

COMING OUT OF DARKNESS

CHAPTER 12

God's Concept of Hell

I find it so sad that two of the most wonderful revelations in the Bible (salvation and hell) are not understood by most Christians. The understanding of the salvation of all, when seen in the light of the revelation of the Spirit, will absolutely change forever your carnal thinking about salvation. Discovering that salvation is entirely a work of God through grace and not human intervention is one of the most wonderful experiences you will ever have.

The proper understanding of hell is also a wonderful thing when understood with the mind of the Spirit. Hell is certainly real and not something we would like to experience. However, when you understand God's concept of hell, even though your natural carnal Adamic mind says, "No way," and greatly fears the fires of God, your inner man rejoices, knowing that when the carnal man is thoroughly purged and is no more, then Christ in all of His glory will be revealed and manifested in His temple, which temple *you* are.

The teaching of hell, as the traditional religious systems teach it, has caused much torment and sorrow in the hearts of God's own people. How many have lost loved ones who never accepted the religious teachings and think they are going to suffer in torment throughout all eternity? How sad to think that there is no hope beyond the grave for those who have never submitted themselves to God.

Daddy, What If . . . ?

Our dear friend Charles Slagle recently wrote a little booklet we published called *Daddy What If . . . ?* In it, he shares how fear of hell was implanted on him as a child. He writes:

It was the year 1958.

"Daddy."

"What, son?"

"After we die, do we all really have to stand before God?"

"Yes, son. The Bible says all of us will have to stand before God and answer for all we have done."

My heart pounded. I was nearly twelve years old, the "age of accountability". At least that was what most people in my church believed. But we were often told it could be far younger.

I shuddered inside, staring straight ahead as my dad and I drove down the highway. As the telephone poles, the fields and trees whizzed past us at sixty miles per hour, I hardly noticed them.

I glanced at my dad. As he steered the pickup he seemed . . . cheerful? He was whistling again. It was one of his favorite gospel songs, "Victory in Jesus".

"Daddy."

"Yes, Charles?"

"What if we do something wrong and get killed all of a sudden before we can ask forgiveness?"

"The Lord has to send us to hell, son. For no sin will enter heaven."

"But what if we fall on our knees and beg and plead for mercy and tell Him we're really sorry and we'll never do it again?"

"Nope. It won't work, son. After this life, if you aren't ready for heaven, you'll have to spend eternity in the lake of fire. God loves you, son. But he hates sin, and the only time for forgiveness is now."

My dad continued whistling and I stared at the highway rushing toward and beneath us.

"Daddy."

"Yes, son?"

"Is Jesus coming soon?"

"Oh yes, I really believe He is, son. Don't you remember that newspaper headline I showed you back at the cafe where we ate? It said in big bold print: **PEACE AND SAFETY**. The Bible says that when men begin to declare 'peace and safety', sudden destruction will come."

"I wish I had never been born."

(Charles & Paula Slagle, PO Box 211447, Bedford, TX 76095)

Saved By Grace, But . . .

I was taught in the Pentecostal religion that you were saved by grace, but if you backslid and died without forsaking your

sin, even though you had been saved by grace you would have to spend eternity in unending torment in hell. I was in a Pentecostal holiness meeting one time and the preacher, making an invitation to come to Jesus, said, "I know that there are some of you here, that as you come to receive Jesus you will be saved. But some of you will immediately go outside, light up a cigarette and be right back more a child of hell than you were before you came to the altar." This is the doctrine taught by Arminianism.

Arminianism teaches that although you are genuinely saved, if you are not careful, you can lose it. And it doesn't matter the reason. You can be entrapped by the devil. We all know we have an enemy. Most Christians use the devil as a fall guy, but we do have an enemy. We have a mind that is anti-christ and we have no guarantee, according to Arminianism, that once we are saved we are really saved. We really don't know our destiny until we die. Because even though we are saved, and we've experienced God, we always have to be careful, because if we die in a backslidden condition, if we die with any unrepentance in our life, then God will throw us into hell and we will burn eternally forever and forever in unending torturous agony. Even if you are filled with the Holy Ghost and speak in tongues, you always need to be on your guard, because if there comes a day when you backslide, then you may spend eternity in hell. You may be a Christian for ninety years and have this happen to you. You have no guarantees with the doctrine of Arminianism. (Some people refer to this as "once saved, hardly saved".)

