The light of revelation filled my mind that night. God had given all of us a ministry. With His message—His Word—we were called to bring peace into people's lives.

### **Three Areas in Need of Reconciliation**

There are three areas of a believer's life that need reconciliation.

We all need peace with God, peace within ourselves and peace with others. Can you imagine being at perfect peace in these three areas of your life? Doesn't the Bible promise that this is possible for you? "*You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You*" (Isa. 26:3 NKJV). Perfect peace—what a tremendous promise!

Every man, woman, teen and child needs more peace. If anyone

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doubts that, all they need do is look at the millions of desperate people who sedate themselves daily through the abuse of alcohol and drugs.

The need for peace is so intense, many will settle for any version of it they can find, even if, ultimately, it will destroy them. If we who know the Source of true peace, learn to minister reconciliation to others, countless people will find deliverance from addictions and abuses of all kinds.

The world is full of hurting and angry people. Millions of children are sexually, physically or verbally abused. Millions of adults have been damaged by divorce, family violence, prejudice and other hardships. How many marriages and homes lack peace today? Only the Prince of Peace really knows, and only He can empower us to help people find the reconciliation they so urgently need.

Over the past seventeen years of pastoral and counseling ministry, God has revealed to me a plan for touching and healing broken lives. Love-based power and gifts will totally change the nature of our ministries.

### **The Old Model of Ministry**

The

Hurting

Multitudes

Reached by

The Gospel Become

The Saved Hurting Multitudes

The Trained Hurting Multitudes

The Busy Hurting Multitudes

The Motivated Hurting Multitudes

The Empowered Hurting Multitudes

In the old model, we see that the hurting multitudes were reached for Jesus Christ. Later, many of them were trained and began to serve in various ministries. Unfortunately, few of them were ever healed or delivered from their past. Their pain and bondages were hidden under



a religious cloak. Some of the high-profile TV evangelists who have fallen in recent years probably fit into this category.

How about you? Did you continue to suffer from past hurts and fears after your conversion to Christ? Has anyone taken the time to

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help you deal with these issues? I hope you attend a church that provides care for your soul instead of ignoring it.

Believers need to have a healthy spirit, body and soul (i.e., mind and emotions). Achieving this is not instantaneous; it requires a process, and going through that process takes time and effort. I like to use a military analogy to demonstrate this truth. As soon as new recruits arrive at their assigned military base, they begin to be subjected to a program of transformation, commonly known as boot camp. When they first get off the bus, they are not handed grenades, assault rifles, rocket launchers or the keys to a tank. They are first stripped of civilian clothing, jewelry and other belongings. Even the hairstyle is changed. The goal of the drill sergeant is to transform their character, their minds and their bodies; to turn civilians into soldiers. Only after they have endured the transformation process are they given the weapons of warfare. A new Christian, in order to become effective, also must undergo a process of transformation, demonstrated in the following reconciliation model:

#### **The Model of Reconciliation**

The

Hurting

Multitudes

#### **The Church's Mission:**

#### **Reach, Reconcile, Raise & Release**

The Saved Hurting Multitudes (**Reached**)

The Saved Healed Multitudes

The Saved Healed Delivered Multitudes (**Reconciled**)

The Saved Healed Delivered Equipped Multitudes

The Saved Healed Delivered Equipped Motivated Multitudes

The Saved Healed Delivered Equipped Motivated Involved Multitudes

The Saved Healed Delivered Equipped Motivated Involved

Empowered Multitudes (**Raised**)

The Saved Healed Delivered Equipped Motivated Involved

Empowered Commissioned Multitudes (**Released**)

Can you see the influence of love through this version of the discipleship process? Love causes us to help people through a deep process of healing and renewal. It is not a "microwave oven approach" to discipleship. You might say that it is a "slow-bake process." Are we *Guidelines for the Ministry of Impartation 141*

looking for a few warm bodies to fill our pews or a few transformed people to change our world? First Corinthians 13:4 proclaims that *"love is patient."* It takes patience to work with the hurting multitudes. Only the love of God that flows through you will heal and deliver the multitudes.

