

COMING OUT OF DARKNESS

CHAPTER 5

The Mystery Of The Gospel

Coming Out of the Wilderness

We have all been in the wilderness, and there is an awareness today that something is about to break upon the scene, that the Church truly is going to come out of the wilderness. What I carry within my heart more than anything else in these days is the desire that God's people would have the love of the Father revealed to them.

The Unveiling of the Father's Heart

We have all experienced the Father's love to a degree. But *for the Church to come out of the wilderness, we must have an unveiling of the Father's heart.* Though I experienced a revelation of the love of God when I was first saved, at times this takes place in a more special way. There have been times in my life over the last 25 years, and there are still times even now, when the presence and the essence of God is so lovely and so wonderful that I sit and weep and weep in the love of God. Even though you have experienced the love of God, there continues to be an unveiling of how great that love is.

Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 13:11, *"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them [the multitudes] it is not given."* To you it has been given. How can we understand that? Many times I have asked God, "Why is it that I have this burning desire, and this love in my heart—why is it that everything within my being cries to be conformed to the image of God?" And the only answer I have ever been given is, "Because to you it has been given. You haven't worked for it. You haven't

been good. In fact you *can't* be good enough for it, but *to you it has been given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God.*"

The Mystery of the Gospel

When you read Paul's writings, he speaks a lot about the mystery of the Gospel.

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Rom. 16:25).

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (1 Cor. 2:7).

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:9-10).

Can you be a part of this? If we take these verses literally, then *there is hope for every one of us.* In the fullness of times, God will do this, because He is sovereign, because He is El Elyon, the Most High God, the supreme Ruler of the universe, and He has purposed in himself to bring all things into one in Christ. If you receive the Word of God literally, you have great hope, because there will come a day in your experience when *you will fully reveal and manifest to the world the glory of your Father God.*

When is this going to happen? Well, in one sense of the word, we could say that it has already happened. When were you put into Christ? I might say that it happened for me in 1969, when I heard the Gospel for the first time. I was raised in a church, one of our mainline denominations, but when I was 29 years old I was still going to church seeking for God, when someone told me the simple Gospel—that this God who I thought I served, the God I had been searching for all my life, all He wanted was for me to simply open my being to Him and receive Him as Lord, and then I could experience Him. And when I did that, I experienced being in Christ.

I could spend hours telling you of my experiences during the first few days. I knew that I had been placed into Christ, and everyone around me also knew it, not because I immediately went out and preached the Gospel, but because my life changed. Without my saying a word, the people I worked with began to say to me, "Gary, what's wrong with you?" I was not the same. To them, it seemed like there was something wrong with me!

In 1969, I entered into the awareness of being in Christ, but you know what? That's not when it happened! The Gospel plainly declares to us that *we were placed in Christ at the cross of Calvary*. Can you believe that? First of all, can you believe it for yourself? And then, can you believe it for those around you?

"How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" (Eph. 3:3-4).

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To

the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:9-11).

"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:32).

"Pray for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel" (Eph. 6:19).

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints" (Col. 1:26).

The mystery of the Gospel was made known and revealed unto the early Church, especially by the Apostle Paul. After His resurrection, Jesus spent 40 days with His disciples, teaching them things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. That's why, on the day of Pentecost, a mere handful of people could turn the world upside-down. Some of them had spent 3½ years with Jesus Himself, and by the words that He spoke, He had put into them the revelation of the Kingdom of God.

The Essence of the Gospel

And you know, we as the Church are still waiting for the Kingdom of God, aren't we? Not realizing that the Kingdom of God is here! Although you might say it this way: "The Kingdom is here, but not yet." The Kingdom of God is here in the sense that God will, by the power of His Spirit, enable you to bring your whole being into subjection unto Him. That's the Kingdom. *The Kingdom of God is simply the rule and the reign of His Spirit*. But since that first period of revelation,

first by Jesus and then by the disciples, so many things have come into the Church.

The Apostle Paul taught this revelation of the Kingdom, and he had not been with Jesus physically before His death and resurrection. Yet Paul had the most marvelous revelation, I believe, of any man in the New Testament. However, *the Church at large has lost almost the entire essence of the Gospel that Paul preached.* If it had not been lost, you would not see the conditions that we have on the earth today.