Once Saved Always Saved?

The other side of the doctrine of Arminianism is the doctrine of eternal security, called Calvinism. This is the Baptist doctrine of once saved, always saved. Calvinism says that once you are saved, you are eternally saved and there is absolutely nothing you can do to ever lose that salvation. However, the back side of it is, that if a Calvinist backslides and gets into sin and unrepentance and dies, then Calvinism says they weren't really saved in the first place. So there goes your eternal security right out the door. If you're really genuinely saved, you are eternally secure. But if you ever backslide, and get into sin and die, you weren't really saved in the first place.

The thing about Calvinism and Arminianism is that there is a thread, a grain of truth in them, but there is a bridge that should be built between Arminianism and Calvinism because there is some truth in both of them, as we shall see as we go on in this message. The good news of Christ's total victory cannot be found in the doctrines of Arminianism or Calvinism.

Absolute Assurance

I would like to quote from another book by Charles Slagle called *Absolute Assurance in Jesus Christ*. He says,

Christ brought us ALL back to God through his own blood shed at Calvary. He came to earth for this purpose, to destroy the devil's deceptive works and to save that which was lost. Eventually our Lord will fulfill His purpose and inherit all that he paid for. That is because God is holy love, and love means commitment. God's commitment is stronger than our weaknesses, our foolish choices, our

stubbornness, our sin. For if God's commitment to us is only as strong as our commitment to Him, perish the thought, that means He is no better than we are. God's fires of purifying judgment are unrelenting, though not of endless duration. Contrary to tradition but not Scripture. So He persistently and patiently corrects us until He succeeds in redeeming us. For our heavenly Father's judgments are not from vindictive rage but from His loving mercy. He loves us too much to let sin and death destroy His dreams for us. Christ's death on the Cross demonstrates the depth of God's love as well as His commitment to destroy sin and death. It shows us that through His own hurt and agony, the Lord is absorbing all the death dealing abuse of our sin and will swallow it up into His life as He saves us.

The Lake of Fire Purifies

Let's look at some of the Scriptures that theologians have used to put the fear of eternal hell in people. I simply want to say here that the Scriptures in the original language did not teach eternal or never-ending punishment. (An excellent booklet on this subject, *Just What Do you Mean . . . Eternity?*, can be ordered at no charge from J. Preston Eby, PO Box 371240, El Paso, TX 79937-1240.)

I think nearly all of us are surprised when we find out that we will all go through the purifying fires of the lake of fire. Jesus said, **"For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt"** (Mark 9:49).

Revelation 21:7, **"He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."** What is an overcomer? An overcomer is one who

has overcome. We are now in the process of overcoming, but most of us have a long way to go. We can't judge people who are overcoming because we see faults and blemishes and hang-ups in them, because they are still in the process of overcoming. So he speaks here to those who will overcome. This is when the books in heaven are opened. Do you remember what Paul told the Corinthians? He said, ***"Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart"*** (2 Cor. 3:3).

Do you realize that you are an epistle, you are a book, right now being written, and someday the books will be opened, which simply means that everything that you are will be opened and will be exposed?

What is the book of life? We are living epistles, written in the book of life, which means that the Spirit of God in me has written His covenant on the tables of my heart. Ezekiel 26:36 says that God will take away your stony heart and give you a heart of flesh, and will cause you to walk in His statutes.

All Will Go Through Fire

Let's continue with Revelation 21:7, **"He that overcomes shall inherit all things and I will be His God, and he shall be My son."** Verse 8 says **"but"**, and this is a big "but", **"But the fearful . . ."** I would ask you if you are ever fearful, because the above verse says that overcomers have overcome all things. They are no longer in any kind of defeat or failure, but they are walking as those who have

overcome all things and they inherit all things.

Are you ever in fear over your future? Are you ever concerned or in fear over what might happen to you when you are not able to work any longer? That's fear. Any kind of unbelief, or having no confidence in God's ability to keep you and save you is fear. **"The fearful, the unbelieving."** Do you ever have doubts and unbelief? If so, you may be in the process of overcoming, but you are not yet an overcomer. Therefore, you are going through the fire. **"The fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, the murderers, the whoremongers, the sorcerers, the idolaters and all liars shall have their PART in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."** So, if you have any of these areas in your life that you have not yet overcome, you are going into the fire. Some are going through it now and some will go through it later. That's exactly what it means. Everyone is going to be salted with fire until there is nothing left of their carnal Adamic nature.

