

Be blessed and refuse to live any longer as "mere men!" (1 Corinthians 3:3 NKJV).
Love y'all.

Pastor Heard

Part 11 – Feel the Passion!

Texts:

Ecclesiastes 9:7 (The Message) - "Seize life!"

Hebrews 4:14-16 (KJV) - "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. [15] For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [16] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Part 7 – How to Have a Breakthrough in 2014

- A. In the beginning, man was created in the image and likeness of God and given authority over all creation.
1. Since the day Adam and Eve sinned and fell from their lofty estate, people have struggled to survive the many limitations placed upon their health, strength, and the ability to achieve.
 2. **Joke:** "Knowing Your Limits"
While walking along the beach, a young man discovered an old, worn out lamp. As he rubbed away the dirt and grime, to his amazement, out popped a genie!
"Yes, master; express your wish," the genie said.

The man thought for a moment and then replied, "Genie, get me a magnificent, exotic villa on the beach, surrounded by palm trees where my girlfriend and I can live happily ever after in paradise."

With a serious expression, the genie looked at the man and said, "Look, if I could make a villa like that, do you think I would be living in this stuffy old worn out lamp?"

3. The thesis for our lesson is: We, who once had dominion and control, now have severe limitations imposed upon us because of our fallen state.
4. However, when we are born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, we are freed from the limitations placed upon the unsaved. The reason for the removal of our limitations is that we no longer live as ordinary human beings. A new dimension of life and resources is available to the believer, which the unconverted are not permitted to enjoy.
5. A close examination of Apostle Paul's rebuke to the church at Corinth reveals that it is possible to continue behaving as 'mere men,' rather than enjoying the Spirit-empowered life.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 3:3 (NKJV)** - "Are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?"
 - b. **2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)** - "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."
 - c. **Colossians 3:9-10 (NKJV)** - "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the IMAGE of Him who created him."
 - d. Notice the reference: "according to the IMAGE of Him who created him." Where have we heard this before? When God created us! He made us in His own image and likeness.
6. As a result of the new birth, we can accomplish much more than those who are not empowered by the Holy Spirit:

- a. **Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)** - "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
 7. I am not saying that the born-again believer will never again experience difficulty or opposition. What I **am** saying is that as believers, we have access to power that the unbeliever knows nothing about.
 - a. **Acts 1:8 (NIV)** - "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
 - b. Not only does this power enable us to witness, it strengthens and causes us to overcome **all** things through Christ.
 8. Of course, the enemy does not want us to discover how powerful we actually are!
- B. The problem arises AFTER our new birth. Something must be done to re-program the mind we once had.
1. We are much like tiny fleas that can jump very high. To prevent the fleas from escaping, they are kept in a jar with a tight lid. It isn't long before they are trained to jump only as high as the lid. Once they accept the limitations imposed upon them, the lid can be removed and the fleas will never jump out of the jar. Because they were conditioned to believe that was as high as they could jump, they will never exceed that limit.
 2. The same is true with mankind. We must learn who we are and what it means to be a child of God. Until we do, it will be difficult to advance any higher than the lid used by the enemy to trap fallen man.
 3. **Joke:** "Know Your Enemy."
Two Cajun neighbors did not like each other at all. Clovis lived across the bayou from Clarence, but they continually yelled and threatened each other. Clovis would scream, "If I had a way to cross dis bayou, I'd come over dere an teach you a lesson good, yeah."

For years, this argument continued until the state finally built a bridge across the bayou near the two houses. That's when Clovis' wife, Eunice, said, "Now is your chance. Why don't you go over dere an teach that Clarence a lesson like you say?"

So Clovis says, "Okay, I will," and he starts walking across de bridge. But when he noticed a sign, he quickly turned and went back home.

Eunice say, "Why you back so soon?"

Clovis answered, "Mais ah don changed mah mind about teaching dat Clarence a lesson. You know, he don look near dat big when I yell at him from across de bayou, but dey got a big sign on dat bridge dat say ... CLARENCE..13 ft 6 in".

4. The enemy doesn't know who he is messing with because we have never learned who we really are!
5. Being born again is the easy part. It's easy because Christ paid the price for our redemption by dying on the cross in our place. The hard part is learning to reject the 'lid' limitations we endured as 'mere men' before becoming a new creature in Christ. Now, we must reprogram our thinking to believe that "we can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens us!"

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV).

- a. **Romans 12:2 (NKJV)** - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
6. How can we reprogram our thinking to become more than just "mere men or women"?
 - a. Our thoughts must be exchanged for His. This is why going to church and hearing the preaching of the Word is so important.
 - b. It's also important to know and study the Word in your time of personal devotion.

D. **Key No. 7** - Rachel moved God because of her EXTRAORDINARY DESIRE!

1. **Genesis 30:1 (NKJV)** - "Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"
 - a. Now, that's desire . . . **passionate** desire!
 - b. **Mark 11:24 (NKJV)** - "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."
 - c. The King James Version says, "What things so ever you DESIRE...."
2. In Rachel's day, a barren woman was ashamed and embarrassed.
 - a. She felt as though God's statement about her worth as a human being was that she was less valuable than others.
 - b. In parts of Africa, this thinking is still true today.
3. I would like to believe that Rachel's desire for a child was deeper than just wanting a baby of her own or removing the shame of being barren. Since she knew that God's promises to Abraham and Isaac would someday be passed to her husband, could a desire for her child to be included in the Messiah's lineage have prompted her passionate desire?
4. As you listen to the preaching of the Word, something can ignite within your heart that is even more impacting than when you first read or heard the words that are being spoken.
 - a. Notice the response from two of Jesus' disciples after He preached the Word that they already knew: "And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" **Luke 24:32 (NKJV)**
 - b. The anointing of the Holy Spirit can activate the Word that you have stored in your heart.
5. Having a good knowledge of human nature, I can imagine what may have happened between these two sisters who had **both** been told about God's promises to Abraham.

