WORD AT WORK

VOLUME XXVII NUMBER VI

Three Dimensions Of Growth III

FRIDAY, June 1
Scripture: Luke 17:22-30

Jesus explicitly describes the time of His second coming. He precisely explained the prevailing mood. The phrase *"they ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded,"* speaks of life with no recognition of the season of Divine visitation. The second and first coming have this in common. It was inconceivable to the majority in Lot's day that anything could change their existence. It was also inconceivable to all but Noah that catastrophic events would soon alter history. Yet **suddenly**, **immediately**, **DRAMATICALLY**, they were baptized in upheaval as God intervened in man's history. Is it possible we are facing an equally dramatic change but of a different nature? We know before the destruction predicted in Revelation, God is going to harvest the earth. If a great invasion is about to come on the Church, lets hope it is one of God's power for great harvest rather than destruction. The Lord must somehow convert the Church's attitude from one of "bless me now" to one demanding eternal fruit. This seems to be the primary emphasis the Lord is bringing to the Church. **Where are our priorities**, and are we really ready to move on with Jesus?

SATURDAY, June 2
Scripture: Luke 17:31-33

Jesus gets very specific about our attitude in the last days. We can no longer afford to be bound by our "stuff" allowing it to hinder us in the things of God. *"In that day, he who is on the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take them away. And likewise the one who is in the field, let him not turn back. Remember Lot's wife."* Lot's wife had a problem. She was more married to her things than she was to God. Her reason for living was not in God. She was more committed to house, appearance, possessions, apparel, appliances, carpet and color-coordinated rooms with matching stone, furniture and decor. How important are material things? She was much more in tune with what she owned than what she had in personal relationship with God. Walking with God for her was a Sunday Wednesday relationship. The majority of her time was given to what pleased her. Those ties grew so strong, she couldn't break them in the critical hour. She had to look back. When she did -- she ***violated the covenant*** of salt and therefore she became a pillar of salt. Jesus said, *"Whoever seeks to save his life, will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it."* The Lord was trying to show what people needed to change to escape the judicial adversity of rejecting their savior. Some need a readjusting of personal priorities to reclaim their first love as the primary calling of this hour. Only when we follow the Holy Spirit can we make the necessary changes that produce great fruit.

SUNDAY, June 3
Scripture: Genesis 18:16-19

Abram was faithful year after year. Even through mistakes and correction, he moved on with God readjusting his priorities. God shared with Abram a great secret; a revelation of what He was preparing to do to a city called Sodom. It is interesting to read God's prerequisite for receiving this kind of visitation. He said in verse 19, *"For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they* ***keep the way of the Lord****, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."* It is obvious from God's comment to the angel, He has a high respect for Abraham because he chose the right priorities. That choice laid the foundation to receive a greater encounter with the Lord at a higher level. God is looking for many Abrahams today in neighborhoods, offices, schools, businesses, and even churches, where He can reveal future plans and birth Divine intervention. Are we available?

MONDAY, June 4
Scripture: Genesis 18:16-19

The fate of Lot was in the hands of Abraham as he interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah in the midst of certain judgment. Through personal choice Lot's fate rested in Abrams relationship with God and the willingness to pray deliverance. Through our obedience, moving God's hand can extend that hand of salvation to many. But I wonder how many of us are available to intercede, to avert destruction that result from sin and satan's devices. Lot's fate was in Abraham's hands, and so it will be with some of the people God brings across your path. Are you available to pray? Are you available to intercede? Are you available to walk with God and bring forth His justice this day? Let's get up in the morning and tell the Lord we're available for whatever He has and then watch as He begins to use us to bring forth His purposes and plans in the earth.

TUESDAY, June 5
Scripture: Genesis 18:20-33

Here we see Abram living not for himself alone, but being available in a time of need, praying for someone he would probably rather forget; because ever since Abraham brought Lot to the land of Canaan, he had been nothing but a source of trouble. When we come to the point where we can pray for those who are trouble, who take advantage of us, who are always pursuing their own best interest and sometimes step on our feet to get there, then we know a measure of maturity has come by the power of the Spirit of God. Abraham experienced God in a new way. What a wonderful place of fellowship, prayer, intercession; a place where the whole course of a city was changed because a man stood before God face to face. I believe there will be a multitude of opportunities like this in the last days. It may not be for a city, but it will certainly be for an individual, for a business, for a church, for ministry, for the entire spectrum of things God wants to do. When we seek the Lord, with a willingness to accept assignments for the blessing of others, we will surely find Him. This arena of denying self is seldom visited by American Christianity.