The root word of fire is *pur*, from which we get our English words pure, purifying, and purge. Each will have their part in the purification process. So if you are an overcomer, you will inherit all things. You will have no part of the second death. You'll be walking fully in the glory and the manifestation of your God. But if you have not overcome, if you have fear, if you have any unbelief, if you have anything in your life that is not according to godliness and holiness, you will have your part in the lake which burns with fire for purification.

Fire Burns the Dross

You have to understand God's concept of fire. The fire of God, as far the New Testament is concerned, began on the day of Pentecost. It says that they were baptized in the Holy Ghost and they saw tongues of cloven fire. The day of Pentecost was when the fire of God began. The fire of God has one purpose, and that is for purification and cleansing. That's what the word *pur* means—purify, cleanse, make pure.

If you throw precious metals into the fire, gold, silver and precious stone, and they have anything connected to them such as wood or dross, the fire will simply purify the gold, the silver and the precious stones. Are we not told over and over that we are living stones and that we have the redemption of God, representing the silver, we have the gold, representing His divine life, and the precious stones, representing transformation?

So when you are judged, if you stand before God and still have fear and unbelief and you still have not overcome, the only thing that happens is that you will get salted with His fire. You have your part in the lake of fire. The Bible calls it a lake of fire because in the beginning the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit and fire and that fire grew from the day of Pentecost until it became a lake of fire in the book of Revelation.

Have you ever heard these words: ***"And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire"*** (Heb. 1:7)? His ministers are a flame of fire. The Lord told Jeremiah, ***"Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my***

words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them" (Jer. 5:14).

Once we understand that the fire of God is for correction, purging, and purifying, we can see that the lake of fire will only destroy that which is not of God. Right now, we are all in the fires of purification. I have felt this fire many times and I am sure I will again. Whenever your heart turns away from the Lord, He turns up the fire. We are so blessed to be going through the fire now. ***"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God"*** (Zech. 13:9).

"As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD" (Ps. 83:14-16). You can see in this verse that the fire of judgment is to cause men to seek the Lord.

The purifying fires of hell are taking place in me right now, and you can be sure that you also will go through the fires of purification. Jesus taught torment. If you have an unforgiving heart, you will be turned over to the tormentors. I believe in torment. I believe in horrible torment, but it is not eternal, because God's judgment and His heart toward me is for correction, for reproof, and for purification, but He is never vindictive, hateful or vengeful.

A lot of misconception and misunderstanding has come from the mistranslation in the book of Revelation

that says that the punishment in the fire is for ever and ever. I'm not going to explain that to you in this message, but I will say this, if you read J. Preston Eby's book called *Just What Do You Mean . . . Eternity?*, it will do a much better job than I could ever do to explain that the word in Revelation which is translated "eternal" does not mean everlasting and unending. Preston proves to you by taking you through the Bible that that word always means a period of time, with a beginning and an end, although in some cases it can be of a long duration, even ages upon ages.

One of the examples that is used is that in the Old Testament, Jonah said when he was in the belly of a fish, ***"The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever"*** (Jonah 2:5-6). There are more illustrations in Eby's book that will fully reveal to you that the word eternal is a mistranslation by the translators of the Scriptures.

The Doctrine of Eternal Torment

The eternal torment doctrine became ingrained by means of the Catholic church. Most of you have heard of the horrible degradation and the darkness when the whole world went into Catholicism. The teaching about eternal torment was brought into the church to keep the people in bondage to their religion.

My wife, Carol, was in a convent about thirty years ago. She wanted God desperately and she thought that because she was raised a Catholic, then to be

really godly, she needed to be a nun. So she was in a convent and she prayed and sought after God every day, and one day she heard the audible voice of God say to her, "You need to leave this place." So she went to her mother superior and told her that she had heard God speak and that she was leaving the convent and they immediately told her, "If you do this you will go to hell."