Are you moved by love to meet the needs of friends and family? Have you discovered the spiritual gifts God has given you so that you may help to equip and motivate the body of Christ? Our spiritual gifts have been strategically given to us by God. If we use them with love, healing and wholeness will flourish.

Love-based gifts and power will bring healing to the body of Christ. Healthy believers will bear much fruit. *"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:8).*

Healthy believers breed health in a church. Hurting believers breed hurt in the body. We cannot afford to ignore the pain and bondage of Christians. They need fellow believers who are equipped and full of

love. Discipleship is a love-based equipping and healing process. In my opinion, true discipleship is very rare in North American churches.

We have become too busy or too slick to offer deep healing.

The reconciled believer has attained peace with God, himself and others. He is then able to help others experience this peace. He uses his gifts to bring healing to the people who need it and want it. Can you imagine an army of reconcilers in your church? People's needs would be met by lay leaders. Your church would grow because health encourages growth. Your ministry will not remain infertile. God-breathed health always bears fruit.

This approach to ministry will help bridge the gap between the gifts and the fruits, the charisma and the character. Through the past fifty years of North American Christianity, we have often placed more value on gifts or personal charisma than on character. The Word confirms this tendency: *"The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart"* (1 Sam 16:7). If we want true revival, we must change. Our values and processes must change. Our hearts and characters must be transformed by God.

### **Revival Will Bring Growth**

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A revival will bring church growth. When God touches lives with His power, He does it for a purpose, and His purposes always come to pass. The Word of God will never return void. *"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it"* (Isa. 55:11 NKJV). Jesus Christ is the Word become flesh (John 1:14) and He is the one who baptizes in the Holy Spirit (John 1:29-34). When He sends the Holy Spirit to baptize you, fill you, or impart something to you, you can be sure His purpose for doing so

will be accomplished.

An impartation is never complete until it bears fruit. You can count on this truth. In time, it will become clear to you as the fruit of each impartation begins to show. Remember, however, that you have a responsibility to feed, protect and exercise the impartation. As healing, deliverance, power, revelation, anointing, ministry, visions and dreams are seeded into your life, realize that they may take days, weeks, months or even years to manifest. But you must hold on in faith. Don't abort these gifts before their manifestation. Remember that *"love always hopes, always perseveres"* (1 Cor 13:7).

Love is the greatest motivator of all. The Ephesian church was known for its love. *"For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you"* (Eph. 1:15-16). I like that word *all*. They loved every person, no matter what nationality, color, age or gender. Isn't this what our churches should be known for? I believe our churches should be multicultural, multilingual, multinational and multi-ethnic. True love causes us to embrace everyone. We have been called to use our gifts to reach every color, race and people group in the world. That is the heart of a God who is love. Is this your heart? Paul was so thankful for these believers that he prayed for them to receive more of the Holy Spirit. *"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better"* (Eph. 1:17). The impartation of wisdom and revelation is poured into the rich souls of love-filled Christians.

### **Love-propelled Power**

Why do we pray for the sick? Because we love them. We hurt for  
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them. Why do we pray for deliverance? Because we hate to see family

members in bondage. Why do we visit the sick or elderly? Because we are moved by God's love for them. Why do we feed hungry children? Because our hearts are broken by their misery. Why do we spread the Gospel? Because, like our Father, we love every soul. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).* Don't be enamored by the power. Be moved by God's love. *"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Eph. 4:1-2).*

## **5. Order and boundaries**

Non-Pentecostals have been accused by some of having order, but no power. Many Pentecostals have been accused of having power, but no order. Perhaps this is why we have been called "charismaniacs"! It is important to understand that revival does not produce a lack of order, only a lack of human control. In fact, order will direct the power of God, helping to keep it within the borders of His perfect will.

Without order, His power can be diluted and abused.