WEDNESDAY, June 6
Scripture: John 12:1-8

In this chapter we see Jesus walking as a man of maturity with His eyes fixed on His Father's purpose, not willing to be hindered from the ultimate goal. When the disciples started to argue about the ointment and whether it should be sold, Jesus stood in the gap for Mary explaining she indeed had been walking by the Spirit, and what she was doing was in the perfect plan of God, and they should sit back and not be concerned because this event was a very necessary thing. I sense we are entering a period where God has a multitude of assignments coming to the diligent, the willing, and the obedient, for the carrying out of His latter-day plan. There is a timing in God in which the supernatural is released for each individual. Judas was captured by mammon and led into the ultimate betrayal

of giving satan worship by doing his will. God planned for it! What seemed to Judas to be a great waste was in fact a great blessing. What seems to the world to be a great waste (all of our Christian activity, our going to church, our being ever mindful of the Lord and His desires, our prayers, our giving), is more training in obedience for even greater assignments. God's war machine runs on little nuts and bolts that are all in the right place, doing what God called them to do. I believe we are going to be a people who don't look for the flashy and the glamorous, but look through the eye of the spirit at that which is glamorous in God's sight, which is almost always guaranteed to be minuscule by the world's criteria. Abram learned that lesson and it laid the foundation for his marching on in maturing in the covenant.

THURSDAY, June 7
Scripture: John 12:9-11

Here is an amazing comment on the condition of the church of Jesus' day which may in some ways parallel ours. How is it we can work for God and not recognize anything He is doing? How is it we can get caught up in a system which proclaims the carrying forth of Father's will and, yet, in fact does that which is contrary to it? How do we, instead of helping, become the biggest hindrance? How do we develop an overwhelming love for position, power, and ministry above God's plan? There comes a time for everyone to lay down what they are doing and pass-the-torch to a new generation, or someone else of the Lord's choosing. If God ever calls us to pioneer a work, we not only have to have the courage to start with nothing, but after we've got it going, we also have to have the courage to be able to shut it down. Here we see religious leadership that was so in tune with their own system, doing their own thing, they couldn't recognize the hand of God. Let's not be such a dense people. You say, "How can that happen?" - by walking in the soulish realm and never moving on into a spiritual walk where God truly is **LORD**!

FRIDAY, June 8
Scripture: John 12:12-19

Thank God for the high spots, the places of glory, the times when there was an overwhelming presence of the Lord in our lives and the mountain top experiences that for some seem to come so rarely, and yet for most of us are so much needed. Jesus is having one of those here. This is called His "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem where He comes as "The King." He comes on the heels of a miracle which caused everyone to recognize He was indeed a prophet - He raised the dead. Many people gave the testimony about being there, about seeing it, and about fellowshipping with Lazarus and asking him what it was like to be dead for four days. The religious opposition in verse 19 agreed. They could prevail nothing against Him. The world had gone after Him. What a perfect time to start your own denomination. What a perfect time to launch a television ministry. What a perfect time to capitalize on your popularity. You could have the biggest offering you ever had in your life. What is it now that marks the ministry of Jesus? He doesn't do what we see done so much in our ministries today. Thank God. Here is the mark of a spiritual servant. What does Jesus do at this point? Does He capitalize? No. He withdraws. He hides Himself because the people come to make Him king. At the very pinnacle of His popularity and power with the people, when He could have taken over -- He let go. We have an old saying called, "Let go and let God." God is looking for people like this to use in the last days. Do we qualify? We hope, believe, and pray that we do!

SATURDAY, June 9
Scripture: John 12:20-22

The Greeks come and say, *"We would like to see Jesus."* What they are saying is, "You talk about this Jesus, but we want to see His power. We want to see what we've heard. We just heard He raised a dead man. We want to see that." Isn't that exactly what most of the people we talk to about the Lord are saying today? "You say Jesus is real. You say He is the Son of God. You say He is risen, He is alive, He lives in you, and He wants to come live in me. Then **show** me His power. Let me see." It's like everyone you talk to is from Missouri. One of

the primary desires in God's heart today is Jesus would be seen in our lives; in more than just our smile, in more than our countenance, and in more than our joy. I believe God wants Jesus to be seen in **all the fullness** of His power where all praise and glory goes to Him for those things we do in His name. This is the call. This is the preparation. Can we go out and heal the sick in His name? Unfortunately we have relegated that ministry to the church house, but in the early days all God's people did it. That is why their numbers grew so rapidly. As we approach the dawning of a third millennium, God's people must catch on fire with the glory of His power which flows forth freely, and they are going to start other little fires everywhere they go, even in their own homes and neighborhoods. God is ready for an invasion. Let's invite Him to begin with us.