This teaching of eternal torment was never in the mind of God and it was never in the original language of the Scripture. However, it is in almost all of the translations, and the concordances. Most of them, including Strong's, will tell you that the word *aion* means eternal, but that is not true. You have to understand that most of the translations that we have today, including the concordances, have come out of the religious influence of Catholicism.

Do you realize that every denomination today is a descendant from Catholicism? Revelation talks about Mystery Babylon who has many daughters, well, they are all a result of coming out of Catholicism.

God started with Martin Luther to bring some truth and revelation, and separated a group of people and brought them out of Catholicism. That was the very beginning of God recovering His people back to some of the truths that you are hearing today. So if you were alive on the earth when Martin Luther came on the scene and you weren't a Lutheran, you were flat out missing God if you were not listening to and accepting the doctrine of justification by faith. In those days, if you did not leave the Catholic church, you were not hearing God, because Martin Luther fully exposed all of those dark, dreadful teachings.

Today it's not so good to be in a traditional Lutheran church, because God has gone far beyond the scope and vision of Martin Luther, yet the traditional Lutherans have not advanced beyond what Martin Luther gave them.

So generation after generation, God would call people out of Catholicism, and then He began to call them out of Lutheranism, and then out of Calvinism. Now He is beginning to call them out of Pentecostalism, and the final call is to come out of all religions, all denominations, all carnal religious ideas, and come to Him. We are in the closing of one age and the ushering in of a new.

The Age of Laodicea

Most of Christianity today is in what Revelation calls Laodicea. This is the church that says she has so much, but actually has very little. She says, "Jesus lives in me," and yet she lives like the devil. She says, "I love you, but only as much as you love me. I love you and I'll help you, but the moment you are a little bit ungrateful, the moment you say something I don't agree with, I no longer like you."

That's the Christian system of today. It's the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. I can be very good. I can be very loving to you, until you do something against me, then all my love for you and all the good things I've done for you turn to resentment. Then I say, "Lord, how could they ever do that to me?" The thing of it is, the person who mistreats you, they will get the fire, but when you judge them and when you are critical and you can't love them regardless, then you get the fire too.

God is going to purify our heart motives and our attitudes. If someone does you wrong and you are resentful and unforgiving toward them, even if you are 100% in the right and they are 100% in the wrong, if they cause anger, bitterness and resentment to rise up in you, that is simply a sign to you that you need the fire.

Making Right Choices

We must learn forgiveness. These things are not a matter of feeling, because if you have resentment, you can't help it. If you hate someone, that's Adam. You can't help it, but you can make the choice to not do it.

We get faith and belief all mixed up. You do not have to feel like forgiving someone to forgive them. Forgiveness is a choice and a decision you can make. If you will make that from the heart, even though you don't want to, if you will make the right decisions, you will find that eventually your emotions will follow your decisions. That's what real faith is.

Believing something is not faith. Believing is to be able to look at the promises of God and just believe Him regardless of how you feel. Maybe you are in a miserable, sinful condition, but you believe with all your heart that God justifies the ungodly. I came to a point in my life where I really believed that, and I was still very ungodly, but I believed it. I heard it with my spiritual ears, not just read it with my intellect, but I believed that God justifies the ungodly, and I began to speak like that and I began to think like that, I began to meditate in the wonderful ability of God to justify me, the ungodly, and guess what happened? My emotions, my feelings, and my experience lined up

with what I believed. I made the choice to believe what God said, rather than what I experienced.

This is how you experience genuine faith. Only God can give you that. You can't work it up, but you can make right choices and right decisions. You can choose to forgive someone that has wronged you and tomorrow the hate and resentment will rise up again, but you make the choice to disagree with these feelings and stand against the Adamic nature that is rising up in you, and choose to forgive them. In the magnificent name and nature of Jesus, you forgive them and command the feelings of resentment and bitterness to die at the root. Guess what happens? You are speaking to the rock. This is how you overcome.

Revelation says about the overcomers that they overcame by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. What are you testifying to? For years as a Christian, my testimony was this: "I love God, but I'm full of lust. I love God, but I love cigarettes. I love God, but my experience is this." I was sowing mixed seed, but then I realized that overcomers overcome not by doing, but by seeing.