- a. Every time Rachel heard about God's promises, a fresh desire was activated in her heart. A person's strong desire will certainly move God to fulfill what He has already planned for them.
- b. With the strong sibling rivalry between Jacob's two wives, no doubt Leah was quick to point out that **she** was the one God would use for the Messiah's lineage. It couldn't possibly be Rachel, since SHE was barren!
- c. Someone will always be near who feels their assignment is to say what you cannot do or what can't **possibly** happen.

6. **Testimonial:** Revival Meeting in Tennessee

At a revival meeting in Tennessee, I noticed one of the ladies watching in amazement as people were being filled with the Holy Spirit. Finally, she approached me and asked to share her personal experience.

When her 12 year-old son was diagnosed with multiple tumors and no medical remedy, she began to earnestly pray. One day, while praying and reading her Bible, she discovered Jesus' final message to His disciples in **Mark 16:17-18 (NKJV)** - *"And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; **they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.**"*

Her next request was, "God, do You still do this today?" Then she told her pastor what she had read and asked him to please pray for her son.

Gently, he tried to explain that God no longer does these things.

I'm sure the pastor meant well, but she was so distraught by the time she returned home, it seemed that her last hope had been taken away.

All she knew to do was pray and seek God. But when she picked up her Bible, it fell open to Acts chapter 2, where she read about the disciples being filled with the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room and speaking with new tongues. By the time she completed Peter's message about the promise

being for them and their children and all who were afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call, she could hardly believe her eyes.

In desperation, she asked, " God, do You still do this today? If You do, I need all of You I can receive!" And she was immediately filled with the Holy Spirit!

When she related this new experience to her pastor, he informed her that the Lord no longer does that. "But what can I do?" she questioned, "I've already received it!" He did his best to make her believe she had been deceived, and then forbade her to tell others in the congregation her story.

When I passed by her in the service, she excitedly told me her story, assuming that she may be the only person in the world who had received this experience. She was so amazed to learn that others had done the same. Her next request was for the healing of her son. As the church began to pray, he was instantly healed and the tumors disappeared.

8. Do not allow people to convince you that God will not do what He has promised. ***Extraordinary desire moves God!***
9. In a recent Sunday evening Holy Spirit Encounter service at Christian Tabernacle, scores of people received the Holy Spirit! It was an amazing event! After most of the people had finished praying and the Spirit had begun to lift, a young man named Amari spoke with me. He was so disappointed that he had not received this gift and asked if I would pray for him. Tony Burgs, our men's pastor, and I prayed and in less than 15 seconds, he was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in his heavenly prayer language!

E. **Key No. 8** - Joseph moved God with his EXTRAORDINARY WISDOM!

1. **Genesis 50:20 (NKJV)** - "But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."

- a. The words 'knowledge' and 'wisdom' do not have the same meaning. Knowledge is about facts and information, while wisdom is the ability to know how, when and where to apply that knowledge.
 - b. **Romans 8:28 (NKJV)** - "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."
2. Joseph endured much suffering because of his jealous brothers.
 - a. At the age of 17, he was betrayed by his family and sold to Potiphar as a slave. After his master's wife assassinated his character, from age 27 to 30, he was imprisoned in a dungeon.
 - b. Joseph was wise enough not to become bitter or blame God for all that had happened. Instead, he maintained his relationship with God and would not allow his dysfunctional family to keep him from living life to the fullest.
 - c. He was also wise enough to assess his family's problems, recognize the origin of his problems, and refuse to be crippled by their rejection.
 - d. Rising above the roles dysfunctional families normally assign to their family members, Joseph broke free from all the negative effects so that God's purpose and destiny for him could be fulfilled.
3. Borstelmann's Rule: If everything seems to be coming your way, you're probably driving in the wrong lane.
4. To make the necessary changes, Joseph had to first separate the emotion and turmoil in his life from the unfair treatment inflicted upon him. Then he had to discard all the negative emotions he had experienced, such as: anger, depression, insecurity and the desire for revenge. When he began to accurately evaluate his situation, all that was left was **reality**.
5. Very few people follow Joseph's example. Most of us allow emotions to cloud our perception and color our judgment. Consequently, our decisions

and actions are negatively affected. Because of the strong effect emotions have on our thinking, we later regret making those decisions that add to our pain rather than producing healing.

6. In **Luke 16:1-8 (NKJV)**, Jesus commended the unjust steward for this same ability. Somehow, the steward was able to disregard the fear of what his actions may incur and to design a strategy that would help him survive the loss of his position.

F. Life Application Points:

1. Purpose to never live as 'mere men'!
2. Allow a hunger for God to become your greatest passion.
3. As your passion for God grows, so will your ability to sacrifice, pray, worship and believe.
4. Ask for God's faith to believe about Him what He believes about Himself.
5. With a spirit of humility, desire God's guidance and wisdom so that you do the things that matter most to Him.