SUNDAY, June 10
Scripture: John 12:23-27

Jesus now gives us a key. The whole world wants to see Jesus in operation and we've just about come to a point where the world is telling the Church, "Put up, or shut up." In verses 24 and 25 Jesus says, "Here is the key to seeing My life and power in you." *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."* He is talking about walking in the spirit, versus bowing to the dictates of the soulish man. The question is a simple one. Who are we going to be led by? Jesus said, *"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also*." Thus the pathway to be honored by God is one of ultimate servanthood. When God honors you, He answers your prayer, He heals the sick person you are praying for, He does the financial miracle you ask Him to do. Oh what a glorious time lies ahead, as we begin to move into the place where we are working **His** purposes.

MONDAY, June 11
Scripture: John 12:28-36

Jesus prays and says, *"Father, glorify Thy name."* Then comes a voice from heaven and shakes the entire area. Some people thought it thundered, others thought an angel spoke to Him. But Jesus said, *"This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake."* Here we see the true mark of a spiritual believer. He is at the very pinnacle of His power, the very height of His ministry. A voice comes from heaven, the dead man that had been raised is at His side, the people have welcomed Him as a king and everything is going His way. He can take over Jerusalem if He will only speak the word. But what an amazing statement is made in verse 36. *"These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them."* Verses 42 and 43, on the other side of the coin, depict the religious crowd. *"...among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."* As we move on into this most pivotal year in laying the groundwork for this new wave of the Spirit, God is looking for people whose chief qualification is they do not love the praise of men, are not moved by it, they can't be stilled because of the pressure of men, and they can't be brought in line by the promise of promotion if they only submit. God is raising up a people who have one thing foremost in their mind. That is - **pleasing Him** and receiving praise from Him alone. This is the kind of army we want. Let's enlist!

TUESDAY, June 12
Scripture: II Timothy 3:1-5

What we have just read in John 12 is the description of a man who has learned a basic truth. Because he chooses to deny his soulish man and submit to Holy Spirit leadership, Divine authority is released in his life. In the realm of our mind, will, intellect and emotions, we're tempted to save ourselves for a variety of reasons. We're tempted with self-pity. We're tempted to protect ourselves. We're tempted to grasp for blessing. We're tempted with self love. We're tempted with every form of selfishness for our own blessing and benefit. He tells us, *"...in the last days perilous times will come."* They will be hard to take. The reason why they will be hard to

take is because the primary agent governing people is selfishness. When people are selfish, they're always looking out for their own interest and they will make sure they get blessed even at the expense of others. This is soulish to the core and must be overcome. Jesus did it through prayer and we must do it the same way.

WEDNESDAY, June 13
Scripture: Genesis 21:1,2

Abraham has to fight to save Lot, laying his life down for the fellow who chose the best land for himself, leaving the worst to Abraham. Abraham is led to the point where he can bring forth the promise of God. Sometimes the road is long and it might even have a detour or two, but God always brings us to the place where He performs that which He has promised. When the performance comes, we're usually ready with a level of maturity to handle the blessing. Let's recognize, if God has not yet manifested that which He has promised us, we are probably growing in maturity to be able to handle what God wants to do. With that knowledge we move on in thanksgiving and praise, expecting the Lord to grow us up quickly, to accomplish what He desires.

THURSDAY, June 14
Scripture: Genesis 21:9-12

That which is born of flesh can't stand with that which is born of the Spirit. Ishmael was brought forth through the flesh; through the scheming, plotting plans of helping God out. Therefore he has to be sent away. So it is with all the works we dream up, all things that ***sound*** like a good idea, that ***look*** like a way to achieve God's promises. From here on, Abram's life is bound up in his son Isaac. His promise has come, but he has a very difficult time turning loose of that which was born of the flesh. So it is with us. We go through periods where it is very grievous to do what God demands. Just like Abraham, we find ourselves being weaned away from that which we produced in the flesh. But it is necessary for God's plan. So let us move on expecting God to do a mighty and a glorious work.