God places great importance on order, a fact that is clearly revealed in all creation. He designed the universe to function in perfect order. For example, He placed every planet in our solar system in a very specific orbit. A fraction of a degree of deviation could cause the destruction of our planet.

In the Old Testament, God also demonstrated His sense of order when He gave His people detailed instructions about the tent of meeting, the articles to be used for worship and sacrifice, the methods of cleansing, and even the type of dress required for the priests. If God were not a God of order, He would have said to His people, "Hey dudes, there are no rules. Do whatever you want to do, whenever you want to do it. When you worship—that is, if you should happen to get

an *urge* to worship—do what feels good to you. Just go for it." That doesn't sound like the God of the Bible. God loves us so much that He gives us clear direction for our lives and our relationship with Him.

In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul brought the church at Corinth into godly order. He showed these believers the secret of making their church into a holy habitation. In the first verse, he points them in the right

direction: *"Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that*

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*you may prophesy"* (NKJV). The remainder of this chapter deals with the proper use of tongues, prophecy, interpretation of tongues and the role of the participants.

*What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. (1 Cor. 14: 26).*

Order is established for the purpose of edifying (i.e., building up, encouraging, and uplifting) the church. And the motivation behind all the instructions, the establishment of order, and even the desire to edify the church, is love.

Dr. David Lim, a wonderful pastor, theologian, educator, friend, and the author of *Spiritual Gifts*, builds a strong case for this truth. In his analysis of 1 Corinthians 12-14, Dr. Lim concludes that the Apostle Paul was not categorizing the value of each gift; rather, he was using the principles of love and order to direct the worship and service of our great God. *"Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way"* (1 Cor. 14:39-40). In other words, he was not saying that prophecy had more value than tongues. He was saying that it brought more benefits to the body of believers because people could understand what was being said. If, however, someone so gifted were

available to interpret the message given in tongues, the gift of tongues could equally serve to build up the body.

The New Testament never abolished the need for order in the worship of our God. Nor did it recommend restriction of the power in an attempt to maintain order. We have experienced the glorious power of the Holy Spirit in our church for many years. I have discovered that the presence of His power requires me, as a pastor, to keep biblical order. Power without love is a clanging cymbal. Love without boundaries leads to lust. Order without love leads to legalism. Order without power leads to a dead church. Love without power leads to sentimentalism. We desperately need a balance of all three qualities:

- The power of God. (1 Cor. 12)
- The love of God. (1 Cor. 13)
- The order of God. (1 Cor. 14)

Let us pray for these three ingredients to be in our lives and

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churches. God will answer the prayer of a hungry heart. If these three are resident in your church, revival will continue for many years. I, for one, do not want a weekend revival. I want our church to experience a revival that lasts until Jesus Christ returns for a spotless, faith-filled church; *"a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless"* (Eph. 5:27).

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### **Selah**

\*\* Are you at peace with God, with others and with yourself? If not, what are some steps you will take to achieve that peace?

\*\* How can you yield to the Holy Spirit more?

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**CONCLUSION: "TAKING IT TO THE  
STREETS"**

Bible truths cannot remain hidden behind stained-glass windows. They are not abstract concepts with which to entertain our minds. The Word of God is living and active. Bible truths, by their very nature, must produce something. So, whenever we learn new ones, such as the seven principles of impartation, we must ask ourselves how we can apply them to our daily lives. How can we use them to reach the world outside our home? It is my hope and prayer that you will use the seven keys of this book to unlock a whole new world, a world of opportunities, challenges and victories.

I can testify that these keys have unlocked doors of ministry and relationships for me. So far, we have started four churches and adopted two others. We also have started three Bible colleges, a home for women in crisis, a school and other new ventures.

As I write these pages, I am reviewing a whole new series of doors that God has opened for us. Our ministry in India has exploded with opportunities. Recently, we conducted our first international pastors' school and held several large evening crusades there. While in India, I had the opportunity to speak to thousands of students and their teachers. Thousands were saved. Others were filled with the Holy Spirit, and pastors were anointed with the fire of God.

