

## THE JOURNEY

From the very beginning, it has been the presence of the Lord that has been my greatest treasure. When I was born of the Spirit in 1971, I literally felt the presence of Christ enter me. I lived in total spiritual emptiness and in an instant experienced the overwhelming lifechanging power of the presence of Jesus. That amazing night my Spiritual journey began. On this journey there would be many rich oases of His presence. These times of closeness were my greatest delight. I have experienced times in His presence too wonderful for mere words to describe. In between were periods of what I now call, groping for the presence of Christ. It seemed like a man who walks into a totally dark room who then begins feeling for a light switch he knows is somewhere in the room. Even though I had experienced the glory of Christ many times when I stumbled into the switch, I didn't know how to experience the presence of God on an ongoing basis. The switch seemed to keep on moving to new locations in the room and so I kept on seeking; I kept on groping, thinking that was the way it was meant to be. Almost like a spiritual game of hide and seek. My focus in prayer and worship was always up into the heavenly where Christ dwelt in eternal glory. I also sought Him in the Word of God where I learned who He was and of His ways. Yet I knew the difference between reading about Christ and experiencing His presence in my innermost man; and so the Word fueled me to push on seeking His presence.

It was 1999 in the fall that I came to my fellow pastors and confessed that I had plateaued in my Christian life. I knew that I wanted to get to the next level in Christ, whatever that meant, but I didn't know how to get there. I was out of answers and weary of all the various "methods" for spiritual growth. I just wanted more of Jesus! I recently found a prayer journal that I had written during that time period that expressed my desperation.

"I feel like I am dying inside. The intimate Jesus I once knew, I don't know anymore. To him who has, more shall be given, to him who has not, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away. Prune me Lord! Help me! I can't keep this up. Be my deliverer, my helper, my strength, my song. Let me know you in greater dimension and serve you in greater power. I am so unchallenged in ministry and yet the needs of people are continually grinding. Surly goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; yet in these days it is not a banquet, but an unwanted fasting, a meager taste of the Bread of Life. There is no one in my life who sharpens me. No one in my life who stirs me to grow. I am loved by many, but I need a person who helps me see with hope to the next level- who lives there himself. I don't and I can't get there alone."

My journey took me to Budapest Hungary to a Youth Ministries International conference where my pastor was scheduled to attend. He believed that a man there named Fergus McIntyre had a ministry that I needed to benefit from, so he invited me to join him. I have not historically been a conference goer, nor one who goes places to experience the presence of God; so going overseas to get "unstuck" seemed really a stretch to me. I went by faith and out of a deep desire to move on in my walk with Jesus. It was there that the presence of Jesus would forever take on a new dimension within me. It was October 14th, that my eyes would be opened to the mystery of Christ. I will never be the same.

## CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY

In 2Corinthians 4:3,4 it declares the tactic of the enemy of our souls.

**And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

His plan is to veil the unsaved from seeing the light of God's glory seen in Christ. A veil blinds one from seeing the light. For one to be saved they must be delivered from this darkness. We know that when a man turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 2 Cor.3:16

The thing that satan doesn't want us to see is the Light of the glory of Christ. Even for Christians, if he can distract us, confuse us, divert us or deceive us from the this high calling, he will have greatly diminished our effectiveness and robbed us from our greatest joy.

Continuing on in 2 Corinthians 4:6 we see God's desire for His people.

**For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.**

This passage declares that God has already shed His light into our hearts and that light reveals the light of glory in the face of Christ. The radiance, the very essence of Christ is seen in His light of glory which dwells inside.

*Doxa is a Greek word that is translated into English as glory. It means appearance, reputation and recognition belonging to a person. Doxa embraces all that is excellent in the divine nature coinciding with His self-revelation. It comprises all that God will appear to be in His final revelation to us. Doxa means the glory shown from within reflecting in the outward appearance which attracts attention. It is the splendor, brightness and adornment. (from the Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible)*

*Thus glory is the essence of all that God is in His fullness. In the Bible God manifested His glory in a cloud, the Shekinah. ( Ex.40:34,35; 2Chronicles 5:11-14; ) We also see God's glory revealed in Light. (1John 1:5; John 1:4,5; Matthew 17:1-6; Rev. 22:5 )*

2 Thess. 2:14 reveals a wonderful truth of the high call of God to which He has purposed for us in Christ.

**And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Understanding that glory is the essence of all that God is, brings greater depth of appreciation to what God has called us to by the gospel. (And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the essence of all that God is in Christ Jesus.) The gospel was for a greater purpose than delivering us from an eternal hell. There is even a greater purpose that making us sons and daughters of God. His higher purpose is that His children obtain, partake of and possess the glory of Christ.

The Apostle Paul declares that his ministry was to proclaim and reveal a mystery of glory.