In this country especially, *we have made the Gospel an intellectual Gospel.* "If you believe it, you can be a Christian. If you don't believe it, you can't be a Christian." Is it simply a matter of intellectually knowing all the right things? Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross accomplished my salvation, but do I have to intellectually know it to receive it? Or can I be in a foreign land somewhere, never having heard the name of Jesus, and could there not be something that stirs within my being? Could I not look up at the stars and realize that through the creation of God there is a revelation of God? And even though I do not know His name, something within the very essence of my being cries out for more of life. Could it not be that even though I do not have an understanding of the Gospel, I might cry, "There must be someone out there greater than I am, and I want to know You!" ***"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!"*** (Rom 10:13). Could that not happen? Could you not be in a foreign land, having never heard the name of Jesus, and be saved? Well, if you say no, you don't know the heart of God. If a man in a foreign land cries out to God, the same thing happens to him that happened to you when you received Jesus!

It is by the Spirit of the Lord, not by intellectual knowledge, that you are saved.

You can know everything there is to know about the Gospel, you can quote chapters and verses out of the Bible, and still not know God. You know that is true. And here is this poor, humble man who has said, "There must be someone out there greater than I am, and I want to know You." There is something in us. We just know. That man is regenerated just like you and I. He may never hear the name of Jesus in his lifetime, and he may meet a Buddhist monk, who will instruct him in the Buddhist religion, and he will be a very, very confused man. Because in his heart he has met, and been regenerated by, and has within him the essence of, the Spirit of God—but in his mind, he has the Buddhist religion. And there are men and women all across America today who would say that because that man is a Buddhist, serving a false god, he cannot possibly be saved.

Please hear and understand! *It's not what you believe intellectually that counts with God.* When you go before God, your excuse will be no good if you say, "I received you intellectually. I cast out devils in Your name. I healed the sick, and I raised the dead!" What will Jesus say? ***"I never knew you"*** (Mt. 7:23). And that poor little, humble man, all he wanted was God, and he got screwed up in his head with Buddhist religion, but in his heart he had the God of the universe—you may see *him* ushered in to the presence of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and *you* will be on the outside. And you had it all intellectually right!

Don't ever judge a man by what he believes in his head. Get to know his heart. No, I wouldn't go worship in a Buddhist temple, but I would never condemn someone who has the genuine love of God in him—and you can tell the difference between religion and love. And you know what? That Buddhist is no different than a Christian. *Whether you are in church or out of it, you have been influenced by 2,000 years of religious tradition, and you can be*

just as screwed up in your head, intellectually, as a Buddhist is. But if you have God, that is what matters. You might be a Lutheran. You might be a Catholic. You might be a Pentecostal, you might be anything. But if you have met the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, you'll know it. And would I look at you, because you go to a Lutheran church, and say, "You don't know God"? I wouldn't dare! Yet that happens all the time. Let's get to know one another by the spirit. Spend some time in my presence, and get to know my heart. You'll hear me say things that you can't agree with, and that's okay, but if you get to know me, and you get to know my heart, you will love me and I will love you. The differences in our intellectual beliefs don't matter.

Oh, I want so badly for the Church to hear this! *On the day of judgment, what is going to matter—whether you had all the right doctrine, or whether you had a heart hungry for God?* If you sought after God, if you relieved the suffering of your neighbor, if you opened your home to the needy—what is going to really count? "Oh God, I believed everything just right." "Sorry about that. I didn't know you. I was in prison, and you didn't come to Me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give Me to drink. You had a church of 10,000 people, and you didn't give them to drink. You gave them all of your knowledge. You taught them the seven steps to this and the eleven steps to that, but you didn't give them anything to drink. You didn't really feed My sheep. I don't know you." It's going to happen. It's going to happen if we don't understand, and have revealed to us, the heart of the Father.

How Will Oneness Happen?

God's plan, His eternal purpose, is that He would gather all things in Christ, so that, as it says in Ephesians 5, He may present to

Himself a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle. How is that ever going to happen? We must have a revelation of the Father's heart.