God has given us a strategy consisting in the worldwide establishment of two-year Bible colleges that will prepare men and women to bring in the end-times harvest. In each country where they are set up, these international training centers will equip the indigenous people and impart into them the tools, gifts, and anointing to plant churches and schools in their native lands.

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We will soon start at least three more colleges in foreign countries. We have been invited to conduct additional pastors' schools and



healing crusades in Guatemala, French Polynesia, and India. God is spreading revival around the world and we are blessed to be part of it. Wherever we go, the seven keys discussed in this book are being taught and implemented with great results. As for us, we know that, although these keys were instrumental in unlocking many doors, our endeavors would have been futile and our dreams, meaningless, if God had not led the way. His power, love, wisdom and guidance made it all possible, and I give Him all the glory.

As I mentioned earlier, God also has given us a vision to start two thousand churches by the year 2020. We call this our "20/20 Vision." In order to achieve this goal, our colleges, training centers and Bible institutes will raise up church planters, evangelists, teachers, and leaders who will be commissioned by the International Network of Commissioned Workers. We will also network with men and women, from various denominations and organizations, who have the same heart we do. We are looking for people who have "spiritual DNA" similar to ours, so that they may partner with us in this great vision. Our vision has become very defined. What about yours? What is God going to do through you? What do you have in your house? What do you have in your hands and your heart? God can use them, if you are willing to lose them.

I'm sure you have at least one little flask of oil in your house. Use these seven keys to unlock the power of God in you. He can multiply anything you have. He may have plans for you to become the next:

**\*\* \* Lillian Thrasher**, a single woman who left her fiancé to respond to God's call to start an orphanage in Egypt;

**\*\* \* Mark and Huldah Buntain**, missionaries to Calcutta who touched the hurting, the hungry and the sick with the gospel, feeding programs, schools, clinics and a hospital;

**\*\* \* Ron and Felicia Shaw**, team members with the Buntains. Felicia,

who recently passed away, started a hospital with only a shoebox full of medical supplies. It is now a seven-story, state-of-the-art facility;

**\*\* Claudio and Betty Freidzon**, a couple who have rocked Argentina with revival fire. They have expanded their vision to touch the

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world through huge crusades.

The most important aspect of learning is applying your new knowledge and turning the theory into practice. Don't be afraid to fail. Fear will paralyze the work of God in and through you. Lay hands on the sick, pray until you get an answer, believe for miracles and impartations wherever you go. Find a group of believers who will agree with you for revival. Get involved in a church where you can be disciplined and use your gifts.

Please remember that God wants to work through you in unique ways. Not everyone will have the ministry that God has given us, even if Claudio Freidzon prays for him or her. The anointing will impact people in different ways. Why? Because God knows you better than you know yourself. He will not disregard your personality. He will work with you.

He wants to use you for the benefit of the whole body. We are not clones. We are created as unique beings. The needs of the body are also unique. These differences are explained so well in 1 Corinthians 12:47:

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*

Different gifts and differently gifted people have been prepared for

various needs. This truth is also discussed in Ephesians 4:11-13:

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

Wow! When anointed believers are released to exercise their unique gifts, the body grows and matures.

As this book comes to an end, I hope you will agree with me in the following prayer:

*Oh God, please use these keys to unlock your power in and through every person who reads this book. Give them an insatiable*

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*hunger for more of You. Empower them to live sacrificial and supernatural lives.*

Now it's time to start putting these principles into practice: How can you start imparting this week?

- Teach a Sunday school class. Every word will be a seed in someone's heart and soul.
- Lay hands on the sick.
- Pray for people who hunger for the Holy Spirit.
- Anoint someone with oil.
- Desire spiritual gifts and step out in faith as God leads.
- Comfort and love an elderly person who needs a touch.
- Encourage your family with kind words and loving touches.
- Coach a Little League team.
- Tutor a student with challenges.
- Pray with your children and your spouse.
- Feed the homeless.

- Give a helpful or inspirational book to someone.
- Send a card or letter to a friend.
- Reward faithful service.