It takes a revelation to become an overcomer. You have to see that you overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of your testimony. Well, what is your testimony? I stand justified before God, not because of my conduct, but because of what He did. When He said, "Father forgive them," I just need to understand and include myself in His forgiveness. I overcome by understanding that the blood that was shed absolutely annihilated my sin.

Here's another good point about eternal torment. Most people would agree that Jesus suffered the penalty for our sin. Is that not the Christian teaching? Well then if He suffered the penalty for our sin and that penalty was eternal torment, then He would have to be eternally tormented to pay for that sin because He is bound by His word. We overcome by revelation, by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony.

Speak to the Rock

I don't always feel victorious. Things still rise up in me that are not godly. You know, once in a while, I even get angry with my wife. Those things are from Adam, but when that happens, I very quickly speak to the rock and I am thankful that though I get angry, it dissipates in a split second. Sometimes it takes longer than that, but the point is this: No matter how deep into the throes of anger and resentment you get, you must learn to speak to the rock, speak to the seed of God that is on the inside of you. Have you ever thought of that? You have the seed of God on the inside of you and you need to water that seed. We're always wanting someone else to water the seed, but *you* need to learn to speak to the seed.

I know that the seed of God is in me. Therefore, by all the authority and the power of the Spirit of God, I command the seed of God in me to arise and to take dominion over the works of the flesh. I bow myself and I give the seed of God, the Spirit of God in me, permission to do whatever it takes to transform me into a child of God, into a son of God. I don't agree with the anger. Even if I have it, I don't have to agree with it, but you know what, I don't have to feel bad when it's

there either, because that's Adam. I never feel bad when I miss God. I never feel bad when I'm angry with my wife, but I am quick to repent and I am quick to speak to the rock. There is no way that you can enter into the presence of God and be angry with anyone. If you do, then you are fooling yourself. Anger and God's presence do not mesh. So whatever arises within you, learn to speak to the rock, speak the truth to the rock, and make the choice to forgive and drop the resentment, and have the eyes to see, and know that as you believe and as you confess, so shall it be.

Believing and Confessing

God's principles always work without fail. One of God's principles is this: Romans 10 says that if you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth, you will be saved. That's how you know that you are saved. You believe in your heart and confess with your mouth and what happens? You are regenerated and you begin to experience the Spirit of God energizing and quickening you. Faith works, whether it is positive or negative. If you believe in your heart that you are a failure, you'll never make it.

I often said that I would have a cigarette in my hand when Jesus returns. That was my confession. I believed it with all of my heart, so what I reaped from that was that I smoked for 13 years as a Christian. I knew that I could never stop on my own, but when I began to grasp hold of what I am telling you, I began to believe in the overcoming power of God, and I began to speak to the rock and I began to take dominion over the power of nicotine in my life. It didn't happen overnight, but by speaking to the rock and believing in God, and believing those things I could not see,

believing in them anyway, there came a day when that desire absolutely dissipated. After 13 years, my struggles ended.

This is one example of many in my life that took place by believing in the power of the blood and the word of my testimony, regardless of my experience, that brought to me the reality of all of those things that I had wanted for years. Whatever you believe, you will speak, and whatever you speak, because you were created in the image of God, will happen. Because you are from the very substance of God, therefore whatever you believe, you speak, and that will be your experience. Positive or negative, it works. That's why people use positive confession in the wrong way to reap all kinds of material gain. If they really believe that teaching and confess it, guess what happens? It works for them. It doesn't necessarily mean that they are godly, because the principles of God can be and are misused by the majority of Christians.

The key is: God, purify me. At any cost, purify me. The cost is very severe at times. That principle is also applied in Matthew 11, where Jesus told His disciples that if you say unto this mountain, "be thou removed," and do not doubt in your heart, but believe that that which you say shall come to pass, you shall have whatsoever you say. That's what the doctrine of the word and faith movement was built on. Name it and claim it. You set your hope and belief in God and that causes faith to be built in you. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Because of the age that we are being ushered into, we will have all of the realities of these things.

A lot of the things that Jesus said, are not to be taken literally. I don't believe that He meant that the mountain would be picked up. I believe He was talking about the insurmountable problems in your life. Speak to the circumstances in faith, and sometimes without any evidence or feeling, just speak in faith and those mountains will be dissipated. There is no way that a godly person is not going to suffer in one way or another. You are going to suffer continually. Anyone that is godly is going to be hurt and going to suffer, but it's okay to be hurt. I'm not saying that you should not have these feelings, just know that it is okay and that you need to make the choice of unconditional love. If you can love unconditionally those who are hurting you, they will be your dearest of friends, but it takes some time.