FRIDAY, June 15
Scripture: Genesis 22:1,2

After a number of years enjoying the promise, God says, "Abraham, I want you to offer your son for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains I'll tell you of." It's interesting God asked him for a "burnt" offering. It is not a sin offering, but it is an offering of consecration and dedication to God. We need to understand Abraham's life here is bound up in his son Isaac. The promise has finally come. He's given birth to that which God promised. We would call it our ministry, our position, whatever it is God spoke to us long long ago and finally brought to fulfillment. We enjoy it for a good long period of time; we begin to move in it joyfully; we praise God He has put us in that position; and then suddenly we find God wants to take everything away. And many times, we say, "This can't be God. God wouldn't give this to me and then let it fail." Is there something much deeper God wants to work in our lives? Is there a truth He wants to burst forth in our understanding? The answer is "yes." You see, it is very easy to let the gift get out of priority with the giver. You can serve the gift rather than the giver!

SATURDAY, June 16
Scripture: Genesis 22:3-18

We have to discover what God gives is His, and He can take it. We must hold on to God, not the gift. How easy it is once we've given birth to a ministry in the realm of the spirit, to serve *it* rather than God. God speaks to us about it, we accept the challenge and begin to put our blood, sweat, and tears into its fulfillment, only to be told: "Turn loose and let it go." We have to continue to serve the Lord and not serve the gift, or the ministry God has given us. Serving the gift happens slowly and gradually so we don't even recognize we are doing it! Over two decades ago I woke up to discover I was running in three different directions serving a ministry and not serving the

Lord. My prayer time had been eroded, my Bible study time had been greatly diminished, and I had to make a choice. I chose to lay down the media ministry in order to re-establish my first priorities. And I'm still thanking God to this day that I made that decision. What God called Abraham to do is the biblical principle that applies when we get caught serving the gift rather than the Giver. He laid down the gift only to pick it up again in much greater magnitude than ever before with an eternal promise and blessing. In the process, he got his priorities right. Our Father has wisdom in growing up and developing His sons. If we continue to walk with Him with all of our heart, all of our strength, and all of our mind, we're guaranteed He will lead us into spiritual maturity where we can rejoice throughout eternity because we have been willing to walk with our God and bring forth His plan.

SUNDAY, June 17
Scripture: I Corinthians 2:1-6

In I Corinthians 2:1-6, we see God compelled the Apostle Paul to experience, in a measure, the very same thing as Abraham. Abraham finally birthed the promise of God in his own son and began to enjoy him perhaps more than he enjoyed the Lord. The Apostle Paul is called to a new kind of ministry with God and yet is forced to put away all the things he had learned over many years of training and preparation to qualify for a higher kind of ministry. His mind probably told him he would lose everything and be totally unable to communicate. And yet, when he determined he would not use the methods of other men which was so much in vogue in that day, God could begin to bless him as he was in a position to totally trust in the moving of the Holy Sprit. He developed in his ability to hear the Lord and in his personal relationship with God to the point like Jesus, he could speak what he heard and do what he saw. God wants to bring us to that point today. Are we willing to invest the time? Are we willing to allow the separation of all hindrances God may put His finger on? The call is there to come up higher into a new realm and a new dimension in our walk with the Lord. Let's move out and allow God to have His way this year.

MONDAY, June 18
Scripture: I Corinthians 2:7-9

Verse 7 is very descriptive of what God desires for each one of His saints; especially in the Amplified Bible. Verse 7 says, *"But rather what we are setting forth is a wisdom of God once hidden [from human understanding] and now revealed to us by God; [that wisdom] which God devised and decreed before the ages for our glorification [that is, to lift us into the glory of His presence]."* I believe God has a personal goal for each one of us this year. It is that we, individually, would experience a lifting into His presence in a way we've never known before. That daily we would move into the presence of God and receive our marching instructions for the day. That our relationship would grow with the Lord to the extent each morning He would outline for us what we are to face and be involved in that day. Not a Christian on the face of this earth will ever be satisfied and happy until they have a close relationship with the Lord. Verse 9 adds to this godly goal by saying, *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, that which God has prepared for those who love Him, for those who hold Him in affectionate reverence, promptly obeying Him and gratefully recognizing the benefits He has bestowed."* This points us to a relationship where people come into the presence of God, they hear what the Lord says, and then go out and do it that day, which just happens to be the lifestyle Jesus lived. It's God's goal we live our lives exactly that way, day in and day out. Let's do it by pressing on to know the Lord.

