

## WHAT'S YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

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**MAY 30, 2004**

**MAHOMET, IL**

Before I share some of the word that I believe the Lord has spoken to me, I have a few thoughts that I want to share with you about the Jamaica trip. I've heard some of the rumors going around about it. One of the rumors that somebody was saying, and I've heard it in more than one place, is that it is a lot like India. It being as I have been to India and I have been to Jamaica, I can say that is not true. It is not like India. If you don't believe me, you can see me and we can arrange for you to go to India so that you can make the comparison. It is not the United States. You don't have the creature comforts that we have here, although you are not staying in the comforts for creature places. You are not going to have room service, of course. Some of you will have to share bathrooms and all of that, but you did that going to school. It is not India; however, it is not the United States, either. There is a lot of spiritual work that needs to be done, and I think one of the reasons that God has ordained for us to have this seminar in Jamaica is on the basis of the liberation of Jamaica in the Spirit.

I can say without reservation that I don't believe there has ever been a group of people going into Jamaica with a word that has the power of the Word that we possess as far as the kingdom is concerned and the coming of Jesus Christ in the midst of the church. I don't believe that there has ever been a church or a people... not because God hasn't knocked on their door, because I know that He has. I know that in 1948 (or in subsequent times) He sent many of His servants to bring God to Jamaica, but, all of the things that have ever been initiated in Jamaica have always been captured by the devil. Hallelujah! Jamaica has more churches, per capita, than any country in the world. They don't lack anything in the way of religiousness, but almost every organization has been captured by the devil. What I mean by that is that, in the midst of all of the religious ceremonies and all of the things that are going on with the Word of God and so forth, they have all of their devil practices. So, there is a great spiritual work that needs to be done, and I believe that we will be blessed, for those of us that are going. If you are not going, I would very much encourage you to be in prayer with regard to those that are there.

We are already running into an extreme amount of difficulty and much flack with regard to customs and all of that. It is a third world country. It is ruled by the devil. Hallelujah! But **the devil is trespassing**. We are children of God. We have the power of God. We have the ability of God in prayer, in fasting, and in the Word of God to move in a realm of the Spirit to bring liberation – not only to a land, not only to a people, but also to ourselves. It is a two-edged sword, you know. It cuts going out. It cuts coming back. So, whatever we are doing, there is some benefit or ramification with regard to those that are participating in it. Hallelujah.

I liked Lisa's word this morning. There is a word that the Lord spoke to me and I have been chewing on it. I didn't really know whether or not I should share it with you at this time. As she began to share, it kind of encouraged me, because it is basically something that the Lord has been talking to me personally about, and I think it is very pertinent to the Body of Christ.

If you have your Bibles, you might want to open them up to Philippians. I want to go into the third chapter. Paul had a revelation that not only established the church, I believe, but it is a revelation that is pertinent to the end-time church. Now, I don't know whether or not you believe it, but I believe we are living in the end-times. I believe that Jesus is coming. Hallelujah! I don't hear too many "amens" on that one. I don't believe it is thirty years down the road. You don't have to believe that way. It doesn't make any difference to me. It doesn't change my position of belief. It doesn't change my position or my perspective of the scripture. It doesn't change what I believe God is speaking to me. I believe Jesus is coming, but He is coming for a church that is without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:27). I'm glad He is not coming right now because I think I need a little more time. How about you? You probably think I need a whole lot of time, but I think I need a little more time to get things in order, and I am working on getting them in order. That is something of a revelation that each and every one of us needs with regard to the Word of God as it pertains to the end time and our calling or election.

What is the thing that we are focusing upon? God has been dealing with me a lot lately about my perspective and how I view things, and do you know what? I found out something. I am generally wrong if I begin to assess something from my position, from my place of perspective, because my vision is limited. In the natural realm, it is limited depending on where I am. If you stand out on a plain with no obstruction, nothing but flat land, they say your visibility, if it is a clear day, is something in the neighborhood of 25 to 30 miles. Your perspective is limited by what your surroundings are. If you are in the city, if you are in New York, if you are in Chicago, what is your vision? What is your perspective? You can hardly even see down the street, much less into the next block, much less outside of the town, much less the surrounding area of the community. Yet, we make all of our decisions based upon how we perceive where we are, what is happening, and what is going on in the midst of our environment. Hallelujah!