We are taught that we should not resent, and that we should not harbor bitterness. We know that, but what we haven't known is that our feelings do not matter, but what does matter is our choices. I choose to forgive you, I don't feel like it, I'm so angry with you, but I know that God's heart is to restore you and for me to forgive you, and I make that choice. Eventually your feelings will line up with your choices.

Calvary Is All-Inclusive

There is no way really that you'll come to an understanding what I've shared with you here without seeing the magnitude of Calvary's victory. If you do not understand that Calvary paid the price for every act of disobedience, you cannot love unconditionally. You cannot love yourself unconditionally and you cannot love anyone else until you understand that God loves that way. You will portray whatever you believe God to be.

God is big enough. Calvary's price covered all of mankind, and when you really understand and have that revealed to you, you will enter into the heart of God and then you'll be able to have the same unconditional love for everyone that He has. If you don't see the extent of Calvary's victory, you won't have that kind of love. You will no doubt hear a lot of things contrary to what I have just written, but I believe that there is a solid enough foundation laid here that even though it may get covered up, the seed will be sure to grow. It is done. Other people will come in and they will have a limited scope and a limited forgiveness and you'll be able to pick it up right away. That doesn't mean that you shouldn't listen to them, just realize that they don't understand, and it's okay. Only God can unveil and reveal His heart to humanity. He will, but not everyone can see it yet, it's just not time. I know that this is one of the reasons God is sending me out today.

Jesus said a wonderful thing to His disciples: He said that it has been given to them to understand the mysteries of the kingdom. God has a people on the earth today who are prepared and who will understand what His ministers speak. They have already been prepared and they have ears to hear and understand. That's why the word today is being released across the world, because you have been prepared to hear it. Your mind may tilt and you may try to run this through your mind for a long time, but it's okay. When we understand that this whole thing is God's responsibility and it's His workmanship, and that He is the author and He is the finisher, we begin to put all of this stuff together and we understand that the steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord. You begin to see this whole picture. When you begin

to see the scope of this thing and the intricacies of the details that He works out, it's awesome. Everything is in God's hand.

I would like to end with a quote from the anointed pen of J. Preston Eby in his December 1996 Kingdom Bible Studies. He writes:

It seems wonderfully significant to me that in the closing pages of the book of Revelation, when the Spirit of God reveals the final and ultimate revelation of God to creation through the glorious city of God, the very last message proclaimed is this. "And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that hears say, come. And let him that is thirsty say, come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Remember before these words were spoken there was a great white throne judgment. Multitudes were cast into the lake of fire. Our God is a consuming fire. The fire of God is God's glory. Only the Holy Spirit can make this real to us, but a person under deep conviction is tormented. Tormented with what? He is tormented with the fire of God's Holy presence, the fire of His penetrating, burning word. He has no peace or rest day or night. His conscience troubles him continually. When you and I were under deep conviction for our sins and past life, we were tormented by the Holy Spirit, the presence of God. And we had no rest day or night. I have seen men literally run out of meetings to escape the convicting presence of God. When we were finally broken by the Holy Spirit's dealing and repented and came to Jesus for mercy, we cried and shed many bitter tears of remorse and regret.

The smoke of their torment rises day and night. The fiery dealings of God are upon the proud, the rebellious, the blasphemers. Is judgment the last word? Is the lake of fire the concluding word? Is the torment of the damned the final word? No! Is there no escape? **"Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely!"** That, my beloved, is the last message. That is the final word. And for how long shall this cry continue? For as long as the torment lasts. "And they shall be tormented day and night unto the ages of the ages." "And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there." Those gates shall always be open. The day of grace never ends! Should grace end it would mean the destruction of God himself, for he is all goodness. God's goodness and grace and glory shall follow...and flow until the last poor hungry and thirsty soul has marched out of the lake of fire and come through the portals of the city to partake of the GREATEST GLORY OF GOD— HIS GOODNESS, HIS CHRIST, HIMSELF.