TUESDAY, June 19
Scripture: I Corinthians 2:10-12 (Amplified)

Here again, God gives us a great encouragement to press on in our desire to know Him. For He says, God has unveiled and revealed these things by and through His Spirit. The Holy Spirit searches diligently. He explores, He examines everything, even the Divine counsels and the things that are hidden beyond man's scrutiny. It's the Spirit of God who comprehends the thoughts of God just as our spirit knows us. And verse 12 says we received

the Spirit of God in order that we might fully realize and comprehend and appreciate the gifts of Divine favor and blessing so freely and lavishly bestowed on us by God. These three verses tell us God's whole purpose in sending the Holy Spirit, to live and dwell within us as living temples, is to daily lead us and guide us into His very best. How it must grieve the Holy Spirit not to be acknowledged **daily** in the life of each one that He indwells, not to be asked to lead, guide, and direct when that is His purpose; not to be relied on in every decision when that's the reason He was sent. Let us be a people that rise up and expect God by His Spirit to direct our path and prosper us in everything too which we set our hand.

WEDNESDAY, June 20
Scripture: I Corinthians 2:13-16

How can we develop this kind of walk where the Holy Spirit is truly leading and guiding on a daily basis so we're hearing His voice, recognizing the direction, discerning the right pathway, and walking by the wisdom of God? In these five verses, the Holy Spirit begins to outline a specific direction. We are to examine, investigate, inquire into, question and discern the source of all activity, even our own thoughts and emotions. God wants to awaken a quizzical nature within us in bringing an on-going examining mental habit to bear on all decisions we face. Once we ask God to reveal motives, He will pour out understanding that reveals hearts. When we see as He does we can conquer selfishness because we keep it under, through the authority of the Holy Spirit. We can become Spirit ruled and God's blessing will increase.

THURSDAY, June 21
Scripture: I Corinthians 3:1-3 Hebrews 4:12

In the first three verses of I Corinthians 3, we're told there has to be the discerning and differentiation between impulses that come from the spirit and from other sources. He says in verse 3, *"For you are still (unspiritual, having the nature) of the flesh - under the control of ordinary impulses."* That is the control God wants to break. Hebrews 4:12 speaks to this when it says the *"Word of God is alive and full of power, sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart."* God wants us to recognize the source of the impulses coming to our minds. *"For as long as there are envying and jealousy and wrangling and factions among you, are you not unspiritual and of the flesh behaving yourselves after human standard and like mere unchanged men."* He says very simply, the individuals that give in to these impulses do not recognize their source and consequently, take them into their life by agreeing and speaking them forth, producing in the spiritual realm, division, debate, strife, and hindering the work of God. ***God's desire is we train our very senses to discern between good and evil so our recognition of the source of thoughts comes to the forefront and a whole new way of thinking emerges as we submit each thought to the test of Scripture***. It's like the high and low filter on an amplifier. When you push the button, it immediately filters out everything above or below the range it was designed to operate in. And so is the mind of a believer who has trained himself to obey and listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. It acts like a filter in his life and catches all the stray, deceiving, ungodly influences and voices that are ever present trying to feed all of us. You say, "How in the world do I turn on that filter in my life?" That's what we intend to develop as we grow in the Lord with the "Word at Work" this year.

FRIDAY, June 22
Scripture: I Thessalonians 5:21-24

We are told to prove all things and hold fast that which is good. Here is described in Scripture the filter we spoke of yesterday. Prove all things. *"...the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."* And verse 24 says, *"He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it."* So we have the promise of God that as we desire to grow in the Lord this sort of filtering system will begin to operate. We supply the desire, we pray for it, we invite the Holy

Spirit to begin to develop it on the inside of us and the Scripture says, He is faithful who has called us, and He will also do it. Let's start **thanking God daily for a clarity of discernment.** It's **His will**, it's **His purposes**, and He will certainly perform it as we pray and ask Him to birth it in our lives.