One of the things that impresses me very much about the Word of God is that God gives us so many examples. He gives us so many illustrations of what men and women of God should do and how they should be. One of my favorites is David. I'm going to kind of deviate. You are going to have to keep up with me. One of my favorite people in the Bible is David. David was a fighter. You know, I had to learn how to fight. My philosophy was, "He that runs away will live one day longer." I am not, by nature, a tenacious individual. I do not have a pugnacious attitude. Thank you, Mom. I inherited from her that timidity of being subdued by a mean look. But David was a fighter. He was a man that, to some degree, wasn't afraid of anything, it seemed. So, I can take courage from that, but yet in all of that aspect of David's character and his ability to fight, it says that when David would go up to battle, he would always inquire of the Lord. He would always go and seek counsel of God. There was something very unique about David. God called him a "man after His own heart." So, there was something in David that God saw that really wasn't David, because we know the character of David and what

David did and how he did it and how he transgressed the law of God. Yet, in the midst of all of that, there was something that God saw in the man. It is my hope that there is something that God sees in the midst of this man that can be likened unto David.

We are in a battle. You and I are in a battle. Humanity has always been in a battle. This is my diversion. We have always been in a battle. **The battle is taking back what the devil has stolen.** Now, don't get carnal on me. I'm not talking about money. I'm not talking about houses or cars. I'm not talking about land. It says that the whole earth and the fullness thereof is the Lord's (Psalm 24:1), and yet it has been usurped by reason of sin. Sin has come in and has taken captive the race that God created to rule the world. There was a race that God created in the very beginning to rule the world.

Genesis chapter 1, chapter 2 and chapter 3 tells us that God created Adam in His own image and in His likeness for His purpose, and gave him, as it were, everything that He created that he might bring it into subjection and have dominion over it. But something happened in the midst of all of that, where the devil came in and the dominion of all things passed to him by reason of sin. The environment became conqueror and man became the conquest. So, from that point on, as far as we are aware, there has been a fight that has been going on in the realm of the natural as well as the Spirit.

The first aspect we have of it is of Cain slaying Abel. Why did Cain slay Abel? Do you know why he slew him? Because **the favor of God was upon Abel.** It says that God had respect for Abel's sacrifice (Genesis 4:4). It wasn't that God appreciated Abel's offering more than Cain's, but there was something amiss with regard to Cain's perspective because it says in Genesis 4:7, ***If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*** Hallelujah! Sin lieth at the door. There was something in the realm of the unseen, there was something in the realm of humanity that was not consistent or acceptable as far as God was concerned. Cain's solution to the problem was to get rid of Abel. Hallelujah! Cain did not understand that, though Abel was a physical, natural human being, Abel existed by a divine, heavenly principal, because, even as he was dying, as the earth was reaching up to receive his blood, it says that the blood of Abel cried out (Genesis 4:10)! The blood of Abel? Was there a misprint in the Bible? There is something of a spiritual realm, you understand, that most of us are not even aware of. Oh, we have an awareness of this realm that we call "heaven." Somewhere out there, out in the wild blue yonder; sometime, someplace, oh yes, and sometime I'm going to be confronted with the spiritual reality of God. Romans tells us that when we walk out into the realm of the world, we are being confronted with that awareness. Isn't that what Romans says? Let's read it. I don't want you to think that I'm rewriting the Bible. Romans 1:17, ***For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*** Well, that is not our philosophy. We live by what we make. We live by what we have in the bank. We live by what we can charge. We live by what we can eat. We live by what we can wear.