**Colossians 1: 25-27 Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from**

**the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

A mystery is something unknown, unseen and not understood. It is cloaked in darkness. The Greek word for revelation (apokalupsis) means uncovering, unveiling, disclosure, to pull back the cover, thus exposing something to the light. When the cloak comes off, we now understand a truth that was previously unknown to us. So the Apostle now declares that the mystery has now been made known, revealed and disclosed to us His saint. It is no longer a secret and the fullness of the Word is contained in it. Here it is, the truth once hidden from our eyes but now revealed- "Christ in you the hope of glory". Christ "the radiance of His (God's) glory and the exact representation of His nature," (Heb. 1:3) is in us! Even as the cloud of Glory filled Solomon's Temple, so the cloud of glory, who is the Spirit of Christ, has filled us; for we are the temple of God. The Light of God's glory radiates from Christ and He has come into us and brought us His light into the deep recesses of our innermost being. The cloud of glory and the light of glory has inhabited every born again heart in Christ by the precious Holy Spirit. What an unspeakable gift, the presence of Christ within us as He manifests the essence of all that God is. We can only begin to fathom all that this means to us as we ponder the unsearchable riches of Christ (Ephs. 3:8). Jesus alone is the Pearl of Great Price! Every other pearl and precious thing fades in comparison, and is traded for this One Solitary Pearl that has been deposited into the bank of our spirit.

**In John 7:37-39 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.' " But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.** Here Jesus reveals that the living waters would be in our innermost being and these waters of the Spirit would flow in us. "Come to Me", there in your spirit where the rivers of life continuously flow and are available any time we desire a drink. There in Him, "from the innermost being" we can drink to our fill. Can you imagine jumping in and splashing and swimming in those rivers that flow from Him deep within you.

Again we see His offer wide open when Christ declares, "**I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.**" John 6:35. There in the innermost man of our spirit, Christ, the Bread of Life, came and set the table and says to us, "Come to Me and eat."

**"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."** 2 Cor. 3:17,18. We have received the gift of the Spirit (1Cor. 1:21,22) and as we behold the glory of the Lord where He dwells inside, the Lord brings to us an unfolding of glory which transforms us into the likeness of Christ. Our revelation of these truths and our souls transformation are a continuous process from glory to glory to glory ect. Like the pages of a book bring greater understanding as they are turned, so our enlightenment

and experience of the unsearchable riches of Christ in our inner man are a continuous 'turning of the pages' to reveal greater glory.

This is truly the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We see this again in 1Cor. 2:9-13. “**‘Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.’ For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.**” This passage declares the total dependency and necessity for the Holy Spirit to bring us revelation of all that God has already given us. Things which our eye cannot see, we will see by revelation from the Spirit. Things which our ear cannot hear we will hear by the Spirit. Even the deep things of God, we will understand as the Spirit brings the light of revelation of Jesus to us.

This precious treasure (the light of His presence within) is contained in an earthen vessel, a jar of clay, (our bodies) “that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves”. 2 Cor. 4:7. It is not about us. It is all about the treasure we possess. A clay pot containing the most valuable diamond in the world is obviously not the focus. We are greatly esteemed by God that He would allow His presence to indwell us, making us His temple, but our reputation and our glory are irrelevant. There is no room for pride. God opposes the proud. We must humble ourselves before Him and learn to be dependent upon Him. We have spent too much of our strength trying to please man instead of fearing God. As our earthen vessel is cracked of fear, pride, independence and selfishness, then we can shine forth with the light of Christ that lives within. We become a fragrance of Christ everywhere we go. His light of glory in us brings the light of glory upon us and we carry an anointing from Him. First comes presence, then comes power. First God must know that He can trust us, before we can move in the power of the Spirit for ministry.

## THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Now let me continue my story of the journey which took me to Budapest where I now know I received a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. As I sit here

three months later, I have a much better perspective than what I knew that night. For since that night the intensity and depth and clarity of what I experienced has only increased in greater measure. When Fergus taught of the indwelling Christ, and prayed for me on that fall night, I understood by revelation that the place to partake of Christ and enjoy His presence was within me. No longer groping, I finally knew where the light switch was located. I know where my refrigerator is in my kitchen. I can go there and eat anytime I desire. So I now see that I can *go down* to where Christ lives by His Spirit in my innermost being and eat of the Bread of Life and drink of the Rivers of Life. No longer must I hope for the presence of God to come in a special time of worship, quiet time or from an anointed speaker. I can go to the secret place of the most high within me, anytime and anywhere. The direction of my seeking has changed from upward to inward. Not that God doesn't dwell in His heavenly kingdom in glorious splendor and power for He most assuredly does. But I also know the glory of His presence is within me also. Someday the glories of heaven and the total revelation of God will be complete when I see Him face to face. Yet now, right here and now, the presence of the Holy One and His kingdom is within me.