There was a time when, if you asked me what I thought it would take to bring everyone into oneness, I would have said to you that for that to happen, everyone would have to be Lutheran. Really! That is what I would have said. Everyone must know that they are not justified by what they do, but as Martin Luther taught, they must be justified by faith. So I would have told you that for everyone to be in oneness, we would all be Lutheran, we would all be justified by faith.

If you would have asked me a few years later what I thought the Church needed to understand in order to come into oneness, I would have told you right away that everyone would have to get filled with the Holy Ghost and speak in tongues. That would bring in the oneness. But I think now that we've had a few years' experience in that, we can look back and see *there was no oneness brought in by people being filled with the Spirit and speaking in tongues.* (I shouldn't say "no oneness," of course; there was some oneness, but not generally.)

The only thing that will truly bring us into oneness is the revelation of the heart of Father God, realizing that He's not just the God of the Jews, He's not just the God of the Lutherans, or of the Pentecostals, but He is the God and Father of all humanity! The Church has to have a revelation of the Father-heart of God! We must have revealed to us that God had a perfect plan, as Ephesians says, and that His eternal purpose, all of this, was already worked out by God. Jesus was the Lamb of God even before the foundation of the world (John 17:24, Rev. 13:8).

What It Means To Be Holy

Now I'm going to touch on some things that may cause you some problems, but just bear with me. One of the biggest problems that we have in the Church is bigotry. The Church has come a long way in bigotry—or I should say, has come a long way *into* bigotry, and now it is coming *out* of bigotry somewhat. There was a time when, if you were within a certain denomination and you were black, you had to be segregated out and you could not be a part of that major denomination. Well, we've come a long way from that. Recently, that major denomination has repented for that concept.

We have so many concepts that we pick up which cause us to be, in our mind, separated, and maybe just a little bit better than the other guy. For instance, I mentioned a little earlier about being filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues. There was a time, and there still is among some Pentecostals, when you were told that if you do not speak in tongues you cannot possibly be filled with the Holy Ghost, because that is the evidence of being filled with the Spirit. And there has been so much division and so much strife brought in just from that one concept. *To tell someone that they are not filled with the Holy Ghost because they do not speak in tongues is almost the height of ignorance in the Church!*

Those of you that are familiar with me know the concept that I teach of being filled with the Holy Ghost. It's not that you may *not* speak in tongues, but if you are filled with the Holy Ghost, if you truly are one who has opened to God and have invited Him to take Lordship and dominion of your life, you will be a holy person. And you won't have to *try* to be holy; you won't have to get up every day and try to live according to a standard. You won't have to memorize ten chapters of

Scripture a day. You won't have to try to pray for four hours a day.

The Lord sat me down for about four years and would not allow me to minister, because although, even as a young Christian, I had been given a revelation of some things that the Church is just about to come into, I wasn't able to share it because the time wasn't right. But God sat me down, to the point where I told my wife at one time, "You know what? I don't think that I even have it anymore. I can't teach." God totally stripped me of everything. There was a period in my life of 3½ years when I prayed and sought God for a minimum of eight hours every day. And my wife can tell you she was almost a widow, because of the times that I would go 12 or 13 or 14 hours. I was so desperate to know God! And out of those 3½ years, the Lord gave me much revelation and in-depth knowledge of His heart and how He feels toward all of humanity—not just toward the Church.

In the eternal past, God had a plan and a purpose. He is El Elyon, the Most High God, and He uses people, He reveals Himself to people, according to His plan and His purpose. It's not according to our plan and our purpose. God sat me down for four years and wouldn't allow me to minister, with the exception that I wrote a couple of books. And I really thought that I had lost my anointing. I told Carol, "I can't even stand up before people anymore. I don't know what I'm going to do!"

I went down to visit Love Link Ministries one day about a year and a half ago, and Pastor Ada said to me, "Do you have a message for us today?" and I said, "No. God hasn't released me yet to preach." And as far as I knew, He hadn't. The next day, we were in church, and she didn't ask me again, she just said, "Gary is going to minister today." That was one of the greatest moments in my life in

recent years, because when she called I knew it was God, yet on the way up I felt so empty. For four years, I had been empty. But when I took the microphone, God filled me up! And everything came back.