There was a man called Enoch. We're not told a lot about Enoch, you understand, but Enoch is another one of my favorite characters. It says that Enoch, though he was a natural man... You know, if you follow the genealogy of Enoch up through time, he lived almost until the time of the flood. Did you know that he had a

wife? Did you know that he had children? Imagine that! **He had a wife and children and he still walked with God.** He had a wife! He had children! I don't think they just sat around all day long. I think that they had to do something in order to survive. Maybe he had a survival kit that grew in the back yard. What did he do? He had to do something and yet in the doing of it, he was walking. He wasn't marking time, he wasn't just holding his own space. He wasn't just holding space and marking time, he was excelling. He was, in spite of his personal responsibility... Come on, humanity isn't that much different! Women are still women. Men are still men. Children are still children. They are disobedient. They are contentious. All of these things were still working in that realm. **Yet, in that environment it says that he walked with God!** You know, I wonder if they ever used the term "fanatical" with Enoch. I wonder if they ever used the term "crazy." I wonder if they ever said to him, "Well, we have to be practical. He is not practical." But, do you know something? **It didn't stop him. He kept walking with God.** Walking with God. Walking with God. **It made no difference what anybody said, he just kept walking with God.** Persevering! Persevering! Pushing! Pressing! Pushing! Pushing! Pressing! Pressing! Until one day something must have broken, something must have happened, something must have come forth out of the realm of heaven that gave him a vision that energized him. Hello? Because it says that he walked with God. Oh, boy! And all the time, "Boy, that Enoch is really crazy. Super spiritual. Mr. Goody-Two-Shoes. He's better than we are. He has got this mega-attitude, this spiritual aura, everything is Spirit this and Spirit that, everything is God this and God that, God here and God there, God everywhere. He is a real pain in the neck. I don't like to be around him, he makes me uncomfortable." **Yet, he walked with God, he talked with God. All of the criticism, all of the pressure, and all of the things that were going on in his environment did not stop God from taking him!!!** Now, whose perspective mattered? There had to have been something of a testimony. This man had to have been married to a God-fearing woman who loved the Lord and who was working on behalf of her husband, recognizing the calling and election that was upon his life. Working with him, walking with him, talking with him. Now, I don't know why it is that God took Enoch and didn't take her, but nevertheless, God must have had to leave someone that could testify. Maybe hers was a greater part. It could well be that being taken was easier than it was to remain and to fight the fight and to testify to the GOODNESS OF GOD! Hello! Hallelujah! I like that story of Enoch. Not much there on the natural realm, but as you begin to get into it and begin to get the understanding, you begin to get the smell of heaven.

Have you ever smelled heaven? Have you ever heard heaven? I remember one time I had this experience where I was walking down a long hall, and at the end it made a right turn. As I was approaching that right turn, the wall opened up. I couldn't really see back there, but I heard this music, heavenly music, coming, floating out to me, calling me. It was drawing me, drawing me, and I walked right up to that wall and I wanted to walk through it. Hallelujah! I wanted to press on in. All of a sudden, there was this person that stood up in the midst of that wall and said, "You can't come through. You can't come through. It is not your time." But there is something of a yearning, there is something of a smell, there is something of a sound, there is something of a taste of heaven that I have with my five spiritual senses. I'm not talking about goose-bumps and hair standing up and chills going all up and down your spine, I'm talking about the

presence of God when He comes into your environment, when He comes into your arena, when He comes in and begins to sup with you and talk with you. You smell, you taste and you hear heaven! LOOSE! Hallelujah! You know, we lose it so quickly. We can have such a marvelous, wonderful time with God and such a spiritual environment. God comes down!

The best way I can relate to that was in the Czech conference. You know, when we were over there in the Czech Republic we had this conference and there was a mighty move of God. God came to us sovereignly. It wasn't because we were better than anybody else. It was because there was an appointed time and an appointed place and God kept His appointment. He moved into the midst for a week-long seminar and conference with preaching, and teachings, and the Spirit of God, and healings, and people of God being delivered and the work of God going on, and the devil's machine being taken apart! We are still hearing testimonies of it, and the furtherance of deliverance that has come. You know, I was laying in my bed after one of the really glorious meetings, and I said, "God, I want to stay here. I want to stay in this place," because I knew it was going to dissipate. I knew it was going to go back out. It was just like as Moses must have been when he went up in that realm and he was with God, you understand, and the glory of God began to permeate his skin. Come on!