SATURDAY, June 23
Scripture: Hebrews 4:12

What are the functions of the spirit, soul and body? In the spiritual Christian, the **soul** is functioning properly when the will is wholly one with God, the intellect has learned a new way to think, and the emotions are under complete control. The **body** is in its right place when God, abiding in spirit, is manifesting through the avenues of the soul to keep the body under in complete mastery. The **spirit** of the man is functioning properly when he is in complete fellowship with the Holy Spirit who dwells within, and this produces both a negative and a positive reaction. The negative reaction is in Hebrews 4:12. There is a dividing asunder or an exposure of the thoughts and intents of the heart to the degree we begin to recognize their source. On the positive side, we begin to discern that which is God, that which He has called us to do, and we hold fast to it because we know it is good. There are Bible principles which help us grow in our spirit, soul, and body, so we're moving toward our goal of being a spiritual believer. These principles we want to learn and incorporate in our lives.

SUNDAY, June 24
Scripture: I Corinthians 6:15-20

One of the basic principles is in I Corinthians 6:15-20. The foundational truth is, my body is no longer my own. It doesn't belong to me because it's been bought with the price of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. It is the seed which I will sow for a glorified eternal body, and because I already have the down payment (which is the Holy Spirit), I will not die (meaning, *"to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord").* My spirit man will jump right out of this physical body and go directly into the presence of God to remain with the Lord Jesus Christ until the resurrection, unless, of course, I get raptured first. The key principle is, I am not my own. I am bought with a price. Therefore, my chief purpose is to glorify God in my body and in my spirit. People approach life very differently. The individual who's learned this principle approaches life much differently than the one who hasn't. The one who hasn't does whatever he wants to whenever he wants to do it. ***But the one who has learned this principle always checks with God*** and is ever ready to stop any activity when he feels a check from the Holy Spirit. He will not go to the store as he planned. He will not do anything that he had planned whenever that check comes because God has become the Lord of his time. His time is no longer his own to be spent as he wishes. This is one of the first principles we have to commit to if we really desire to grow spiritually. Have we made this commitment yet? If not, let today be the day! The only thing we have to lose is our failures.

MONDAY, June 25
Scripture: Romans 6:1-18 (in both the King James and Living Bible, especially verse 11 in the King James)

A second primary principle in growing up to become a spiritual person is the daily application of the cross in our life. Here in Romans 6 we are told, God through His great wisdom, freed us from the impulses of the flesh and brought us into total victory over sin through the crucifixion. God reckons, when we confess Jesus as Lord, that we died on the cross with Jesus Christ. Our old man is crucified with Him, therefore, we only have one nature and that is we are partakers of the Divine nature, according to Second Peter 1:4 which says, *"by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."* The only problem is, we live two lives; a life in the spirit and a life in the flesh. Jesus said it best in Gethsemane - *"The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."* So there was only one answer for that life in the flesh. It had to die on the cross and it died for us. Therefore, we can take **the power that is in the cross** to deliver and we can apply it on a daily basis whenever we encounter difficulty. We can apply it in prayer. We can apply it in praise. We can apply it with a prayer of commitment and

dedication - *"Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done."* And as we make that application, verses 11 and 12 of Romans 6 become a reality. We have reckoned ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God, therefore sin does not reign in our mortal body that we should obey it. In verse 13, neither do we yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness, but we yield unto God to be used by Him and to bring forth His will, purpose, and plan in the earth. We become, through dedication and commitment, a spiritual person.

TUESDAY, June 26
Scripture: Romans 12:3-11

The soulish man who grows to be dominated and moved by the spirit is described in Romans 12:3-11. He is fervent. That means he boils over with zeal versus being lukewarm. Jesus said those that are lukewarm, *"I will spew you out of My mouth."* There is a Divine fervency and zeal in God's people who are moved by the Spirit and have given themselves to the will of God.

WEDNESDAY, June 27
Scripture: Acts 19:21,22 20:17-38 21:4-14

It is not enough to be fervent in spirit. We have to purpose in the spirit. Here we see the Apostle Paul coming to a point in his life where he purposed by the Holy Spirit that he had to go to Jerusalem, and that was necessary. But after purposing by the Holy Spirit, everywhere he went he was told what would happen to him: *"chains and tribulations await me"* in Jerusalem. Acts 21:4-14 provides the key. In verse 13, Paul says, *"What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, 'The will of the Lord be done.'"* They tried to persuade Paul to get out of the will of God, but he absolutely refused to do it. Why? He had purposed in the spirit, and that **purposing in the spirit *held his mind steady*** even though he knew great persecution was ahead. There is the mark of a spirit controlled individual.