The only reason I share that story with you is so that you might know me, and understand that what I teach I didn't read out of a book, and I didn't pull it out of a hat, and I'm not copying someone else's ministry. One of the things God revealed to me is that in these coming days, *there is a wonderful, glorious, magnificent revelation of the heart of God coming to the Church!* God truly does love humanity. But we take the things of God, and we create wedges. We become bigots. "If you don't speak in tongues, you're not filled with the Holy Ghost." Jesus told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they were—not *filled* with the Holy Spirit, but *clothed* with the Spirit. In Luke 24:49, He said, "**Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until you be endued,**" which simply means to be clothed with the Spirit. And then we read in John 20:22 that on the very first day of the Resurrection of Jesus, He appeared among His disciples and He said to them, "**Receive ye the Holy Spirit,**" and it says He just breathed on them! What does that remind you of?

In the very beginning, God breathed upon a man of clay. And in the very breath of God is the very essence of God. Everything that God is, is contained in His breath, His Spirit. And when Jesus breathed on those disciples and said, "**Receive ye the Holy Spirit,**" they were absolutely filled with the Spirit of God! That is the only way, my friend, that you will ever be filled with the Holy Spirit—by receiving the breath of God. You can't live physically without breath; neither can you live spiritually. That's why God told Ezekiel at the valley of dry bones to speak to the wind to breathe—breathe life, breathe the Spirit—into the dry bones (Ezek. 37:4-10). In the words

are the very breath of God. Just speak to those bones and watch them stand up and live!

If you are filled with the Holy Ghost, you are just simply holy. Now what does that mean? We don't even really know what it means. We think that to be holy we would probably stop all secular activity and would pray a lot and read the Bible a lot. In other words, our concept of holiness is way out of whack. The simplest way to explain it is that *holiness is wherever God is.* The first time holiness was revealed in the Bible was at the burning bush, where Moses was told, "**Take off your shoes, for you are standing on holy ground**" (Ex. 3:5). That ground was only holy because the presence of God was there. I have heard holiness taught until it becomes a bondage. "You have to wear your hair long, your shorts long. You can't cut your hair this way or that way. You can't go to movies. You can't dance. You can't take a drink!" The way holiness has been taught has brought people into bondage, rather than liberty!

Transformation By the Presence of God

God loves for His people to be set free to live according to the awareness of His presence. Yet generally speaking, the people of God as a whole don't really carry the presence of God within them. We all know that He is there, but I am speaking from conscious experience, because a lot of times I have no awareness of the presence of God. Sometimes I'll begin to speak to someone on the street, and immediately I am just aware that God is on the scene. At that moment, I don't think about my condition, I don't think about where I have missed God for the last three or four days, I don't think about what I need to do, but when the essence of God appears, at that moment I become a holy person.

There is no way that you can learn to be godly, a better word for it is transformation.

You cannot learn it with the natural mentality. I have often shared that I tried for 13½ years to be a good Christian, and I never made it. I couldn't even quit some of the simple habits that I had—either couldn't quit or didn't want to. But God is my Father, and one day He spoke to me, "Gary, I have a plan and I have a purpose for you. You can fight back. You can rebel, and it is going to cause you a lot of grief, a lot of heartache. You are going to go through a lot of trials, a lot of tribulation. But I am El Elyon, and I can guarantee that there will come a day when you will fully reveal and manifest My glory to My creation. Not because you are good enough. Not because you are always obedient when I speak. Not because of anything you have done, but because I have a design, an intent and a purpose for you. Because of that, you will be what I say you will be. Fight it if you want to."

The biggest obstacle I hit with this is, what about the human will? He is El Elyon. It is said in religious circles that God will not violate your will. Well, tell me about the story of Jonah. Didn't Jonah try to say no? And what did God do? Have you ever said no to God? And when you have said no to God, has He turned His back on you? Well you might have thought that He did, because you might lose the awareness and the sweetness of His presence, but He comes back, does He not? Oh, there is nothing in all the world that I desire more than to be a carrier of His presence on the earth! And my desires have become so strong in this area that the other things that kept me down for 13 years don't bother me any more. But it's not the overcoming of those things that got me to a place in God where now I am worthy to receive His presence and carry it throughout the earth.