Have you ever been in the presence of a vibrant, living Christian? You sense God upon them, you see God in their eyes, and you hear God in their voice? Hallelujah! Most of us sound like Tom, Dick and Harry. Most of us talk like whoever it is that we were named after. We spend so much time down here concentrating on these things that are around us, when these things that are around us are made to bring us to a place and a position and to promote the church. Now, I don't mean building buildings and erecting schools. All of that may have it's place. I don't know. I don't care. **I would to God that we would prosper in our souls! Prosper as God meant His people to prosper - coming from the carnal, the low, the realm of base humanity into the heavenly realm.** To them that believeth, to them gave He power... God gave them power to do what? To become sons of God! We are using the power for something else!

Somebody mentioned, I don't know where it was, maybe it was you here a few weeks ago, somebody mentioned something about having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Do you know that it really makes no difference how many souls you win? It makes no difference. It makes no difference, although there is some credit to that. But what is the credit that you credit to your account if everything else that you are doing on the natural realm is debiting it? Have you ever thought about that?

There is a will of God that God has for humanity, and every individual in the midst of that humanity. God wants to bring forth a Christian Church. Not Christian in name, not Christian in denomination, not Christian in association, but Christian in the nature of God being manifested. It was for this purpose, and this purpose alone. Do you know that God could have done it any other way? Do you know that? But He chose to bring Himself to condescend, bring Himself down out of the realm of heaven, out of that position, that place. My God! God did that. Why? He wanted to prove a point. He wanted to demonstrate a reality. He wanted to demonstrate a principle, **a heavenly principle.** Loose 'em! My God! Hallelujah! He wanted to demonstrate the ability of God to resurrect Himself out of the midst of this grave. Hallelujah!

We have what the Bible calls a “hard heart.” It is just like that stone that they rolled over the tomb when they entombed Jesus. They said, “Now we’ve got Him. Now He is finished. Let’s put a guard over it. If that isn’t enough, let’s put the stamp of the state on it. Let’s put Nero’s imprint and that’ll keep Him.” **In spite of all of that, HE STILL ROSE!** Glory to God! Hallelujah! Come on! Do you know that my resurrection from the dead is just as glorious? Did you know that your resurrection from the dead is just as glorious as the thing that happened in that time, in the physical place? There was as much power loosed in your set of circumstances to raise you up out of that earthly carnal place, out of the muck and the mire, out of the filth of sin and degradation, out of the place of being defeated and failure. **God blew, God breathed, God brought forth LIFE and LIFE CAME FORTH IN SPITE OF HELL!**

It was kind of wet out here one day and I took a weed. A big weed. I got hold of that weed and I began to pull on it, and I began to pull on it, and I began to pull on it. That weed said to me, “I’m not coming out.” “Now he’s really gone bonkers. He’s talking to weeds.” “That isn’t so bad, the weed is talking back to him.” I said, “Oh, yes, you are! You’re coming out. You’re coming out.” I wasn’t in a physical battle, you understand, I was in a spiritual fight. It said, “NO, I’m not coming out.” I said, “Yes, you are coming out! The conditions are right. The ground is ready. You have been softened up and everything is ready for you to come out. **YOU’RE COMING OUT! LOOSE!!!**” And that weed went schlooooooomp – out of the ground, all the way down to it’s tap root. Glory to God! Hallelujah! There was a force that was being applied to that physical thing on a physical level that was stronger than the force that was keeping it in the ground. Not that I was stronger than it, but that God had prepared a set of circumstances by which it could be rooted up. AMEN. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Romans 1:17, *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.* That is what we are talking about, you know, resurrection from the dead. Hallelujah! Resurrection. Devil is trying to kill, devil is trying to maim, devil is doing all sorts of things. Let the devil do what the devil wants to do. “Give it your best shot, devil, because on the last day, on the last trump, I am going to be standing, by the grace of God, in a position and a place by which I might get a hold of your neck. And, whatever neck I can get a hold of between now and then, just give me an opportunity, and put it within the reach and grasp of my stubby little fingers!” Glory to God. I’m not going to sit back and wait. I’m not going to sit back and wait for rapture to come. You can sit and wait for rapture if you want to. I’m not waiting for rapture. Paul said in Philippians, I press toward that mark of the high calling of Jesus Christ (Philippians 4:13). **High calling! High calling! High calling!** I don’t want to be third level, fourth level, fifth level, sixth level, seventh level, eighth level, ninth level... **I don’t want to be any level, but NUMBER ONE LEVEL!**