These are all practical ways of imparting. If God can take even a little sack lunch and feed five thousand. He can take these small acts and spark a revival. There are so many ways God can impart through you. Be creative. Be bold. Be a vessel.

Now, do you believe God can use you? I do. If you would like to be trained for this end-times revival, the following options are available through ICLV:

➤ **Master's Commission Las Vegas** is a powerful two-year discipleship and Bible institute program that, through classes and hands-on training, will prepare you for revival ministries all over the world.

**\*\* The International Bible College of Las Vegas** will prepare you theologically and practically for full-time ministry. Perhaps it will inspire you to become part of the 20/20 Vision.

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➤ Completion of ICLV's online program of Bible courses and revival training is slated for early 2002. If you are interested in our programs but are unable to move to Las Vegas, education via the Internet could prove to be a helpful option.

## **OTHER RESOURCES TO HELP YOU GROW IN LEADERSHIP, COUNSELING, AND THE POWER OF GOD**

**By Paul M. Goulet**

*The Reconcilers Series* was designed to equip pastors and church leaders to bring healing to broken people. This Biblical counseling and helps model will transform your team and help them become more fruitful.

*The Maturity Series* is a Sunday school curriculum and small group study tool. The small booklet format will help participants grow in spiritual, emotional, and relational health.

*Jesus I Want to Know Him* is a dynamic book that will help you know Jesus more intimately, experience His power more explosively, and partner with Him even through seasons of suffering and trials.

A full range of Pastor Goulet's sermons and teachings are available on videotapes and audiocassettes. For a list of resources, please visit our web page at: [www.iclv.com](http://www.iclv.com) or send for our catalog by writing to us at the following address:

**International Church of Las Vegas**

8100 Westcliff Drive

Las Vegas, NV 89145

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Paul M. Goulet, *Reconcilers* (Las Vegas, Nev.: Reconciliation Training Ministries, Inc., 1988). *Reconcilers* is a biblical counseling and discipling series used to equip caring church leaders. For more information or to order the series, call the International Church of Las Vegas (ICLV), (702) 242-2273. *Reconcilers* may also be ordered through the ICLV website at [www.iclv.com](http://www.iclv.com).

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## **Chapter Five**

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The Hebrew word translated as double is *shanyim* meaning "two, both, a couple of, twain, or double." The word translated to English as portion is the Hebrew *piy-* (from another Hebrew word, *peh*, one of the meanings of which is "part or portion"). Finally, the single Hebrew word translated to English as the three words of your spirit is *baruwchakaa*. In the middle of this word we find the base word *ruwach* (also transliterated as *ruwach*), meaning "wind, breath or spirit." (The information for this word study was provided by *Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and*

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## THE POWER TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

The *Power of Impartation* could change your life forever. Jesus prophesied that the believers in Jerusalem would receive power after the Holy Spirit came upon them. The Apostle Paul told the Philippian church that he wanted to be more intimate with Jesus, the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings.

Do you have this type of power in your life? You can!

In fact, I declare to you that God wants you to have the power of Jesus Christ in your life. This book will help you experience it and pass it on to others. Get ready for a spiritual revolution that will transform you, your family, church and world.

### DO YOU WANT:

- Power to Heal?
- Power to Preach?
- Power to Win Souls?
- Power to Walk in a New Anointing?

### THEN THE POWER OF IMPARTATION IS FOR YOU!



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Paul Goulet is the senior pastor of International Church of Las Vegas in Nevada. After graduating with an M.A. in Psychology and Pastoral Counseling in 1984, he started a ministry for hurting people. God anointed these efforts and birthed counseling centers, books, a radio program, seminars and conferences.

In 1992, the Holy Spirit led he and Denise to pastor a young church in Las Vegas. Since this bold step, the church has grown to over 3,000 in attendance as the power of God revolutionized the services. Pastor Goulet and Denise are being used around the world to reach men and women for Christ, to bring healing to broken lives, and spread revival.

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