Any man who feels that he has *earned* a place in God where he is now acceptable by the

Father to be a teacher, or a carrier, or anything that has to do with God, is a man most deceived. If you stand before people and you see that you are where you are today because you have been obedient, you do not understand the Father-heart of God. Now in a sense, you do learn obedience. But your obedience does not come out of anything that is in the natural, soulish makeup of man. There is nothing in that old creation that is willing and obedient—*nothing!* And if you think there is, you will find out otherwise.

There is only one hope that we have. Paul said it this way: *Christ in you is your hope* (Col. 1:27). There is absolutely nothing in your natural personality (the natural human makeup, the carnal mind) that God can use. Nothing. We haven't learned that yet, because as long as you look at another human being and say, "If they would only do certain things; if they would only stop this, and do that," you are a person who would bring other people into utter bondage.

There is nothing in Adam that will serve Christ, although he may want to. I teach a lot on the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, that there is a good desire in a lot of us. We do, some of us, want to become like God, but we can't. How could we? The desire is there, but even that desire can be a carnal desire of a good man who just wants God. That doesn't work either. The only hope is to have a revelation of the Father-heart of God. And when you do, you will realize that God truly is no respecter of persons. Sometimes that's hard for the Church to accept, because we want to feel like we're special. There is something about us that wants to feel like "I have a heart for God, and because I have a heart for God, He really blesses me. And if only you had a heart for God like I do, you would be blessed as I am." Oh, that is so wrong. Where did I get that heart?

When I was 11 years old, I told my mom, "Please buy me a Bible that I can read and understand, if there is such a thing." All we had at that time was a King James Bible. I asked my mom to buy me a Bible because I said, "When I grow up I want to be a preacher." Why? I hated church! I told my mom that when I grew up, I would never go to church again. It wasn't Church. I was born with a desire, a hunger, for God. I used to think it was just for me, that it was kind of exclusive. None of the other friends I had seemed to have a strong desire for God as I did. Now, I realize it was grace.

God's Plan

God is El Elyon, and He has a plan and a purpose. He placed His Seed not just in you and me. God has placed His Seed in all of humanity. The Gospel of John says that Jesus was the true light that lights every man that comes into the world (John 1:9). Is this true or false? Proverbs tells us that the spirit of man is the candle, or lamp, of the Lord (Prov. 20:27). *Every person has within their being the Seed of God*, and that Seed needs the Divine Sperm to quicken it and regenerate it. God calls out the Church, reveals Himself to the Church, and then begins to impart unto the Church His essence, His nature and His character, so that they in turn can go to the world and bring reconciliation to the creation that fell.

God has been with us in the wilderness. When we suffer, God suffers. Why? Because, more than you ever realize, God and man truly are one. In the very core, in the very center of your being, lies the Seed of God. And when you are regenerated, that Seed of God is what brings to you the feeling, the emotion, the regeneration of God. Every person that was ever born is special, but you are not any more special because you know God than the man who doesn't. Didn't Jesus say, "**No man can**

come unto Me except the Father draw him" (John 6:44)? Then how can you take credit? How can you say that the reason you know God is that you have done certain things, or you haven't done certain things? *When God chooses you out of all the people in the world, and for His own plan and purpose generates His Divine Seed within you, all of a sudden you become aware, you become conscious of God.* Why? It is His plan and His purpose to restore the creation back to Himself.

Romans 8:21 says that there will come a day when all of creation shall be loosed from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Is that true or not? If you are typical in your Christian thinking, it is not yet true for you. But who does "all of creation" include? Those who have run to an altar? Those who have said some words? Sometimes we think it's a magical phrase: "Jesus, I receive You." Will there really come a day in the history of the world when all of creation shall be loosed from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God? Oh, I can't wait for the revelation to come to the Church! Oh, we have such a message! We have the hidden mysteries of the Gospel yet to be revealed.