I want to tell you a little story. You’re aware of it. My mother, thank God for praying mothers, I had a praying mother and that is why I am preaching the Gospel today. I did everything to resist her prayers, do you hear me? I resisted and resisted, rebelled, brought pain and suffering and hurt. Thank you, Mother, for persevering, for praying, and for working in my behalf. Thank you, Mother. Mothers, you have a responsibility, a position or place before God, a strength and a vitality that has been given to you as a mother. No wonder the devil wants to eliminate motherhood. Hallelujah! He is doing

everything he possibly can to neutralize you, to get you all tied up in your emotions, get you all tied up in the business of the day, get you all tied up in the things that go on in the world, get you all tied up so you don't have time to pray, don't have time to intercede, don't have time to seek the council of God concerning your children. He gets you all tied up in the accoutrements of your desires for your children. You know, there is no desire that I know about that is on par or equivalent to a mother's desire for her children. I think it is a little bit like God. It is like God's desire for His church, His children and their position and place of success. No wonder "mother" has become such a dirty word. "Oh, you stay home with the kids? Really? How many children did you say you have? What? A mother?" Come on, there is something there. Don't you see it, don't you hear it, don't you feel it in the Spirit? There is a responsibility that is delegated to mothers that is not delegated to fathers.. Loose! Hallelujah!

Romans 1:17, *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.* If you are not exercising your faith, you do not have any justness. You cannot have one without the other. You have to have the one working in order to have the other. Verse 18, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* We are talking about church. We are not talking about the heathen out there. Do you know that the Bible is levelized? Whereas it would mean something on one level to one people (heathen), it would mean something on another level to another people (the church). As a man is called in the church, so is he called in the home! He has to do, in the home, what his calling is, but as his calling is in the home, so it is in the Church. Hallelujah!

I believe that we are living in the dispensation of the wrath of God, where God is going to begin to reveal His Wrath. Not to the heathen out there! **For it says that judgment must first come to the house of God** (I Peter 4:17)! Now, least you get the wrong idea, the wrong perception of what I mean by the "wrath of God," as some vindictive, angry... Jonathan Edwards, in Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God - I'm not talking so much about that. It is just that there is a position, there is a place that God is working to redeem you, working to bring you to a place of salvation.

God has a perspective of you that is entirely different than your own. Your perspective may be right here. Do you understand? God's perspective may be up here. You don't see the ability or the wherewithal by which you might go from here to there but that makes no difference. God knows, in the very beginning when He called you, that you DID NOT HAVE IT. You will never have it on your best day. Never, ever have it! Never have it. It is in your ability to believe God and that in Him there is an ability, there is an avenue, there is a way, there is a means by which God can move in that set of circumstances to take you from point A to point B. Hallelujah!

We are living in the dispensation of the wrath of God. God is moving in the midst of the earth to demonstrate His reality. Never, since the times that God brought the flood in Noah's day, never has humanity, has civilization, stood on the brink of hell as it is standing today. Hello! Look what they are doing in the courts with homosexuality. Look at the laws that they are making with regard to what you preach about it and what you say about it. It is not that I am against the homosexual. I am against the homosexual spirit that makes the man a homosexual and then blames it on God, saying that God made

him that way. Do you know that I have seen homosexuals delivered? Set free! Cleaned up! I've seen homosexuals delivered. I know homosexuals that have families and have children, that are walking and pressing and moving on into God. They have repented for their position and their participation in the evil works of darkness. They will be the first to tell you and to testify to the power of God to deliver them out of the midst of that hell, that bondage. I always thought, and I believe it very much, that any homosexual that won't testify of his deliverance is still not delivered. It is not that he is braggadocios, he is telling of the mercy and the grace of God to redeem to the uttermost.