THURSDAY, June 28
Scripture: Luke 9:51 Isaiah 50:7 Ezekiel 3:8,9

Here we see the prophecies and the fulfillment of Jesus setting His face like flint. He was very determined to have the entire will of God in His life. It is interesting when we look at Ezekiel and what God did for him in Ezekiel 3:8,9: *"Behold, I have made your face strong against their faces, and your forehead strong against their foreheads. Like adamant stone, harder than flint, I have made your forehead; do not be afraid of them, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they are a rebellious house."* Here God, for a specific purpose in the life of Ezekiel to prophesy to Israel, worked a work in his life through the Spirit. He brought his soulish man to the point where he could handle all the verbal abuse, all the rejection, all the criticism, and all the derision that would come from Israel. That truly is the work of the Spirit of God in the life of a person. We call an individual who is not moved by adversity and refuses to quit, one of strong character. They never give up. Why? Because through the activity of the Spirit of God, their mind has been brought into subjection. Their feet are set on the pathway God has ordained and they're not moved to the right or to the left. You say, "Brother Houghton, I see these principles. I see these characteristics. But how do I get from where I am now to that place of maturity in the Spirit?" Being a doer of the Word is a one-day-at-a-time proposition where we humbly ask, "God, help me walk in the Spirit."

FRIDAY, June 29
Scripture: Psalm 105:16-22

Psalm 105:16-22 says, *"Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the Lord tested him."* The word "tested" often translated "tried" is the Hebrew word **tsaw-raf** which means, "to fuse metal, to refine (literally or figuratively), to melt a metal, to purge gold or silver by fire (in order to separate it from the impurities, Psalm

12:7; Isaiah 1:25), to smelt; (methorphically) to test, to prove, to purge away, to try, to examine someone (Psalm 17:3; 26:2; 105:19) to be purified (Dan.12:10); (as a part.) a goldsmith, a smelter. This Hebrew verb was used less than thirty-five times. In order to see who was qualified to battle, Gideon set about to test 10,000 men, but only 300 of them were chosen (Judges 7:4)." It is obvious from the definition in Lexical Aids To The Old Testament from the Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible that the trying of Joseph produced a tremendous purification. If we look at the method of trial, it compares to a modern smelter or mega adversity. This pattern consistently re-occurs throughout Scripture. Adversity brings us face to face with things in our life God wants to change, i.e. attitudes, desires, emotions, responses. The length of the process is often determined by how quickly we respond bringing forth godly attitudes the Holy Spirit desires. Adversity is God's anvil on which our character is forged!

SATURDAY, June 30
Scripture: Genesis 40:14 - 41:16 45:1-9

Molten metal was never in our plans but specifically tailor-made for God's personal purpose. Joseph makes a perfect example. Joseph had promises of exaltation, but apparently no one instructed him about the pathway going through the depths of humiliation and discouragement. It was in this place he had to wrestle with the issue of his calling the very antipathy of his circumstances. How could prison be a training ground for ruling and reigning. The answer is in the heart of compassion needed when we exercise great authority. Joseph was left with no alternative but walking through the process God ordained, ***learning captivity is always a precursor to ruling and reigning.*** The humiliation of the cross always precedes the glory of the resurrection. It was true with Joseph, David, Moses, Jesus and the pattern continues even to this day. Let's recognize how God brings us into a walk in the Spirit. It is the process of exposing, conforming and dealing with our flesh in ways we would have never chosen. Adversity has an end result, and produces a product which is the fruit of the Spirit. After a long extended season of captivity when Joseph stood before Pharaoh, he was quick to offer an answer of humility. He said to Pharaoh, *"What you are asking is not in me, but it is in God who will give Pharaoh an answer of peace."* He was very quick to claim no credit for himself, which is one edge of the sword. The second edge of the sword is in Genesis 45:1-9 where he is equally as quick not to blame his brothers as the agent of those who started his extended agony in captivity. He was able to forgive extending the grace God demanded by recognizing it was the Divine purpose which brought him to Egypt for the eternal plan. Have we grown to where we can extend grace and forgiveness to people, recognizing God's hand is ultimately involved in those who seem to be our most ardent oppressors? Compassion, mercy, and forgiveness are the product of adversity. Perhaps the final observation is a walk in the Spirit is anything but cheap. It is very very costly and always seems to be paid for by scars attained through the experiences of life. Jesus Christ truly is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

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June 9-11	City Of Refuge, 602 Northwest 14th Andrews, TX Phone: (915)523-7773
June 21-24	Kingdom Faith Center, 56th Street Delta, B.C. Canada Phone: (604)943-8100