Our country is in such a mess, yet even as Christians, we say, "Well, if we could just get rid of that Bill Clinton. If we could just get rid of the whole political system and start over." But let me tell you that we, you and I, are responsible for what is happening in Washington today. It's not Bill Clinton's fault. It's not the Democratic Party's fault. It's not the Republicans' fault. The people of God have lost the of the Father-heart of God, and *we have not become the salt of the earth.* What is the salt of the earth? If I am the salt of the earth, I am the flavor, and if I am truly salted with His essence, I am absolutely free to do *anything!* But in the doing of whatever I do, I am salt, and from the very essence of my

being, something will permeate, and people will be affected. If you have the essence of God, you don't have to preach the Gospel, in the sense of the "religious" Gospel.

I worked at NASA for six years, and for at least half of that time, I didn't try to preach the Gospel at all. But I tried to be the best worker, the best friend. That is a gift that God has given me, I just love people. But after three years, I mentioned to a man who worked with me, "John, have you ever been aware of God in your life?" and this big bruiser of a guy almost hit me. He said, "Don't you ever mention that name in my presence again." Because, he said, "I'll tell you one thing, Gary. If there is such a thing as a God, I can't wait to see Him, and I'll tell Him, 'You SOB,' for the mess that He made this creation to be." But I want you to know that when I left NASA, this man had tears in his eyes, and he said, "Gary, all of my life I've heard about the love of God, about, you know, preaching and this and that," and he said, "You're the first person I've ever met whom I could say actually *has* the love of God and walks in what they say they believe."

You don't have to preach the Gospel. And if you are around me, you find out that I'm just a joker. I have a lot of fun. Yet I know that deposited within my being, there is such a precious, precious anointing of His love for humanity. Again, does that make me special? Please! NO! No, it doesn't. As I said, for 13½ years I did everything; I never prayed less than an hour a day. I never read less than ten or twenty chapters of Scripture a day. Yet for 13½ years I was a failure. Not totally, for I did make some progression, but I wasn't free. But when I realized that holiness is wherever God is, then God began to speak in small ways and reveal to me, "You've been *saying* for years that Jesus lives in you—don't you think it's about time that you became *aware* of it?" And today, I'm still not. I'm aware of it, but not

nearly enough, because *when we have the heart of the Father unveiled to us, we will be world-changers.*

God is not a bigot. I was taught as a young Christian, "If a Jehovah's Witness comes to your door, slam it in his face, because those people really believe what they say, and you will become so deceived." That's the kind of love that I was taught. And the Mormons? "Oh my God, don't even get close to those guys! Some of the things they teach are demonic!" We have no concept of the Father-heart of God. We don't really have an experience of what we say we believe, or we would not be in fear of a Jehovah's Witness, we would not be in fear of a Mormon, we wouldn't teach our kids not to play with the "JW's".

If we had the essence of God and we were the salt of the earth, what would we fear? Because we would salt the earth. You really are the salt of the earth. But the Lord said, "***If the salt has lost its flavor . . .***" (Mt. 5:13), and for the most part that is what happened. In 2,000 years, we lost the flavor. The Church isn't really able to salt that much anymore. What did the Lord say? "***It's good for nothing. It needs to be cast out.***" Some people will tell you that means that if you lose your salt, you lose your flavor; you've lost your salvation and you will go to hell and burn forever. Let me tell you what it really means. *When you lose your saltiness, the fire of God begins to bring purification.* It's not a negative experience! El Elyon knows just exactly what you need to cause you to bow the knee, just as He knew what it would take to turn Jonah, who was running away from Him.

You are free to do anything you want to do, you are free to turn your back on God. But I have news for you. Try it! Sure, you can make the choice. You are free. But *you really don't have a free will.* Your will is either captivated

by the enemy through the fall, or you have given yourself to God. I used to drive out into the desert every morning in California, and I would say, "God, I give you permission to do whatever it takes. I say to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, I give God permission to do anything He wants to do in my life." I lost my free will. If I ever had it, I lost it then. God became El Elyon to me, whether I liked it, or whether I didn't. And there have been many times when I didn't like it. The fire gets hot.