It says that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven. From heaven! From heaven! From heaven! You know, you could even go into Revelation, if we are living in the end times, and I believe that Revelation is pertinent to the time we are living in.

I cannot believe in one thing and not believe and hold fast to the other. There is a chapter devoted to what God calls the "Two Witness, First Fruit Company." We are told in Revelation 12 of the woman that is standing on the moon. She is clothed with the sun, but she is pregnant with a manchild. "Oh, someone is going to get pregnant in the end time and bring forth Christ." Oh, yes, somebody is, but it is going to be a church! It is not going to be by the overshadowing of some natural entity! My God! There are many men of God that are sincere in their calling, sincere in their love and their pursuit of God, but they are ensnared, they are entrapped in a system that demands that they perform and function in a manner that is down here (low). **There is a level, there is a place, there is a door, brethren, that is being opened unto each and every one of us, through which we might enter and partake and taste of those things.** The Bible says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8)." It is like honey in the rock. Remember when Moses struck the rock and water gushed forth and came forth out of that place in abundance? I'm not talking about the second time, I'm talking about the first time. It was a blessing to the people of God. So it is with you and I. There is a door that God is putting before you and I and He is saying unto us, "Enter thou in, come on into this realm, this experience, come into this place of fellowship with Me!" Fellowship in the Spirit. Fellowship in the realm of the natural. You know, I'm not all just hither and yon, I'm not way up there all of the time. I've got to go out here and work hard. Work, work, work, work hard! Dawn unto dark. Work hard! But, there is something of a spiritual reality that I have that moves in my environment that strengthens me, that encourages me, and gives me the ability to do it. I know that whatever I am doing, one day there is going to come a blessing from God, in the work of God coming forth and the thing that God wants being accomplished. All of the time, it is working something in me, working something in me. Working, Working, Working.

But, you know, if I assess it from my perspective, from my emotional point of view, if I look at it from my intellectual understanding, **I'm going to miss God.** God never allowed things to come forth in the natural realm that He didn't intend to be a blessing to the church and to be utilized by the church to bring forth the will of God. But, you know something, in reality, they are nothing compared to the ability to move in the Spirit.

What was the man's name who went to bed and woke up in Russia? Tommy Hicks. We have a heritage. God had these men for whatever they were. They were flesh, they were bone, they did not have the understanding, yet God used them and

demonstrated something of a spiritual reality in their service to Him. Do you understand what I am saying? There was never a prophet like William Branham. Never. The man died in a place that was grievous, but my God! There was something of a reality of heaven in which he was able to walk and talk and see and feel and move in the realm of the Spirit. What does that do? That stirs my appetite. That whets my desire to know and to be with God, to have the essence and the reality of His presence, to know that, in spite of my flesh, He is still real. In spite of my circumstances, He is still evident. In spite of all of the things that my eyes see, **HE IS STILL JEHOVAH!**

It says, Romans 1:20, *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made...* We are confronted with God. We are confronted with God, but, most of the time, we never or we hardly ever see God. One of the first things that they did with Samson... You know, some parts in the story of Samson are an illustration of the church. Samson is not just a story in the Bible of a man that lived. He was a man that had the anointing of God. He was a Nazarite. He was vowed, he was committed, he was dedicated from birth. The hand of God was upon him. He is a story of the church. He is a story of the end-time. He is a story of the position, the place, the desire of God for humanity. *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified* (Romans 8:30). There is a process. There is a working out. There is a coming from point A to point B to point C to point D, until we reach the reality of the realm of God where it could be said of us, "They walked with God, and they were not." My God. Hallelujah!