In the first chapter of Ephesians verse 17, Paul declares that he prays for the believers **“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.** This spirit of unveiling or uncovering would bring a greater knowledge of God. These believers already knew the Lord and were walking in His love and blessings, yet Paul prayed for a greater revelation of God. I knew quite well of the presence of God in my life. I also understood that He lived inside of me. As I said earlier, His presence was my treasure from the very beginning of my walk of faith. Yet the hunger and crying out for His presence was a reaching up, a looking up to the heavens for God to pour Himself out on me again. In a moment I became aware of Christ in me and His call for me to come within to where He lives in me and partake of Him. This is the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him which was imparted to me on that night by Fergus McIntyre. Through the years, each of the manifestations of His presence, all the revelations of His Word, all the times of anointed ministry are deposited in my spirit like a bank from which I can make a withdrawal in times of ministry or need. Every miracle of peace in the midst of the storm, every celebration of joy, every revelation of the love of Christ is mine within to partake of again and again. In this secret place where Jesus lives in me I am called to deepest intimacy with Him. There I experience our oneness and our abiding is complete. John 15:4,5 There I embrace my treasure which is His presence. I celebrate our oneness. I am lost in His love and His holiness. This is not a feeling to be lost or an experience which will end. Christ has been added to my very core. Nothing or no one can take His presence from me. I don't wake up in the morning and wonder if I can hope to find my hand on the end of my arm. I know where it is and I know where to find it if I desire to do so. This is now what I know of the Christ within me. I know where to find Him and I know how to go there. At first the pathway is an unfamiliar one. Once we travel to Him often, the path becomes a highway of holiness. It becomes well traveled and easily traversed. For this to be our reality we must confront the defilements of flesh and spirit which oppose our inner journey. Repentance is not sorrow over consequences of our sin, but a change of mind and heart that causes us to walk a different way. With the sword of

the Spirit we are called to cut away the thorn bushes that stand in our way and oppose our walk. The fire of God that consumes the wood, hay, stubble and straw in our lives becomes more intense as we walk closer to the sacred place within us; “for our God is a consuming fire.” Heb. 12:29

Something else has also greatly helped me in this journey to Christ within me. When I was in Trujillo, Peru around Thanksgiving a couple of months ago, I saw a man dance as David danced before the Lord. We were in the town square of the first night of our crusade. We were worshipping the Lord and I was entering in with my usual level of focus and intensity. I had felt pretty good about my level of worship in recent months. Then I saw him. A man came to the middle of the square, alone and abandoned himself to the Lord in exuberant worship and dancing. He didn't care about what anyone thought of him. He was there for Jesus. As I watched him, I realized my fear and pride that kept me from that level of worship. Anything else but that level of abandonment seemed far short of worship. I had a choice at that moment that burned within me. I could let that man be the only one in the gathering to worship at that level or I could join him. I turned to Pastor Bill, for I knew he must be feeling what I was feeling, and said, “let's go! We joined the man in the middle as well as some others who followed also. During that night, I knew that I had come to Trujillo to do warfare praise. The Lord showed me that in my spirit. Our praise would clean out the principalities and powers over the city. The level of our worship would determine the level of freedom and anointing for ministry. Each night following, our team were the ones to set the pace of worship. It seemed that we literally determined how the worship service would go. It was in our hands, or more accurately our feet, to create the spiritual atmosphere for the Lord to minister. This was warfare praise and we had entered into it. Each night the intensity of worship increased as well as the numbers who joined us. The last night was the climax of joyful celebration to Jesus. Hundreds were on the floor of the arena where there was singing, dancing and waving flags in celebration to Jesus. It all started with that one man who danced as David danced. I will never forget him.

Upon returning home, I was determined not to return to the level of worship that was limited by my fear of man and my pride. My prayer life has become a dance of worship. I have experienced the greatest ongoing, deep sense of Christ in me that I have ever known. The knowledge of His presence in me has left me in piles of joyful tears. I love to go there with my Jesus. In these times of worship I have experienced a spirit of intercession that I have never known. Intercessory prayer has been difficult at best throughout my walk. Now in the celebration and adoration of worship and dancing and kneeling before the Lord, the Holy Spirit rises within me and bursts forth in faith-filled, heart-felt prayer. Now I know and have experienced the union of worship and intercession. The harp and the bowl of incense go together. The harp is the worship and the bowl of incense is the prayers of the saints. Rev. 5:8.

The anointing of the Lord for ministry and the gifts of the Spirit are increasing in measure. This is fitting since the Lord gave me two permissions in Budapest. Two things for which I was released by God. The first was the passing of Stan's life verse upon me also. He was my spiritual father and his mantle has passed to me which declares, “**Arise,**

**shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness will cover the earth, and deep darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you, and His glory will appear upon you.”** (Isa. 60:1,2) I knew the Lord had placed within me a new level of glory through which to do ministry. The second is found in Isaiah 54:2 **“Enlarge the place of your tent; stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, spare not; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your pegs.”** He was also releasing me to expanded ministry in the lives of more people in new and broader places. Since returning home from Budapest I have seen the dramatic evidence of both. They have been confirmed many times and I stand amazed.

My passion is to tell everyone of the mystery revealed, which is *Christ in you - the hope of glory*. I want to *impart the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him* resulting in a true knowledge of God’s mystery, that is Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. So *I will proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that I may present every man complete in Christ*. And for this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant (to us all) , according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in (our) hearts through faith; and that (we), *being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that (we) may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.*

John Wilson, “Goldnuggets of the Faith” Jan. 15<sup>th</sup> 2000