But although we look at these experiences as negative, we have to understand the Father-heart of God. *He will burn you to a crisp.* You will be judged, but it won't be a religious judgment. God is not that big, ugly being up there full of vengeful wrath. I know that the Bible talks about the wrath of God, and I know that the day of His wrath is coming, but the concept of "sinners in the hands of an angry God" is really not the right concept of your Father God. God as your Father will put you through the fire. What happens to gold if you throw it in the fire? It is purified. Gold, silver and precious stones. What is in you? The gold. Do you have the Divine Life and Nature of God, or do you not? If we can say, as the Apostle Peter taught us, that we have the Divine Life of God in us, then we have the gold, but we will have to be purified by the fire.

I hope you can hear what I am saying and go a little bit further with it. God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezek. 33:11). John said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Mt. 3:11). Well, we have taken the Holy Ghost and Pentecost, but we left off the fire, because the fire isn't the fun part. But we need the fire, because when we have the heart of the Father unveiled to us, we will be world-changers.

I was born with a nature that loved all of the wrong things. On the inside of me, I had a desire for God, but my natural character and makeup was much stronger than my desire for God. So, everywhere I went, ministers would say, "I can't help you. You have to make a choice. You have to decide, are you going to obey God or obey your flesh?" Well, what am I going to do if my flesh is stronger? I tried obeying God, but it didn't work. So God put me in the fire.

All of us will go through the fire. Your natural, human character and personality—all of those human traits that you have inherited from your father Adam, all of the disobedience, all of the erring of your ways, everything in your being that is antichrist (and the Church is full of antichrist today) must be burned. El Elyon will put you in the fire until you come up out of it a pillar of smoke, and this is not just for you alone. You are only fortunate in this sense of the word: that God is calling you now. *God has called us out now to begin to purify us so that we can take the message of reconciliation to the world.*

I had a prophecy given to me a few years ago, and when this prophecy was given to me, God spoke right behind it and said, "This word was not for you, this word was for the Church." It was for me, but not *just* for me. You know what I mean. And the word was this: *"There is going to be a day when people will look into your eyes and immediately be ushered into the presence of God, be regenerated, and be filled with the Spirit of God."* When that happens, you'll know for a surety that we have come up out of the wilderness.

We need to be the offering that is consumed upon the altar by the fire of God, and it hurts. But you know what was said of Jesus (and you would have this same attitude if you understood the heart of God), it said that for the joy that was set before Him, He endured

the cross. And *if you have the plan of God for your life revealed to you, then for the joy that is set before you, you also will endure the fire!* And you will endure the pain, you will endure the suffering.

Your Holy Ghost that we can live and not die. Oh God, bring the fire. El Elyon, reveal to us your Father-heart.

There is not much talk in the Church today about suffering, but *if you will be godly, you will suffer!* And it won't be by people persecuting you (although that could be a part of it); you are going to suffer in the very essence of your being, because *everything in you that you thought was godly is going to be stripped away.* And if you haven't had this experience yet, there will come a day when God will rip that flesh away from you and let you look at it and see it as it is, and you will realize that, if not for the grace of God, you could be a murderer, you could be a rapist, you have all of the tendencies that any man ever has had embodied in your flesh and you are capable of the most vile acts, were it not for the grace of God. It's worth the suffering to be rid of the flesh. ***"And He will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire"*** (Mt. 3:11).

Prayer: Burn Within Us

Father, by the power of Your Holy Spirit, by the very essence of your being, I ask You to burn upon the altars of our hearts. I ask you to send forth that holy fire that would consume every area, every avenue of my thought and my being. O God, I ask that you would burn, and burn, and burn within my being, and that You would cause the essence of Your being, the Seed of Your Life, that is within me to rise and to stand. O Father, may that Seed of Your Life come forth within Your people! Lord, we, as the collective Body of Christ, stand undivided. We say, "Come, O Holy One, come, fire of God, come and burn within our being." Father, only You can burn out the rebellion. Only You can burn out the disobedience. It is only by the purifying fire of