I had a revelation just the other day. It really excited me. It might not excite you too much, but I'm going to share it with you. I was sharing it with someone here just recently. I've come to an understanding. You know, when I first got involved with certain things, with God and the church and all of the things that were going on in that arena, I thought, "Well, I'm just going to do the very best job that I can do with what has been given into my hands. I'm going to do it with all of my might so that it can be said, 'Well, you did a good job.'" You know, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into My rest (Matthew 25:21,23)." It is not a wrong perspective, but it is a human perspective. Do you understand what I am saying? Because the circumstance in which God put me, He doesn't need it for His business to be accomplished. It was created for my purpose. It was created for my benefit, to bring me into a closer reality, a closer position, a new dimension of who He is. He intended, not for me to do the very best that I could do in the midst of that situation, but He meant for that situation to do the very best in me and whoever else was involved and participating with me on that level and doing the thing together. He meant it for the working out of the frailties of our flesh, and working out the reality of our humanity, **to see the divineness of God coming through!** But, oftentimes, sad to say, we are so overshadowed by the environment that we are in that we end up in the garden in the same place and the same position that Adam and Eve were in. As God came and began to walk in the garden, they hid themselves because they were ashamed and they were aware of their nakedness. That wasn't what God intended, you know. Hallelujah!

Turn with me into Philippians, the third chapter. I'm going to start at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse and then jump down to the 8<sup>th</sup> verse. We need to start at the beginning, and we

need to go past the end. Eight is the number of new beginnings. Philippians 3:1, ***Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.*** I believe that this was one of the letters that Paul was writing from captivity, wasn't it? He was in Rome. He says, "I've run my race, I've finished my course (II Timothy 4:7)." I don't think he was bemoaning his position. I think he was rejoicing in the fact. And you know what I have a confidence in? That, when he stood before Nero, the Mad Hatter, he testified to the power of God to save to the uttermost. I don't think that he was any less bold, or made any less of the opportunity than he had before Agrippa. I have heard words of prophecy that have come over people, "You are going to minister unto the small and the least, but you are also going to minister unto the great, and those that sit in king's palaces." And we think, "WOW! WOW!" We can see ourselves sitting down at the king's table, eating the king's turkey, chewing on the king's deer, using the fine silver and all the good cutlery. We don't see ourselves in chains, ragged clothes, vermin crawling all over us, knowing that, no matter what we do or what we say, we are slated to give our all and that our heads are going to be separated from our bodies. Yet being in that place, Paul said, "I am persuaded." I am persuaded. What brought that reality to him? It was his experience and all of the things that he was in, his place of utter belief and hanging on to God. I don't know. The man was human. He was human. On the third day of floating around out there on a little piece of driftwood, I wonder what some of the thoughts were that were going on in his mind? I wonder; he was human! He was human and the devil doesn't leave you alone. The devil might have said, "Oh, yeah, you trusted God, look what it's got you. Look at the hole you are in."

Some of us are in financial holes. We are floating around, as it were, on some little piece of driftwood, clinging to it, and we are saying, "Oh, God, where are You?" We will never find God. We'll never see God. It says that to see God, you have to believe. You have to believe. You have to believe. It was the FAITH and the operation of FAITH in Paul's life that gave him the ability and the strength to trade a temporal existence for an eternal reality. He already had the reality. Do you hear me? He just exchanged a garment. He took off an old coat and he put on a brand new one. We are trying so desperately to hang on to the shreds of our humanity. We are trying to hang on to our identity, our ministry, our personal preferences, our likes, our dislikes. All of these things we are wanting to hang on to because we do not have a reality of the heavenly kingdom. Paul had a reality. He said, "The kingdom of God is not meat or drink, but it is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17)." That is a heavenly thought. That is a heavenly position. Oh, yes, someday on that far shore, in the beautiful sweet by and by... No, no, no, no, no, no. This man had a reality, though he was down in the dungeon, in the stocks. Their jails were not like our jails. They didn't have a TV. They didn't have a library. They didn't have a weightlifting room. They didn't have all of those things. It was a hole in the ground which the sewer of the city was running through. His back was lacerated, they would have had him up on charges wouldn't they? The head of the warden would have rolled. The news media would have had a ball. No, sir. No, sir. They had a heavenly court, they had a heavenly judge, they had a heavenly place, they had a heavenly experience, they had a heavenly awareness. **And they began to sing praises.**

Have you ever tried to sing when you are hurting? It is bad enough for me to sing, period. I mean, it is squeak, squawk, squeak, squawk, up here, down here, all over the place. Boy, but when I am hurting, it sounds like a cat with his tail stuck in the door. Have you ever heard a cat - meeeooowww! That isn't a quiet pain! That is rejoicing. That is a song of glory. That is a song unto my Maker. **"DEVIL, YOU'RE A LIAR!!!"**

He says, *Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you...* My God! We would have been writing our attorney. "Look, I hired you to get me out of here. You are not doing anything for me. What about my appeal? Where is it?" This man had the mind of God. We go into a situation and we say, "Oh, what are we gonna do? What do we do?" We act as though we have no head, because we don't! We are not attached to Jesus Christ! I don't care where you are!

There are stories in the Bible for our benefit. It was the Spirit of God that told the prophet what was happening in the king's bedroom. Oh, that is a great story. That is Old Testament stuff. Yes, it is Old Testament stuff, but it says that in Christ Jesus comes the fulfillment of everything that is Old Testament stuff. We have New Testament stuff! We have the ability to know by the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, and if God doesn't want to tell you what is going on, then He doesn't have to tell you. That doesn't give you the liberty or the right to be despondent or discouraged. You just have to keep on walking. Keep on pressing. Keep on believing. Keep on thanking God, "You're magnificent, You're wonderful. God, You are so absolutely, totally beyond my mind. It blows my mind, Oh God! **This is all an illusion!** My achy body, my financial situation, the pressures in the community, the things that are happening in my home, my God, Hallelujah, **these are all lies from the devil!!** You are going to come out of this victorious, blowing up everything that pertains to the kingdom of Hell!" Paul said in another place, "We are pressed down (II Corinthians 1:8)." Do you know what that means, "pressed down"? It doesn't mean that someone is just putting their foot on you, pressing you a little bit. This is winepress pressing. They had this big vat with this large, huge, wooden screw and they had these handles that went out on both sides and they would get men on each of these handles, big, strong men, sometimes more than two men, sometimes a whole gang of them. They would begin to turn it down, turn it down, turn it down, until everything in the vat was crushed and the only thing running was juice. It is of God's mercy, it says, that we are not consumed (Lamentations 3:22). Oh, my goodness! Hallelujah!

*Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.* Rejoice! Rejoice! Your victory is not in moping and thinking about all of your shortcomings and all of the things that are happening. Not that you are not going to deal with them, not that you are not going to ask God to be delivered of them; yes, you are! But you are not going to be rolling around there in it. I saw an old dog the other day. Dogs find things, you know, and he just got down and rolled around in it, then he got up and he walked around and he got down on the other side and he rolled around. That's the way we are sometimes, with regard to our humanity - we just get down in it, rolling around in it. Then we get up and shake ourselves off and then we get down in it and roll around in it again. And we come up STINKY! We come up STINKY! Stinking like flesh. Do you know that flesh in the nostrils of God is a stench? Paul said that what I offer might be a sweet smelling savor of a sacrifice (II Corinthians 2:15).

What is a sacrifice if you are mumbling and grumbling? What is a sacrifice if you are begrudging? What is a sacrifice if you are moving in a manner that is human or lower or baser? "Oh, yeah. God, remember my sacrifice." It didn't even get to God for Him to remember.

Philippians 3:8, *Yea doubtless*, Paul saying, *and I count all things but loss...* This guy was a fanatic! This guy was religiously crazy. He was a kook. Come on! He was a kook! Can you imagine him in one of your little social gatherings? Can you imagine? Would you invite him, knowing that he was going to embarrass you? "Oh, you're invited, but I've got two rooms, one for these people, and one for you." I mean, this guy was crazy. *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord.* We want to see, we want to taste it. We want the reality of it in front of us. He is not talking about that. He is talking only about being in a position, in a place of awareness. Hallelujah!

*...for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him... Listen to this. This should be our motto. ...and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.* If there was nothing else, nothing else, nothing other than the fact that God has apprehended you for a particular purpose, for a particular place, a particular time and to bring forth a particular manifestation, *13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*

God bless you.